

B Latijns-Amerikastudies
M Latin American Studies
Leiden University
Assessment report

10 april 2026



Content

1.	Summary	3
2.	Introduction	8
	Procedure	8
	Institution	11
	Programme	11
3.	Programme assessment	14
	Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	14
	Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	18
	Standard 3: Student assessment	29
	Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	35
	Final conclusion	38
4.	Annexes	41
	Annex 1: Administrative data	41
	Annex 2: Intended learning outcomes	43
	Annex 3: Curriculum outline	46
	Annex 4: Programme site visit	49
	Annex 5: Documents	51

1. Summary

This report describes the programme assessment of the academic bachelor Latin American Studies and master Latin American Studies offered by Leiden University¹.

Standard 1 – Intended learning outcomes

The panel finds that both the bachelor's and the master's programmes in Latin American Studies present clear, coherent and academically well-positioned profiles. The bachelor's programme offers a multidisciplinary introduction to the histories, cultures, languages and societies of Latin America, approached through Latin American perspectives and embedded in an area-studies framework. The curriculum integrates disciplinary approaches from history, linguistics, literature and cultural studies and is supported by substantial instruction in Spanish and Portuguese. The master's programme likewise adopts an interdisciplinary orientation and builds explicitly on the bachelor's foundations through three coherent tracks, with a strong emphasis on disciplinary and methodological depth, fieldwork and research-based learning.

According to the panel, the profiles of both programmes are distinctive within the (inter)national academic landscape. The bachelor's programme is characterised by its combination of language acquisition and regionally focused disciplinary training, while the master's programme offers focused specialisation through its three tracks and a clear research orientation. The panel notes that clearer external communication of the programmes' unique features could further enhance their visibility and potentially support student recruitment.

The panel concludes that the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of both programmes are clearly formulated and appropriate for their respective academic levels, aligned with the Dublin Descriptors for NLQF level 6 (bachelor) and NLQF level 7 (master). The bachelor's ILOs articulate the expected knowledge, skills and competences across the core disciplinary perspectives relevant to Latin American Studies, alongside academic skills such as critical analysis, independent research and intercultural awareness. The master's ILOs reflect an advanced interdisciplinary focus, with explicit attention to theoretical grounding, methodological competence, critical reflection and independent research. In the panel's view, these learning outcomes adequately reflect the academic demands of the field and prepare students for further study or professional engagement. The panel also notes positively that the

¹ At the time of writing, the programmes are formally registered under the Dutch names B Latijns-Amerikastudies and M Latijns-Amerikastudies. In practice, the master's programme is consistently referred to as MA Latin American Studies. To formalise this, the programme has submitted a formal name change request. For the bachelor's programme the Dutch name is used. In this report, however, the panel uses the international names for both programmes, as the report is in English.

bachelor's programme includes explicit language-proficiency targets in Spanish or Portuguese, ensuring that students achieve the required CEFR levels by graduation.

Finally, the panel finds that the programmes maintain the relevance of their ILOs through sustained engagement with contemporary scholarly debates and interaction with a broad academic and professional network. The recent decision to establish a formal alumni network and advisory body is seen as a positive development that may further strengthen external input, particularly in the context of future curriculum developments.

The panel approves the proposed name change from master Latijns-Amerikastudies to master Latin American Studies.

Overall, the panel concludes that both the bachelor's and the master's programmes meet **Standard 1 – Intended learning outcomes**.

Standard 2 – Teaching-learning environment

The panel concludes that the bachelor's and master's programmes in Latin American Studies offer coherent, well-structured and academically robust curricula that provide a clear and logically sequenced learning trajectory. Both programmes combine disciplinary perspectives from history, cultural analysis and linguistics with sustained language acquisition in Spanish and Portuguese, ensuring that students engage with Latin America through region-specific sources, methodologies and scholarly debates. The bachelor's programme integrates introductory disciplinary foundations with intensive language training in the Spanish or Portuguese track and a mandatory study-abroad semester in Latin America, while the master's programme builds on this foundation through advanced theoretical and methodological training within the Public Policy, Cultural Analysis and Language Variation & Bilingualism tracks and a mandatory fieldwork period in the region.

Students in both programmes report positive experiences with the curriculum, describing it as intellectually stimulating and valuing the strong emphasis on multilingual learning, interdisciplinary perspectives and the opportunity to engage directly with Latin American contexts. They indicate that courses are well aligned and that academic and research skills are developed cumulatively across years and components. At the same time, students express a wish for clearer articulation of how their academic skills translate into professional contexts; particularly in relation to career orientation and employability.

The panel is positive about the development of transferable skills in both programmes, including academic writing, critical analysis, intercultural communication, digital literacy and independent research. It notes that methodological skills are firmly embedded, for example through the integrated research methodology course in the bachelor and the preparatory seminars for fieldwork in the master.

The teaching staff bring strong disciplinary expertise, active research engagement and international collaboration networks, providing a rich academic environment for both programmes. Students praise lecturers for their accessibility, commitment and support, particularly in relation to language acquisition, the study abroad semester and fieldwork supervision. Study guidance is well organised, with a dedicated study adviser, short lines of communication and clear support structures, including facilities for students with disabilities.

The panel notes several areas for further refinement. In the bachelor's programme, continued attention to the workload and local support during the study abroad period is recommended, as well as monitoring how the planned faculty-wide shift towards shared courses may affect the programme's distinctive regional identity. In the master's programme, the panel notes that the programme already supports its heterogeneous student intake effectively, and encourages the team to continue monitoring this diversity through their proactive admission procedures and clear academic alignment. For both programmes, the panel encourages greater visibility of professional links and employability skills, and continued attention to ensuring balanced representation of Portuguese within the curriculum. The panel also encourages the programmes to further strengthen guidance on the responsible and effective use of Generative AI (hereafter also referred to as GenAI) within the teaching-learning environment.

Overall, the panel concludes that both the bachelor's and the master's programmes **meet Standard 2 – Teaching-learning environment**.

Standard 3 – Student assessment

The panel concludes that the bachelor's and master's programmes in Latin American Studies have a coherent and professionally organised system of assessment, firmly aligned with the faculty's framework for valid, reliable and transparent testing. The assessment plans clearly demonstrate how all ILOs are covered through a balanced mix of assessment formats across both programmes. These include written exams and open ended essay questions – particularly prominent in the early stages of the bachelor – alongside academic papers, oral presentations, group assignments, creative and digital formats, and, in the master's programme, fieldwork-based assessments. Students value this diversity, noting that it allows them to demonstrate a wide range of competences.

The panel recognises the programmes' ongoing efforts to professionalise assessment practices, including clearer rubrics and stronger alignment between course objectives and assessment criteria. At the same time, the panel advises continued attention to the transparency of expectations, especially for interdisciplinary assessments in the bachelor's programme and for fieldwork related components in the master's programme. The programmes' approach to GenAI is considered appropriate: expectations are

communicated at course level, and a varied assessment landscape – including in class essay exams, oral components and reflective assignments – supports the verification of students' own work.

Thesis assessment procedures are applied consistently and in line with faculty policy, with generally well substantiated feedback and balanced judgments from examiners. The panel recommends the programmes to continue refining the explicit link between feedback, criteria and final grades, and it welcomes the calibration practices already in place to support consistency and transparency.

The Examinations Board carries out its statutory duties carefully and proactively, monitoring grade patterns, reviewing samples of examinations and theses, and engaging with developments such as GenAI and innovative assessment formats. The panel judges that the Board effectively safeguards the validity, reliability and independence of assessment across both programmes.

Overall, the panel concludes that both programmes meet **Standard 3 – Student assessment**.

Standard 4 – Achieved learning outcomes

The panel concludes that both the bachelor's and the master's programmes in Latin American Studies successfully achieve their ILOs. The panel's review of a representative sample of recent bachelor's and master's theses confirms that all final projects meet the academic level expected for their respective degree cycles, with several examples in both programmes exceeding these expectations. Bachelor's theses demonstrate solid academic writing, critical engagement with relevant literature and theory, and the ability to apply concepts independently to socially and academically meaningful cases. In addition, many bachelor's students attain high levels of linguistic competence, enabling them to conduct research in the target language (Spanish or Portuguese). Master's theses are characterised by strong analytical and methodological competence, clear argumentation and academic writing, and, in many cases, originality and empirical depth through the use of fieldwork data and other primary sources from Latin America.

While the external reviewers identified some areas where further improvement could be encouraged – such as greater analytical depth, more focused research questions or clearer structure in individual cases – these points were appropriately reflected in the grading and do not detract from the overall positive impression of the achieved final level.

Graduate performance further confirms the attainment of the ILOs. Bachelor's graduates progress successfully into relevant master's programmes or enter the labour market in fields such as education, cultural organisations, NGOs and other socially oriented sectors. Master's graduates likewise secure positions across a wide range of professional fields, including international organisations, research institutes, NGOs, cultural institutions and policy-related environments, while others pursue PhD

trajectories in the Netherlands or abroad. Alumni testimonies and student reflections underline the value of the programmes' interdisciplinary, language-based and reflective approach in preparing graduates to navigate complex societal issues from multiple perspectives.

Overall, the panel concludes that both programmes meet **Standard 4 – Achieved learning outcomes**.

Both programmes meet all four NVAO standards. The panel therefore issues a positive recommendation to the NVAO for the accreditation of the bachelor's programme Latin American Studies and the master's programme Latin American Studies at Leiden University.

The chair and secretaries of the panel hereby declare that all members of the panel have considered this report and agree with the judgements recorded in the report. They confirm that the assessment was carried out in accordance with the requirements regarding independence.

Date: 10 April 2026



Prof. Dr. Gert Buelens
(chair)



Daniëlle de Koning MSc.
(secretary)

2. Introduction

Procedure

Leiden University has appointed Odion Onderzoek to coordinate the external quality assessment of the following programmes: the master's programme in North American Studies, the bachelor's and master's programmes in African Studies, the bachelor's and master's programmes in Middle Eastern Studies, the bachelor's and master's programmes in Latin American Studies, the bachelor's programme in Russian Studies, the master's programme in Russian and Eurasian Studies, the bachelor's programme in International Studies, the bachelor's programme in Chinese Studies, the bachelor's programme in Korean Studies, the master's programme in Asian Studies (60 EC), the master's programme in Asian Studies (120 EC), the bachelor's programme in South and Southeast Asian Studies, and the bachelor's programme in Japanese Studies. This assessment takes place in the context of the accreditation of the programme cluster *WO Regiostudies 1/ Area Studies 1*. This cluster comprises 24 programs offered by four institutions: Leiden University (16 programmes, reviewed during two multi-day site visits), University of Groningen (4 programmes), University of Amsterdam (3 programmes), and Radboud University Nijmegen (1 programme). From Odion Onderzoek, dr. Alexandra Paffen served as cluster coordinator until August 1, 2025, after which Julia Roosenboom MSc took over her role.

The assessment was conducted in accordance with the procedures and standards of the *Assessment Framework for the Accreditation System of Higher Education in the Netherlands* of the NVAO (*Staatscourant* 2024, no. 6405). The programmes within the WO Regiostudies 1/ Area Studies 1 cluster are existing programmes, and the institutions involved have successfully completed the Institutional Quality Assurance Audit.

Given the number of programmes at Leiden University, it was decided to divide the programmes into two site visits. During the first visit (3, 4, and 5 November 2025), the master's programme in North American Studies, the bachelor's and master's programmes in African Studies, the bachelor's and master's programmes in Middle Eastern Studies, the bachelor's and master's programmes in Latin American Studies, the bachelor's programme in Russian Studies, and the master's programme in Russian and Eurasian Studies were reviewed. During the second visit (8, 9, and 10 December 2025), the bachelor's programme in International Studies, the bachelor's programme in Chinese Studies, the bachelor's programme in Korean Studies, the master's programme in Asian Studies (60 EC), the master's programme in Asian Studies (120 EC), the bachelor's programme in South and Southeast Asian Studies, and the bachelor's programme in Japanese Studies were reviewed.

In consultation with the programmes, Odion Onderzoek composed a panel of peers (assessment panel) to carry out the assessment of the first nine programmes at Leiden University.

- Prof. Dr. Gert Buelens (chair), Professor of English and American Literature, Ghent University
- Prof. Dr. Christian Lange (member), Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Utrecht University
- Carlijn van Esch MSc (member), Freelance foreign journalist and researcher/author
- Dr. Lisa Gaufman (member + external reviewer), Assistant Professor of Russian Discourse and Politics, University of Groningen
- Veerle van der Put MSc (student-member), Alumna master North American and Middle Eastern studies, University of Groningen
- Prof. Dr. Clarissa Vierke (external reviewer), Professor of African Studies, University of Bayreuth
- Dr. Matthias Schwartz (external reviewer), specialized in Eastern European literatures and cultures, and in the dynamics of cultures in warless Eastern Europe, Deputy Director *Leibniz-Zentrum für Literatur- und Kulturforschung*.
- Dr. Rozenn Guerois (external reviewer), Researcher in African Linguistics at the CNRS and Director of the laboratory
- Prof. Dr. J.M. Michiel Baud (external reviewer), Emeritus Professor of Latin-American Studies, University of Amsterdam
- Prof. Dr. Brigitte Adriaensen (external reviewer), Professor of Hispanic Studies, Radboud University
- Dr. Pieter Coppens (external reviewer), Associate Professor of Islamstudies Veni-laureaat History of Quranic exegesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
- Prof. Isa Blumi (external reviewer), Professor of Turkish and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Stockholm
- Dr. Katy Hull (external reviewer), Assistant professor of Modern Gender History, American Studies, University of Amsterdam
- Dr. Maggie Dwyer (external reviewer), Senior Lecturer of African Studies and International Development Programme Director, University of Edinburgh
- Prof. Nadia Lie (external reviewer), Professor of Spanish and Latin-American Literature and Movies at KU Leuven
- Dr. Boris Noordenbos (external reviewer), Associate Professor of Literary Studies, University of Amsterdam, PhD in Slavic Studies, University of Groningen
- Prof. Diana Castilleja (external reviewer), Professor of Spanish and Latin American Literature, Vrije Universiteit Brussel and the UCLouvain Saint-Louis – Bruxelles
- Dr. Dorien Nieuwenhuijsen (external reviewer), Associate Professor Spanish Linguistics, Director of Studies of the Graduate School of Languages, Literature and Communication (TLC) of the Faculty of Humanities, Utrecht University

The panel was supported by Odion Onderzoek through Julia Roosenboom MSc (process coordinator and secretary for North American Studies), Barbara Roemers (secretary for the bachelor's programme in Russian Studies, and the master's programme in Russian and Eurasian Studies), and Daniëlle de Koning MSc (secretary for the bachelor's and master's programmes in African Studies, the bachelor's and master's programmes in Middle Eastern Studies, and the bachelor's and master's programmes in Latin American Studies). All three have extensive experience as NVAO certified secretaries. The NVAO reviewed the accountability form for the panel composition and confirmed that the panel meets the required expertise. In addition, the panel members, the institution, and the secretaries provided written declarations confirming that the panel and secretaries perform their tasks independently. On 23 October 2025, the NVAO approved the panel composition (approval form PA2492a).

Prior to the assessment process, the chair was trained by Julia Roosenboom MSc and Daniëlle de Koning MSc on the NVAO's *Assessment Framework for the Accreditation System of Higher Education in the Netherlands* (2024). The cluster coordinator reviewed the standards, procedures, and responsibilities with the chair, in line with the *Profile of the Chair* (NVAO 2016) and the guidelines from the NVAO training *Train the Chair*. The other panel members were instructed and informed during a cluster-wide start meeting by the cluster coordinator and chair about the content and intent of the assessment framework, as well as the procedure, attitude, working methods, and planning within the cluster.

Prior to the site visit, the Faculty of Humanities of Leiden University provided the secretaries with a list of recent graduates per programme. In consultation with the cluster coordinator, the panel chair selected fifteen final projects per programme, taking into account the distribution of grades, assessors, and, where applicable, variants and tracks. The panel studied the selected final projects with their corresponding assessment forms, as well as the programmes' self-evaluation report. The theses were assessed in accordance with the NVAO guideline for the review of final projects (Implementation Regulations, September 2024). An overview of the reviewed material, including the selected theses and an explanation of the selection process, is included in Appendix 5.

After reviewing the documentation, the panel members formulated their initial impressions and shared them with the secretaries. The secretaries compiled these and distributed the compilation to the panel. During a preparatory meeting prior to the site visit on 3, 4, and 5 November, the panel members discussed their first impressions and identified key topics for discussion.

Staff and students of the programmes within the visitation group WO Regiostudies 1/ Area Studies 1 at Leiden University were informed in advance by the faculty about the opportunity to speak confidentially with the panel. They could register for this through the secretaries. An *open consultation hour* was scheduled during the preparatory meeting for potential participants. As no registrations were received, this *open consultation hour* was cancelled.

On 3, 4, and 5 November 2025, the panel conducted a site visit at Leiden University. The draft programme of the visit, including representative stakeholders, had been submitted in advance by the programmes to the chair and secretaries. Appendix 4 contains information about the site visit.

At the conclusion of the site visit, the panel formed an independent judgment of the programmes, based on the four standards of the NVAO's *Assessment Framework for the Accreditation System of Higher Education in the Netherlands* (2024). The chair presented the main conclusions in a public oral feedback session.

This final report provides a systematic account of the panel's findings, considerations, and conclusions. After the site visit, the secretaries drafted a preliminary version of the report and submitted it to the panel members for feedback. Based on their comments, the report was revised in consultation with the chair. The draft report was then sent to Leiden University for a check of factual inaccuracies. After processing any corrections, the report was finalized and approved by the chair.

Institution

Leiden University was founded in 1575 and is therefore the oldest university in the Netherlands. The institution is publicly funded. Over the past three years, the number of LU students has fluctuated around 36,000, spread across 48 bachelor's programmes and 83 master's programmes². The university has seven faculties: Archaeology, Humanities, Medicine (LUMC), Governance & Global Affairs, Law, Social Sciences, and Science. The university's profile is described on its website³. In short, Leiden University aims to equip new generations to make a difference in a global society. Its core values are Connecting, Innovative, Responsible, and Free. Leiden University attaches great importance to partnerships. Within the Netherlands, it collaborates extensively with Delft University of Technology and Erasmus University Rotterdam⁴, and internationally, among others, within the League of European Research Universities⁵.

Programme

The bachelor's and master's programmes in Latin American Studies at Leiden University offer a multidisciplinary and humanities-based approach to the study of Latin America. Drawing on perspectives from history, cultural analysis, linguistics and language proficiency, both programmes combine academic depth with strong regional and linguistic orientation.

- The bachelor's programme provides students with broad foundational knowledge of Latin America's histories, cultures, languages and contemporary societal dynamics. A distinctive

² See: <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/over-ons/feiten-en-cijfers>

³ See: <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/over-ons/profiel>

⁴ See: <https://www.leiden-delft-erasmus.nl/nl/home>

⁵ See: <https://www.leru.org/>

feature is the integration of Spanish or Portuguese language acquisition with content-driven courses, preparing students to engage directly with primary and secondary sources throughout the programme. The bachelor also includes a mandatory study abroad semester in Latin America, which fosters linguistic immersion and intercultural competence.

- The master's programme builds on this foundation through a one-year interdisciplinary curriculum, structured around three tracks: Public Policy in Latin America, Cultural Analysis in Latin America, and Language Variation and Bilingualism. Students engage with advanced theoretical and methodological debates and conduct independent fieldwork in Latin America, which forms the empirical basis for the master's thesis.

The small-scale character of both programmes contributes to a close academic community with frequent interaction between students and staff, who bring strong international research connections to the classroom.

Curriculum redesign

Both programmes have undergone notable redesign since the previous accreditation. The bachelor's programme was initially informed that it might be discontinued alongside the research master, while only the one-year master would be retained. Although this created a period of uncertainty, staff and the study adviser used this moment to initiate a collaborative redesign process. This resulted in a more integrated and multidisciplinary bachelor's curriculum, with strengthened coherence across courses and a clearer structural embedding of methodological and linguistic components, while retaining the core profile of Latin American Studies. 'The master's programme did not see a comparable redesign at curriculum level. Improvements were rather made at the course level. The master's programme is currently still in a process of refining. This process is likely to consist of more incremental changes. Specific attention is and will be paid to the diversity of research topics and methodologies between the tracks and a more structured guidance throughout the thesis trajectory. These adjustments align the programme more closely with faculty-wide standards and evolving developments in the field.

Further details regarding the profile, design, and content of both programmes are provided in the subsequent standards of this report.

Developments since the last accreditation

The previous accreditation (2020) resulted in several recommendations for both the bachelor's and the master's programmes in Latin American Studies. The current panel examined how the programmes have addressed these points. The programmes provided written updates in their Plans of Action and elaborated on these developments during the site visit. The panel concludes that most recommendations have been followed up adequately, or that the programmes have provided clear and well-argued alternatives where full implementation was not feasible. Many recommendations have led to substantial and meaningful improvements, particularly in curriculum structure, interdisciplinarity, methodological

training, language integration and assessment practices. Any remaining points are relatively minor, well understood by the programmes, and already the focus of ongoing development. In the sections below, the panel summarises the main actions taken by the bachelor's and master's programmes respectively; where relevant, these developments are further discussed under the corresponding standards.

In the bachelor's programme, the main recommendations concerned strengthening the programme profile, balancing the three core disciplines, ensuring consistent attention to Spanish and Portuguese across tracks, and encouraging interdisciplinary development. Since the previous review, the bachelor has undergone a major curriculum redesign, initially prompted by institutional discussions about programme continuity. This redesign has resulted in a more integrated and multidisciplinary structure, with strengthened alignment between history, cultural analysis and linguistics, and clearer embedding of methodological and academic-skills training. The use of Spanish and Portuguese within content courses was reinforced, and the programme has explored additional exchange partners to improve the study abroad offering. The formulation of ILOs was refined, and communication with students has improved following the appointment of a permanent study adviser.

The master's programme has also addressed several recommendations. The programme has strengthened its interdisciplinary embedding, refined and clarified admission criteria, and improved communication about the structure and expectations of the fieldwork trajectory. Methodological training was reinforced through closer alignment across the three tracks, and the programme has reviewed curriculum timing to mitigate the earlier concerns about fieldwork preparation for students starting in September. The recommendations regarding assessment – such as providing more balanced thesis feedback and maintaining vigilance regarding grade patterns – were addressed through collaboration between the Programme Board and the Examinations Board.

Across both programmes, the previous review emphasised the importance of transparent and consistent assessment practices. In response, the programmes have refined rubric design, clarified expectations for reviewers, and stimulated informal calibration among examiners. Although the earlier panel did not identify structural problems, the current panel observes that these actions have contributed to greater consistency, clearer criteria and more well-substantiated thesis assessments.

Overall, the panel finds that the programmes have acted constructively and effectively on the recommendations of the previous accreditation.

3. Programme assessment

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 and considerations

Profile bachelor

The BA Latin American Studies is a multidisciplinary programme that offers students in-depth insight into the histories, cultures, languages and societies of Latin America. The programme approaches contemporary regional and global issues through Latin American perspectives, enabling students to develop nuanced, context-sensitive understandings of the region in a globalised world. The curriculum combines disciplinary approaches from history, linguistics, literature and cultural studies within an area-studies framework, and places a strong emphasis on Spanish and Portuguese language acquisition. Through engagement with different regions of Latin America and with relevant scholarly debates, students acquire solid disciplinary foundations as well as the analytical, methodological and intercultural skills required for further academic study and professional engagement.

The panel considers the profile of the bachelor's programme to be clear and well defined, characterised by a coherent formulation of its aims and a distinctive regional focus. The panel particularly values the way in which the programme combines language acquisition in Spanish and Portuguese with courses in history, literature, culture and linguistics, thereby ensuring strong disciplinary foundations. Furthermore, the panel observes good integration with current debates in the humanities, including postcolonialism, indigeneity and environmental humanities. The panel also notes that the programme aligns well with international benchmarks, as demonstrated by the benchmarking exercise presented in the self-evaluation report.

Profile master

The MA Latin American Studies is a multidisciplinary programme that offers advanced training in the analysis of Latin America from a humanities- and social-science-oriented perspective. Building explicitly on the bachelor's programme in Latin American Studies, the master's programme provides disciplinary and methodological depth through three coherent tracks: Cultural Analysis, Public Policies in Latin America, and Language Variation and Bilingualism. Across these tracks, the programme places explicit emphasis on fieldwork, critical reflection and academic communication, fostering a mature research orientation and preparing students for independent scholarly work within the field.

The panel is positive about the profile of the master's programme and values the strong integration of disciplinary and methodological depth, as well as the coherence of the three tracks. According to the panel, the programme pays explicit attention to fieldwork, critical reflection and academic communication skills, thereby ensuring an appropriate level of research maturity. The panel also notes that the master aligns effectively with current global and regional debates, including sustainability, migration and decoloniality, reinforcing the programme's international and societal relevance.

Across both programmes, the panel sees opportunities to strengthen external communication, noting that a clearer presentation of the programmes' unique features could enhance their visibility and potentially support increased student intake. The panel considers that closer alignment and collaboration within the faculty-wide communications and marketing context could help to further support the programmes' external profile, while ensuring coherence with broader institutional strategies.

Learning outcomes of the programme

The panel finds that the ILOs of both programmes are clearly formulated and appropriate for their respective academic levels⁶. For the bachelor's programme, the learning outcomes are explicitly aligned with the Dublin descriptors for NLQF level 6. They articulate the expected knowledge, skills, and competencies associated with an undergraduate degree in Latin American Studies. They cover core disciplinary perspectives, including historical, linguistic, cultural and literary approaches, as well as academic skills such as critical analysis, independent research and intercultural awareness. In addition, the bachelor's programme has formulated explicit language-proficiency outcomes: graduates are expected to reach level B2 in Spanish or Portuguese for most productive and receptive skills (with C1 reading proficiency), reflecting the programme's strong emphasis on sustained and meaningful engagement with the target language. The panel considers these learning outcomes to be coherent, well-structured and appropriately geared towards further academic study and entry into the labour market.

For the master's programme, the ILOs correspond to Dublin descriptors for NLQF level 7. They reflect a strong academic orientation through their emphasis on advanced theoretical knowledge, methodological competence, critical reflection and the ability to conduct independent research. The panel concludes that the learning outcomes meet the expectations associated with a master's degree in an interdisciplinary and internationally oriented field such as Latin American Studies. The panel concludes that the ILOs meet the expectations of both the academic discipline and the international professional field.

The panel considers the vertical alignment between the bachelor's and master's programmes to be convincing, noting that the master's programme builds in a focused and coherent manner on the broad

⁶ See annex 2 for the intended learning outcomes of the bachelor and master program

foundations established at bachelor's level. It observes a clear progression from broader disciplinary orientations towards more specialised perspectives, for example from general historical approaches to more targeted analyses of public policies, which is seen as well aligned and academically convincing.

At the same time, the panel notes some opportunities for further refinement. For the bachelor's programme, it observes that a small number of learning outcomes are formulated at a relatively broad level and could potentially be specified further to support the articulation of progression across the three years. For the master's programme, while the learning outcomes are comprehensive, the panel suggests that a slightly sharper articulation of the distinctions between the tracks could help to further clarify the profile of each track.

Maintaining the relevance of the intended learning outcomes

The panel observes that both programmes operate within a broad academic and professional context that contributes to the continued relevance of their ILOs. Through research-led teaching, engagement with international scholarly debates and the involvement of staff in academic networks, developments in the field of Latin American Studies are regularly incorporated into the curricula. Guest lecturers and collaboration with external partners further support the integration of contemporary perspectives.

The panel notes that, until recently, formal consultation with alumni and employers in the periodic review of learning outcomes was relatively limited. It therefore welcomes the decision, taken shortly before the site visit, to establish a formal alumni network and advisory body, an initiative that is being rolled out more broadly at faculty level. The programme views this development as an important step in strengthening its links with alumni and the professional field and, in doing so, in supporting the visibility of the programmes, as also highlighted by the panel in its earlier reflections on external communication. The panel values this initiative. It considers the alumni network and advisory body to be a promising mechanism for more structured external input. This is seen as particularly relevant in light of planned curriculum developments from 2026 onwards, including the merging of disciplinary courses and changes in the balance between language instruction and other domains, on which external input should be sought.

Name Change programme

The master's programme indicates that it wishes to change its name from master Latijns-Amerikastudies to master Latin American Studies. The master's programme in Latin American Studies is taught entirely in English. Depending on the chosen track, students also work with Spanish and Portuguese, especially during fieldwork and in linguistic or culture-related courses. The programme's target group consists of both Dutch and international students. Since the programme's inception, the English name has already been used – for example, on recruitment and programme information pages, as well as in the Study Guide. This is in line with the university's policy, in which master's programmes are offered in English. By

changing the formal name to master Latin American Studies, the programme ensures that the official name corresponds to the name by which it is known among all students and staff. This improves recognizability. The panel concludes that the name change meets the NVAO criteria listed below and therefore issues a positive recommendation.

- The name provides sufficient insight into the content of the programme;
- The name aligns with what is customary within the sector to which the programme belongs and within the intended visitation group;
- There is no substantial change in content that would require a New Programme Assessment.

Conclusion

Based on the documents reviewed and the discussions held during the site visit, the panel concludes that the bachelor's and the master's programmes in Latin American Studies present clear, coherent and academically well-positioned profiles, each with a distinctive multidisciplinary orientation grounded in Latin American perspectives. The ILOs of both programmes are appropriately formulated, demonstrably aligned with the relevant Dublin descriptors and NLQF levels, and effectively reflect the academic expectations of their respective degree cycles. The panel is satisfied that the learning outcomes are sufficiently comprehensive, well-structured and suited to preparing students for further study or professional engagement within the field of Latin American Studies. The panel also notes positively that the bachelor's programme includes explicit language-proficiency outcomes for Spanish or Portuguese, ensuring that students achieve the required CEFR levels by graduation.

The panel also finds that both programmes maintain the relevance of their ILOs through ongoing engagement with contemporary scholarly debates and through interaction with a broad academic and professional network. The recent decision to establish a formal alumni network and advisory body is seen as a positive and timely development that may further strengthen external input, particularly in the context of future curriculum developments. The panel encourages the programmes to implement this initiative in full, so that it can provide the intended structural external input.

With regard to the proposed name change, the panel issues a positive recommendation regarding the name change from master Latijns-Amerikastudies to master Latin American Studies. The panel concludes that the new name accurately reflects the content, language of instruction and international orientation of the programme, aligns with sectoral conventions, and does not imply a substantive change in programme content.

Based on the interviews conducted during the site visit and the review of the underlying documentation, the panel concludes that both the bachelor's and the master's programmes meet the criteria of 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 and considerations

Content and structure of the curriculum

The panel observes that both the bachelor's and the master's programmes in Latin American Studies are built on curricula that are well designed in terms of structure, coherence and academic level. It characterises the overall curriculum architecture as well structured, balanced and logically sequenced, with clear alignment between course components and the ILOs.

Curriculum bachelor

The bachelor's programme in Latin American Studies is a three-year, full-time programme of 180 EC that offers a multidisciplinary introduction to the study of Latin America, combining perspectives from modern history, cultural analysis and linguistics with sustained language acquisition. At the start of the programme, students choose between a Spanish track and a Portuguese track, which determines their primary target language throughout the degree. Throughout the programme, language learning is structurally integrated with content courses, enabling students to engage with academic literature, teaching materials and assignments in the target language.

- In the first year (60 EC), students acquire a broad foundational understanding of the region through compulsory introductory courses in the three core disciplines, alongside intensive language training (20 EC) in their chosen track. Attention is also paid to the development of academic skills, including academic writing, critical reading and source analysis, embedded within disciplinary courses.
- The second year (60 EC) deepens disciplinary and thematic knowledge through a combination of compulsory courses and track-specific content, while continuing language acquisition. A key component of the second year is the mandatory study abroad semester (30 EC), during which students study at a partner university in Brazil, Chile or Mexico. This period abroad provides linguistic immersion, exposure to local academic contexts and first-hand engagement with Latin American societies, thereby contributing directly to the programme's learning outcomes in the areas of language proficiency, intercultural competence and regional understanding.
- In the third year (60 EC), students focus on methodological preparation and individual academic profiling. A compulsory research methodology course (5 EC) prepares students for independent research, followed by elective courses and discretionary space that allow for further specialisation or broadening. The programme culminates in the bachelor's thesis (10 EC), an independent research project that may be written in Spanish, Portuguese or English, in which

students demonstrate their ability to integrate disciplinary knowledge, methodological skills and language competence.

Across all three years, the curriculum is designed to support a coherent progression from introductory knowledge to more advanced, integrative and research-oriented learning. A detailed overview of the curriculum structure, including course components and credit distribution, is provided in Annex 3.

Students indicate during the site visit that they are generally positive about the bachelor's programme and experience it as intellectually stimulating and supportive of their learning process. They particularly value the strong emphasis on language use in Spanish and Portuguese, which they identify as a distinctive feature of the programme. Many classes are taught in Spanish, with flexibility to contribute in English or Portuguese where appropriate. Students following the Portuguese track acknowledge that they sometimes need to navigate a stronger presence of Spanish, but also describe this multilingual environment as enriching.

Students also highlight the programme's interdisciplinary character and internal coherence as key strengths. They indicate that the combination of history, cultural analysis and linguistics enables them to analyse social, political and cultural issues from multiple perspectives. The alignment between courses is experienced as explicit and cumulative, with themes recurring across the curriculum and lecturers clearly building on previously covered material. As an illustrative example, students referred to how the course *Natievorming in Latijns-Amerika* builds directly on concepts and historical knowledge introduced earlier in *Inleiding Moderne Geschiedenis van Latijns-Amerika*. Students say that the way the courses are thoughtfully connected keeps them motivated and really helps them understand the material more deeply.

The panel is positive about the content and structure of the bachelor's programme. As mentioned earlier, the programme has undergone a major curriculum reform. According to the panel, the redesign process was swift, collaborative and well considered, with staff critically reflecting on what works well and how the programme could be strengthened. Importantly, the panel observes that disciplinary depth and educational content have been preserved and repositioned thoughtfully within the revised structure. The panel also highlights the strong internal coordination and collaboration among staff. Courses are well aligned and build on one another in a coherent manner, supported by a shared commitment to quality. The integration of three core disciplines, each with its own methodological traditions, provides students with exposure to diverse academic approaches and strengthens their analytical and research skills. In addition, the panel values the programme's consistent attention to marginalised and indigenous perspectives, which it considers to be structurally embedded in the curriculum rather than incidental. The mandatory study abroad semester in Latin America (for example in Brazil, Chile or Mexico) is seen as a clear strength of the programme. The panel notes that this component offers students meaningful linguistic and cultural immersion and reinforces the international orientation of the curriculum.

The panel identifies one point of attention for the future. It notes that the planned faculty-wide move towards a greater use of shared courses may put some pressure on the programme's distinctive regional identity. While recognising the broader institutional context in which these developments take place, the panel advises the programme to continue monitoring how its specific focus on Latin America, including Brazilian themes and language acquisition, remains clearly visible and substantively embedded within the curriculum.

The future of Portuguese within the bachelor's programme

The programme acknowledges that the intake in the Portuguese track is very small, in some years limited to a single student. As described in the self-evaluation report, this has led to a restructuring of the curriculum in which the separate Brazil-focused track is being discontinued. At the same time, Brazilian themes and Portuguese-language perspectives remain firmly embedded within the programme through their integration into broader disciplinary and thematic courses. Teaching staff explained that this approach aligns with the revised curriculum logic, which prioritises thematic and disciplinary cohesion over separate trajectories. The course *Indigeneity in Latin America* was cited as an illustrative example: the course is jointly taught by lecturers from cultural analysis, linguistics and history, and explicitly incorporates Brazilian cases alongside those from other parts of Latin America.

Staff further emphasised that language acquisition has traditionally been, and continues to be, a core component of the bachelor's programme, even though curriculum revisions have affected the organisation of language instruction. Recently it had been decided that Taal IV (academic writing in the target language) will be discontinued in the new programme that will run from 2026-2027 onwards. This discontinuation, that is also described in the self-evaluation report, is experienced by staff as a substantive loss. The programme is actively exploring alternative solutions and ways to safeguard academic language proficiency, elsewhere in the curriculum or through elective and extracurricular options, thereby maintaining access to Portuguese language learning within the revised programme structure. The panel welcomes these efforts, noting that the strong language component is central to the identity and appeal of the bachelor's programme, and encourages the programme – and the broader faculty context – to continue supporting initiatives that preserve this strength.

Curriculum master

The master's programme in Latin American Studies is a one-year, full-time programme of 60 EC, taught in English, and designed to provide advanced, research-oriented training in the interdisciplinary study of Latin America. Building explicitly on the bachelor's programme in Latin American Studies as well as on related disciplinary backgrounds, the programme offers students the opportunity to specialise within one of three tracks:

1. Public Policy in Latin America, which focuses on contemporary state-civil society relations, public policies and social development in areas such as poverty alleviation, education, healthcare and public security;
2. Cultural Analysis in Latin America, which examines how culture, identity and political discourse take shape through literature, film, visual media, popular culture and other narrative and symbolic forms;
3. Language Variation and Bilingualism, which addresses theoretical and methodological issues related to linguistic diversity, bilingualism, language acquisition and language policy in Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking Latin America.

Across all tracks, the curriculum combines theoretical depth, methodological training and independent research, with a strong emphasis on fieldwork in Latin America.

- In the first semester (30 EC), students follow a theoretical seminar (10 EC) and a methodological seminar (10 EC) aligned with their chosen track. These courses introduce students to advanced theoretical debates and research approaches relevant to their specialisation and prepare them for independent empirical research. A core component of the first semester is the fieldwork project in Latin America (10 EC), during which students conduct original research, collect empirical material and engage directly with local academic and societal contexts.
- In the second semester (30 EC), students take an elective course (10 EC) that allows for further deepening or broadening within or across tracks. The programme culminates in the master's thesis (20 EC), an independent research project based on the fieldwork conducted earlier in the programme. The thesis may be written in English, Spanish or Portuguese and requires students to integrate theoretical insight, methodological rigour and empirical analysis at master's level.

A detailed overview of the curriculum structure, including course components and credit distribution, is provided in Annex 3.

During the site visit, master's students indicated that they value the freedom of choice and specialisation offered by the three tracks. They emphasised that the programme allows them to sharpen their own academic interests while maintaining a clear interdisciplinary core. Students experienced the possibility to work with self-selected themes or case studies in essays, presentations and research projects as motivating and conducive to deeper engagement. The student chapter of the self-evaluation report further confirms that master's students are generally satisfied with the academic level, the small-scale setting and the opportunities for individual academic development. Students appreciate the flexibility of the curriculum, the close interaction with teaching staff and the strong alignment between the bachelor's and master's programmes. At the same time, students note that the programme demands a high degree of independence, particularly during fieldwork and thesis writing, which they regard as challenging but appropriate for master's level.

The panel is positive about the content and structure of the master's programme. It characterises the programme as a small-scale, research-intensive learning environment with strong staff-student interaction and close supervision. The three tracks – Public Policy, Cultural Analysis, and Language Variation and Bilingualism – are seen as clearly defined and as providing advanced theoretical and methodological training within distinct yet interconnected disciplinary perspectives. The panel particularly values the central role of independent fieldwork in Latin America (as discussed below), which it considers a key strength of the programme. This component deepens students' methodological competence, enhances intercultural understanding and provides a strong foundation for the master's thesis. The panel also notes positively the variety of teaching methods used, including seminars, workshops and forms of online collaboration, which stimulate active participation and critical reflection.

As a point of attention, the panel notes that low enrolment continues to pose challenges for programme viability and workload balance. In this context, the panel considers the decision to move towards one intake moment per year to be well justified and potentially beneficial for both students and staff. In addition, and in line with observations made at bachelor's level, the panel notes that Portuguese may currently receive relatively less visibility within the programme. While recognising the constraints involved, the panel encourages the programme to continue reflecting on how a balanced representation of the different linguistic components can be maintained within the overall curriculum structure.

Transferable skills

Both programmes offer students a range of transferable skills that are relevant across academic and professional contexts. These include critical and creative thinking, academic writing, independent research, digital literacy, intercultural communication, time management and self-reflection. A key development highlighted in the self-evaluation report and confirmed during the site visit is the recent revision of the methodology component in the bachelor's programme. Where students previously followed several discipline specific methodology courses in the third year, this provision has been consolidated into the integrated course *Onderzoeksmethodologie Latijns-Amerikastudies*. This course addresses core academic and research skills – such as formulating research questions, interview techniques, the use of questionnaires, close reading, academic writing and research planning – and prepares students for the bachelor's thesis, regardless of their disciplinary focus. Teaching staff emphasised that this integrated approach better reflects the multidisciplinary nature of the programme and strengthens students' ability to apply methodological tools across disciplinary boundaries.

Students from both the bachelor's and the master's programmes indicated during the site visit that the development of academic skills is increasingly integrated into substantive coursework rather than treated as a separate component. They noted that research design, academic writing and critical analysis recur across multiple courses, providing cumulative preparation for independent thesis work. Students

reported that this gradual and integrated approach leaves them feeling sufficiently equipped and confident to undertake an independent thesis trajectory at the appropriate academic level.

The panel is positive about the way transferable skills are developed within both programmes. It notes that critical thinking is strongly emphasised and consistently linked to questions of positionality, representation and framing, which are central to the field of Latin American Studies. The panel also values the clear alignment between methodological training, thematic coursework and the final thesis, and considers this integration to be supportive of both academic progression and preparation for professional practice.

Link with the professional field

Both the bachelor's and the master's programmes in Latin American Studies prepare students for further study and a broad range of professional trajectories by developing strong academic, analytical and intercultural skills. As described in the self-evaluation report, the programmes maintain links with the professional field through guest lectures, public events and staff networks with external partners such as cultural institutions, NGOs, embassies and governmental organisations. Guest lectures by academics and professionals (e.g. translators, museum professionals and policy advisers) form a structural part of the curriculum from the early bachelor years onwards. At master's level, the research-oriented character of the programme further strengthens engagement with academic and professional practice. Students participate in research days, seminars and meetings with researchers, and are encouraged to engage with international academic networks, particularly in Latin America.

Students in both programmes indicated during the site visit that, while they value the strong academic quality of the programmes, the translation of acquired skills to the labour market is not always explicit. Bachelor's students in particular expressed a desire for clearer guidance on career orientation and internships, while master's students noted that the programme does not lead to a single, clearly defined professional profile.

The panel acknowledges the existing connections with the professional field and alumni, but notes that these are not always sufficiently spelt out to students. It therefore encourages the bachelor's programme to make professional links and alumni involvement more explicit, and the master's programme to strengthen labour market orientation by offering clearer guidance on how academic and intercultural skills can be applied in professional contexts. As indicated under Standard 1, the panel welcomes the recent decision to establish a formal alumni network and advisory body, which it considers a promising step towards strengthening the visibility of professional pathways and supporting a more structured and ongoing dialogue with the professional field.

Generative AI

The panel discussed the topic of GenAI with both staff and students in the context of teaching and learning. As described in the self-evaluation report, the programmes operate within a faculty-level framework in which the use of GenAI is addressed explicitly at course level. Lecturers indicate at the start of each course how GenAI tools may or may not be used, and provide guidance through course materials and Brightspace. In methodology-oriented courses, explicit attention is paid to common research pitfalls, analytical errors and issues of source criticism, which supports students in developing a critical approach to the use of AI tools. Students indicated during the site visit that they regard GenAI as an increasingly unavoidable part of both academic and professional practice. They emphasised that they are encouraged to use AI tools in a reflective and responsible manner, for example for inspiration, structuring ideas or language support, while not relying on AI for final products. The panel encourages the programmes to continue strengthening the integration of GenAI in the learning environment and to make guidance on its responsible and effective use even more explicit. Issues related to the use of GenAI in assignments and assessments, including rules and restrictions, are discussed separately under Standard 3.

Study abroad and fieldwork

As indicated above, the bachelor's programme includes a mandatory study abroad semester (30 EC) in the second year at a partner university in Mexico, Chile or Brazil. This component is structurally embedded in the curriculum and contributes directly to language acquisition, intercultural learning and regional understanding. The panel considers the study abroad semester a clear strength of the bachelor's programme, providing students with deep linguistic and cultural immersion. Bachelor's students described the study-abroad semester as a demanding but highly valuable part of the programme. They explained that the workload can be intense, yet the experience significantly strengthens their language skills, intercultural communication and independence. Students feel well supported by Leiden University, though their experiences with guidance at host institutions differ. The panel recognises that supervision and guidance from Leiden are well organised and appreciated. At the same time, it considers continued attention to workload and the consistency of support at host institutions important. Closer monitoring of the support provided abroad could further enhance the overall study abroad experience.

The master's programme includes a mandatory fieldwork component (10 EC), typically carried out over two to three months in Latin America and closely linked to the master's thesis. Students conduct independent empirical research, collect original data and engage with local academic or societal contexts. The panel is highly positive about the fieldwork component and regards it as a defining feature of the programme. Despite the limited duration of the one-year master, students achieve a high level of academic depth and methodological maturity. Master's students confirmed that the fieldwork is one of the most valuable elements of the programme, as it allows them to test their own research questions in practice, conduct interviews and collaborate with local organisations. They emphasised that this experience helps them connect theoretical knowledge to concrete societal contexts. One student

explained how, with support from staff in Leiden, she was able to establish contacts with local researchers. She also had regular (online) meetings with her thesis supervisor and could request additional guidance when needed, making her fieldwork a well-supported and integrated trajectory. The panel notes that supervision and guidance from Leiden during the fieldwork period are well organised and appreciated by students, and considers this support a strength of the master's programme.

Admission, enrolment and academic alignment

For the bachelor's programme, general admission requirements apply. Students are admissible with a Dutch *vwo* diploma or with a *propedeuse* obtained at a university of applied sciences or a research university. The programme attracts a diverse intake, including students entering directly from secondary education as well as students with prior experience in higher education. For the master's programme, admission requirements are closely linked to prior disciplinary background and language proficiency. Applicants must hold a relevant bachelor's degree in the humanities or social sciences and demonstrate sufficient prior knowledge of Latin America. In addition, as stated in the self-evaluation report, students are required to have at least B1 proficiency in Spanish or Portuguese, enabling them to read and understand academic texts in the target language. While students are encouraged to use Spanish or Portuguese where possible, English is explicitly permitted as a thesis language, in line with formal programme regulations.

The panel notes that the master's programme attracts a highly heterogeneous student intake, with students coming from different countries, disciplinary backgrounds and educational systems. This includes graduates from the Leiden BA Latin American Studies, students from programmes such as International Studies, and students from Latin America itself. Teaching staff confirmed during the site visit that they systematically assess students' academic and linguistic starting points at the beginning of the programme, recognising that not all students enter with the same level of regional knowledge or language proficiency. The role of the Admissions Board is regarded by the panel as a particular strength. As also described in the self-evaluation report, the Admissions Board is actively involved in safeguarding academic standards and has the authority to admit students conditionally. Where necessary, tailor-made premaster trajectories or additional bachelor-level courses are offered to address deficiencies in language proficiency or regional expertise. The panel characterises these admission procedures as proactive and responsive, and values the way in which accessibility is balanced with the maintenance of academic quality.

Study advice and student guidance

The panel finds that study advice and student guidance in both the bachelor's and the master's programmes in Latin American Studies are well organised and contribute to an inclusive and supportive learning environment. As described in the self-evaluation report, both programmes offer a clear and accessible system of guidance, centred around a dedicated study adviser who acts as the primary point

of contact for students throughout their studies. The study adviser monitors students' academic progress, offers individual consultations at key moments in the programme, and provides guidance on study planning, course choices and personal circumstances where relevant. Students who require additional support due to a disability are directed to Leiden University's Fenestra Disability Centre and may receive further assistance from the faculty's adviser for students with functional impairments. The small scale of the programmes allows the study adviser and teaching staff to maintain close contact with students, enabling early identification of potential study delays or personal difficulties.

Teaching staff in both programmes are described in the self-evaluation report as approachable and accessible, and as providing academic guidance both within and outside the classroom. According to the self-evaluation report, lecturers support students in dealing with differences in disciplinary background, developing academic skills, and navigating programme-specific demands such as the study-abroad semester in the bachelor's programme and the fieldwork and thesis trajectory in the master's programme. This guidance is complemented by regular communication through Brightspace and other programme-level information channels. The panel notes that this picture was confirmed in the conversations with students.

In addition, student support is reinforced through the study association Interlatina, which contributes to academic and social integration by organising study-related and social activities. The panel concludes that the combination of structured study advice, accessible teaching staff and a close-knit programme community provides a solid framework for student guidance and supports study progress in both programmes.

Teaching staff bachelor and master

The panel finds that the teaching staff of the bachelor's and master's programmes in Latin American Studies are highly qualified in terms of subject expertise, research activity and didactic competence. Both programmes are taught by a multidisciplinary team of lecturers affiliated with several institutes within Leiden University, including the Leiden University Institute for History (LUIH), the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics (LUCL) and the Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society (LUCAS). This composition reflects the interdisciplinary nature of Latin American Studies and brings together expertise in history, cultural analysis, linguistics, public policy and related fields. Lecturers are active researchers with strong international profiles and maintain ongoing research collaborations with institutions in Europe and Latin America. According to the panel, this close connection between research and teaching enriches the curriculum and ensures that students are exposed to current debates, empirical research and region-specific expertise. At the same time, the panel observes that the programmes' reliance on a relatively small group of specialists creates a degree of vulnerability in staffing and continuity – a point that applies to both the bachelor's and the master's programme, but is particularly pertinent in the master's tracks, given their specialised nature. The panel also notes that all staff contribute to other

programmes at BA and MA level, which underscores the importance of monitoring capacity and safeguarding continuity.

During the site visit, teaching staff described a culture of intensive collaboration and open communication within the team. As also outlined in the self-evaluation report, coordination takes place through the Programme Board and regular staff meetings, with collective decision-making and systematic information sharing. This is particularly evident in the current phase of curriculum revision, in which adjustments to the existing programme are being implemented alongside the development of a revised curriculum for 2026–2027. Input from all teaching staff, as well as from student representatives through the Programme Committee and the study association Interlatina, is structurally incorporated into this process.

Students in both the bachelor's and the master's programmes describe the teaching staff as knowledgeable, committed and approachable. Bachelor's students emphasised the small-scale character of the programme and the short lines of communication with lecturers, which contribute to a sense of accessibility and personal guidance. Master's students likewise spoke positively about the level of support provided by teaching staff, particularly in relation to fieldwork preparation and thesis supervision, where intensive contact and timely feedback were experienced as highly supportive.

Overall, the panel concludes that the teaching staff are well equipped to deliver both programmes. Their combined disciplinary expertise, strong research orientation, international engagement and collaborative working culture contribute to a stimulating and supportive teaching-learning environment. The panel considers these strengths essential for enabling students to achieve the ILOs at both bachelor's and master's level, while also noting the importance of monitoring staff capacity in light of the programmes' reliance on a limited number of specialists.

Language of instruction

The bachelor's and master's programmes in Latin American Studies apply a well-considered approach to the language of instruction, aligned with their aims and student populations. In the bachelor's programme, Dutch is used in the first year to support students' transition from secondary education, after which Spanish or Portuguese increasingly become the main languages of instruction, supplemented by selected English-taught courses. This multilingual structure reflects the programme's strong focus on language acquisition and prepares students to work with academic sources and assignments in the target languages. It also supports students in achieving the required CEFR proficiency targets in Spanish or Portuguese by the end of the bachelor's programme. The master's programme is taught primarily in English, with some courses being taught in the target languages Spanish and Portuguese. As explained in the self-evaluation, this choice reflects the international academic field of Latin American Studies, the professional contexts in which graduates operate, and the programme's ambition to create an

international classroom. At the same time, the programme maintains a strong commitment to Spanish and Portuguese: students work extensively with sources in these languages and may write their thesis in English, Spanish or Portuguese. The panel concludes that the choice of language(s) of instruction in both programmes is well justified and consistent with their objectives and positioning. It also finds the English programme name for the master's appropriate. All teaching staff meet the university's language requirements and demonstrate sufficient proficiency in the languages in which they teach.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that both the bachelor's and the master's programmes in Latin American Studies offer a coherent, well-structured and academically robust curriculum, with clear alignment between course components, methodological development and the ILOs. Interdisciplinarity, language acquisition and region-specific perspectives are consistently embedded across the programmes, creating a learning environment that is both intellectually stimulating and well attuned to the multidisciplinary character of Latin American Studies. Across the curriculum, transferable skills – such as academic writing, research design, digital literacy and intercultural communication - are effectively integrated into content courses. The panel recognises the progress made through the consolidation of methodology training in the bachelor's programme and the strong research orientation of the master's. It also values the programmes' thoughtful approach to multilingual education and considers the choice of languages of instruction well justified.

The teaching-learning environment is experienced by students as supportive and engaging. The small scale of both programmes facilitates close interaction with lecturers, while the study adviser provides accessible and proactive guidance. Students value the quality of teaching, the strong sense of community, and the opportunities for academic and personal growth offered through language immersion, the bachelor's study abroad semester and the fieldwork component of the master's programme. The panel considers these elements distinctive strengths that contribute significantly to students' development as independent and critical scholars.

The panel identifies some areas for further refinement. These include monitoring the workload and support during the bachelor's study abroad semester, making professional links and employability skills more explicit across both programmes, safeguarding the visibility of Portuguese within the curriculum, and maintaining careful academic alignment in light of heterogeneous student intake, particularly at master's level. The panel also encourages the programmes to further strengthen guidance on the responsible and effective use of GenAI within the broader teaching-learning environment.

Based on the interviews and the review of the underlying documentation, the panel concludes that both the bachelor's and the master's programmes meet the criteria of Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment.

Standard 3: Student assessment

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

Findings and considerations

Assessment principles

The panel finds that the assessment policy of both the bachelor's and the master's programmes in Latin American Studies is aligned with the faculty-wide framework for testing and examination. The assessment system is governed by the Faculty Course and Examination Regulations (OER), the Faculty Assessment Framework, and the joint Rules and Regulations of the Board of Examiners. Together, these documents provide clear principles for valid, reliable and transparent assessment, including procedures for the appointment of qualified examiners, the use of plagiarism-detection tools such as Turnitin⁷, and requirements for ensuring constructive alignment between learning outcomes, teaching activities and assessment methods. The panel reviewed the assessment plans for both programmes and confirms that the ILOs are systematically addressed across multiple courses. The plans consist of two complementary matrices:

1. a matrix linking each intended learning outcome to specific courses, including Leiden level indicators and the EC-weight of each component;
2. a matrix linking each course to its assessment formats, specifying the type and relative weight of all assessment components.

The panel considers these matrices clear, comprehensive and effective in demonstrating the relationship between the ILOs, the curriculum and the assessment programme. In its view, the assessment system is transparent, coherent and well monitored, providing a robust structure for ensuring coverage of learning outcomes and progression across both the bachelor's and the master's curricula.

Assessment programme and assessment methods

The assessment plans for the bachelor's and master's programmes in Latin American Studies show that both employ a wide and balanced range of assessment methods. The panel considers this diversity a strength, as it enables the programmes to assess disciplinary knowledge, language proficiency, methodological skills and critical reflection in complementary ways.

- The bachelor's programme uses a structured mix of assessment formats across the three years. In the first year, written exams and open-ended essay questions form the core of assessment, complemented by early training in academic writing. As students progress, essays remain central, supported by assignments such as annotated bibliographies, individual research papers and components linked to the Research Methodology course. Oral presentations and group

⁷ Turnitin is used as the plagiarism-detection tool for all assessments (including papers and the thesis) that are uploaded to Brightspace.

assignments are used throughout the curriculum, with increasing complexity in later years. The programme also incorporates creative and digital formats, such as video-essays in *Art and Politics*, which foster analytical, collaborative and digital skills.

- The master's programme likewise employs a broad range of assessment methods, including written exams, essays, oral presentations, weekly assignments, group work and reflective components. Fieldwork is assessed through a combination of research planning, data collection, reflective reporting and the master's thesis, allowing for integrated evaluation of theoretical insight, methodological competence and independent research skills.

Students in both programmes appreciate the variety of assessment methods and generally perceive grading as fair. They value the opportunities to demonstrate different competences through essays, presentations, group projects and practical assignments. At the same time, they note that the transparency of assessment criteria can vary between courses, and that feedback is occasionally provided too late to be used effectively for subsequent assignments, which can hinder learning progression.

Overall, the panel finds that the assessment systems of both programmes are robust, coherent and professionally organised, with clear alignment to the ILOs and to the faculty assessment framework. The wide variety of assessment formats supports student learning and allows different competences to be evaluated effectively. The panel also appreciates the programmes' ongoing efforts to professionalise assessment practices. Alongside these strengths, the panel offers a few suggestions for further refinement. For the bachelor's programme, rubrics for interdisciplinary courses could be refined to ensure consistent expectations across disciplinary boundaries; for the master's programme, the assessment of fieldwork reports and reflective components could be made more explicit in terms of weighting and criteria.

Generative AI

As noted under Standard 2, the programmes address the use of GenAI explicitly at course level, and lecturers provide guidance at the start of each course on responsible and discipline-appropriate use of AI tools. For assessment, the panel explored the implications of GenAI further with lecturers, students and the Examination Board. According to the Examination Board, GenAI can be a useful tool for early-stage idea development, but cannot replace independent academic reasoning, critical analysis or methodological rigour. The Board emphasised that GenAI output tends to reproduce existing information and cannot engage with the interpretive, contextual and critical dimensions that are central to the ILOs of both programmes. The rise of GenAI has therefore prompted the programmes to reflect more broadly on assessment design, particularly the importance of process-oriented assessment, intermediate assignments and reflective components. The self-evaluation report similarly notes that the increased use

of in-class exams with open essay questions is partly a response to GenAI's impact on written take-home assignments.

The panel considers it positive that both programmes already employ a wide variety of assessment methods, which limits opportunities for students to rely on AI generated text alone and enables examiners to verify whether students genuinely understand the material. The panel encourages the programmes to continue engaging all stakeholders – lecturers, students and the Examination Board – in refining how GenAI is addressed in teaching and assessment, as also noted under Standard 2. In the panel's view, the key aim should be to ensure that students learn to work with AI tools in responsible and discipline-appropriate ways while maintaining assessment formats that allow examiners to ascertain whether students have mastered the ILOs.

Thesis assessment forms

Both programmes use thesis assessment forms that are based on the faculty's assessment policy. These forms require examiners to evaluate each intended learning outcome separately and to provide written justification for the grade. Theses are assessed by two examiners independently, each completing an individual form before discussing the final grade. If the two assessments diverge significantly or if consensus cannot be reached, the Examination Board appoints a third examiner, who determines the final grade while taking the previous evaluations into account. The panel confirms that this procedure is clearly described in the thesis assessment plans and was consistently applied in the reviewed sample of bachelor's and master's theses.

The external reviewers who evaluated a selection of bachelor's and master's theses found that the assessment forms were generally completed adequately and that the written feedback clearly substantiated the awarded grades. They observed that examiners typically provided well-argued, balanced and constructive comments, highlighting both strengths and weaknesses and explaining their reasoning in a transparent and logical manner. Across both programmes, the evaluations addressed the full range of ILOs, including research design, analysis, theoretical engagement, academic writing and communication skills. Reviewers noted that feedback was often detailed—sometimes referring to specific passages or theoretical frameworks—demonstrating careful engagement with the work. They concluded that the independent assessments usually complemented each other and contributed to a fair, nuanced and well-considered final grade.

The external reviewers identified a small number of points for further refinement in the thesis assessment process. While the overall quality of assessment is sound, they noted some variation in the level of detail in summaries, the explicit linkage between comments and criteria, and the clarity of the distinction between first and second assessor feedback. In a few cases, reviewers also observed minor inconsistencies between the tone of the written feedback and the final grade. They additionally noted

that the thesis assessment form uses five broad qualitative categories without numerical weighting, which in some instances made it difficult to see how lower judgements on individual categories related to the overall grade. These observations were present in both programmes, though not systematically.

The Examination Board recognises this pattern. As explained during the site visit, the Board occasionally encounters a degree of tension between the numerical grade and the tone or emphasis of the written feedback. According to the Board, this is partly related to the way assessors formulate their comments: feedback may reflect earlier discussions or guidance provided during supervision, which can influence whether strengths or weaknesses are highlighted more prominently in the final written assessment. While the Board considers overall grading practices sound and sees no structural issues in grade distribution, it acknowledges this as a recurring point for attention. The Board also noted that calibration currently relies on informal collegial consultation rather than a systematic, embedded procedure.

The panel advises the programmes to continue strengthening the consistency and transparency of thesis assessment by making the link between feedback, criteria and final grade more explicit, ensuring clear separation of assessor comments, and maintaining vigilance regarding assessor independence, particularly in small staff teams. The panel welcomes the calibration practices already in place and encourages the programmes to further formalise and develop these activities. In this context, the panel considers it helpful for examiners to have access to contextual information – such as typical grade distributions from recent years – to support shared expectations regarding what constitutes a particular grade.

Examinations Board⁸

The panel finds that the Examinations Board responsible for the bachelor's and the master's programmes in Latin American Studies performs its statutory duties in a conscientious and transparent manner. As described in the annual report and confirmed during the site visit, the Board meets monthly, handles student requests on a rolling basis, and maintains short communication lines due to its small scale. During the site visit, the Board explained how it safeguards the quality of assessment by monitoring grade patterns, reviewing samples of theses annually, and checking the consistent application of procedures such as the use of a second reader. The Board also analyses feedback-grade alignment, potential grade inflation and the distribution of pass rates across courses, enabling it to identify trends and intervene where necessary.

⁸ The Examinations Board consists of a chair appointed by the Board itself, two internal members, one external member, and is supported by an administrative secretary.

The panel notes that the Board is actively engaged in current discussions within the faculty, including those concerning the pedagogical and legal implications of GenAI. While the Board awaits updated faculty-wide guidelines, it regularly reflects on how GenAI may affect assessment integrity and how programmes can safeguard learning outcomes in a changing landscape. The Board is also attentive to the increasing use of innovative assessment formats. During the site visit, the Examination Board emphasised that it welcomes a broad variety of assessment formats. The Board explicitly mentioned video-essays as a promising example of a newer assessment type, supported by faculty-level facilities such as ANS⁹. At the same time, the Board reflected on whether the programme might still lean somewhat heavily on traditional essays and encouraged continued diversification of assessment formats where appropriate. In this context, the Board stressed the importance of transparent criteria and consistent application across all assessment types, ensuring that innovation goes hand in hand with clarity and reliability.

The panel values the Board's systematic quality checks, including blind reviews of theses and feedback to all examiners, and notes that calibration sessions in the master's programme further support a consistent assessment culture. Overall, the panel concludes that the Examinations Board effectively safeguards the validity, reliability and independence of assessment within both programmes.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that both the bachelor's and the master's programmes in Latin American Studies have a solid and professionally organised assessment system, well aligned with the faculty's principles for valid, reliable and transparent testing. The assessment plans clearly demonstrate how all ILOs are covered through a balanced mix of assessment formats, enabling the programmes to assess disciplinary knowledge, language proficiency, methodological skills and critical reflection in complementary ways.

The panel appreciates the programmes' ongoing efforts to professionalise assessment practices, including clearer rubrics and improved alignment between learning objectives and assessment criteria. Students value the diversity of assignments, while the panel encourages further strengthening of the transparency of expectations and grading criteria, particularly for interdisciplinary assessments in the bachelor's programme and for fieldwork-related components in the master's programme. The panel considers the programmes' approach to GenAI to be discipline-appropriate and supportive of academic integrity.

With respect to the theses, the panel finds that procedures are consistently applied and that assessments are generally well substantiated. It notes that examiners engage carefully with the ILOs and that the overall quality of feedback is sound. The panel encourages the programmes to continue enhancing the

⁹ ANS is the university's assessment software used to administer both summative and formative digital examinations.

explicit link between feedback, criteria and final grades, and welcomes the calibration practices already in place as an effective means of further strengthening consistency and transparency. Providing examiners with contextual grade distributions may further support transparent and consistent use of the existing qualitative assessment framework.

Finally, the panel concludes that the Examinations Board safeguards assessment quality in a careful and proactive manner. Through systematic monitoring of grade patterns, annual reviews of theses and examinations, and engagement with current developments such as GenAI and innovative assessment formats, the Board fulfils its statutory responsibilities and contributes to a reliable and transparent assessment culture.

Based on the interviews and the review of the underlying documentation, the panel concludes that both programmes meet Standard 3: Student assessment.

Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes

The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Findings and considerations

The totality of the examinations (including the thesis) guarantees that all ILOs are achieved. The panel confirms that the assessment system in both the bachelor's and the master's programmes adequately covers all ILOs, with the thesis serving as the key indicator of the achieved final level. Prior to the site visit, the panel reviewed a representative selection of 15 recently completed final projects from both programmes, together with the corresponding assessment forms. The selection ensured a balanced spread of grades, assessors and tracks (see Appendix 5).

Final projects bachelor

The panel finds that all bachelor's theses demonstrate achievement of the ILOs and are appropriate for the level expected of a bachelor's degree in Latin American Studies. Students show solid academic writing skills, a good command of relevant literature and theory, and an ability to apply concepts independently to empirically and socially meaningful cases. Many theses demonstrate a clear understanding of issues such as identity, representation and postcolonial critique, and apply these perspectives to contemporary cultural, political or social phenomena in Latin America. The reviewed theses address a wide range of relevant and timely topics within Latin American political, social and cultural contexts, including corruption in Mexico, media manipulation in Brazil, post-conflict reintegration in Colombia, inclusive language, migration and decolonial critique through music. Several theses stand out for their originality, ambition and interdisciplinary scope, for example by combining approaches from linguistics, cultural studies and music studies. Across the sample, students demonstrate that they can formulate clear research questions, conduct original research, and use academic literature appropriately. In a number of cases, students also attain a high level of linguistic competence, enabling them to conduct research in Spanish or Portuguese.

External reviewers confirm that all theses meet the bachelor's level, with several works assessed as above average. While some theses show minor limitations, for example in theoretical depth, analytical precision or coherence between sections, these aspects are reflected in the grading. Occasional overgeneralisations ("Mexico's corrupt system") or a lack of nuance were noted in a small number of cases, but do not detract from the overall conclusion that students achieve the ILOs.

Final projects master

The panel likewise concludes that all master's theses meet the ILOs and are appropriate for the level expected of a master's degree. Students demonstrate strong analytical and methodological competence, clear academic writing and the ability to formulate well-grounded judgements. Many theses engage with original empirical material from Latin America, including fieldwork data, interviews, policy documents

and linguistic corpora. The topics addressed are highly relevant and timely, particularly in the areas of public policy, environmental governance and societal change. Examples include electoral accountability in Brazil, climate governance and CSR in Chile, environmental law in Colombia, and innovative analyses of sustainability issues through sector-based case studies. Several theses stand out for their originality and analytical depth, while others demonstrate solid and consistent master-level performance.

External reviewers confirm that all theses meet the expected master's level. Students are generally able to collect and analyse empirical and theoretical material within clearly defined analytical frameworks and to present their findings in accordance with academic standards. Some theses show minor weaknesses, such as overly broad research questions, limited analytical depth in parts of the fieldwork, or issues of structure and clarity. These aspects are appropriately reflected in the final grades and do not detract from the overall assessment that the ILOs are achieved.

Performance of graduates

The panel concludes that graduates of both the bachelor's and master's programmes perform well in further study and in the labour market. Alumni of the bachelor's programme successfully progress to relevant master's programmes or find employment in fields such as education, cultural organisations, NGOs and other socially oriented sectors. This is consistent with labour market data presented in the self-evaluation report, which indicate that a large majority of bachelor's graduates secure employment within a relatively short period after graduation.

Master's graduates likewise demonstrate strong performance in academic and professional contexts. Alumni find employment across a broad range of sectors, including international organisations, NGOs, research institutes, cultural institutions and policy-related environments. According to the Faculty Labour Market Survey 2025, a substantial proportion of master's graduates find employment within the first months of graduation, while others successfully pursue PhD trajectories in the Netherlands and abroad.

Alumni testimonies and student reflections during the site visit further underline the added value of the programmes' interdisciplinary and reflective approach. Students from both the bachelor's and master's programmes emphasised that the curriculum enabled them to analyse Latin America both "from the outside in" and "from the inside out", by combining academic distance with engagement and lived experience. Several students indicated that this dual perspective, supported by language immersion, fieldwork and exposure to multiple disciplinary viewpoints, constituted one of the key learning outcomes of the programmes and prepared them well for both further study and professional environments requiring contextual sensitivity and critical judgement.

Conclusion

The extent to which the ILOs are achieved is evident from the results of the examinations and assignments, from the quality of the theses, and from the way in which the graduates perform in further education or in professional practice.

The panel concludes that both the bachelor's and the master's programmes successfully achieve their ILOs. The panel's review of a representative sample of recent final projects confirms that all bachelor's theses meet the expected bachelor's level, while all master's theses meet the expected master's level, with several examples in both programmes exceeding these expectations. The theses address timely and academically relevant topics within Latin American Studies, demonstrate solid academic writing and critical engagement with theory and empirical material, and in many cases show originality, interdisciplinary awareness and methodological rigour. For the bachelor's programme, students demonstrate the ability to apply concepts such as identity, representation and postcolonial critique to socially meaningful cases, while also attaining high levels of linguistic competence that enable them to conduct research in the target language (Spanish or Portuguese). For the master's programme, many theses are characterised by strong analytical and methodological competence and by the use of original empirical material, including fieldwork data. Although the panel identified some areas where further improvement could be encouraged – such as analytical depth, theoretical precision or structure in individual cases – these points are appropriately reflected in the grading and do not detract from the overall positive impression of the achieved learning outcomes.

The panel also finds that graduates of both programmes perform well in their subsequent academic and professional trajectories. Bachelor's graduates progress successfully into relevant master's programmes or enter the labour market in fields such as education, cultural organisations, NGOs and other socially oriented sectors. Master's graduates likewise secure positions across diverse fields, including international organisations, research institutes, NGOs, cultural institutions and policy-related environments, while others pursue PhD trajectories in the Netherlands or abroad. Labour market data presented in the self-evaluation report confirm positive employment outcomes for both programmes. Alumni testimonies and student reflections further underline the added value of the programmes' interdisciplinary, language-based and reflective approach, which equips graduates to navigate complex societal issues from multiple perspectives.

Based on the interviews and the review of the underlying documentation, the panel concludes that both the bachelor's and the master's programmes meet the criteria of Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes.

Final conclusion

The NVAO-approved panel has assessed both programmes against the four standards. The panel concludes that the bachelor's programme Latin American Studies and the master's programme Latin American Studies each meet all standards (intended learning outcomes, teaching-learning environment, student assessment and achieved learning outcomes) and therefore rates the overall quality of both programmes as positive.

Standard	Judgement	
	Bachelor Latin American Studies	Master Latin American Studies
Intended learning outcomes <i>Standard 1: 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.</i>	Meets the standard	Meets the standard
Teaching-learning environment <i>Standard 2: The curriculum, the teaching-learning environment and the quality of the teaching staff enable the incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.</i>	Meets the standard	Meets the standard
Student assessment <i>Standard 3: The programme has an adequate system of assessment in place.</i>	Meets the standard	Meets the standard
Achieved learning outcomes <i>Standard 4: The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.</i>	Meets the standard	Meets the standard
Final conclusion	Positive	Positive

In the preceding paragraphs, the panel has discussed and substantiated its positive comments on the programmes for each standard. The programmes are commended for the following features of good practice:

- Clear and well-positioned academic profiles: both programmes articulate coherent and academically robust profiles, grounded in Latin American perspectives and characterised by strong interdisciplinarity across history, cultural analysis, linguistics and language proficiency.
- Clearly formulated intended learning outcomes: the ILOs are well defined, aligned with the Dublin descriptors and appropriate for the academic levels of both programmes.
- Multilingual and immersive learning environment: the bachelor successfully integrates Spanish or Portuguese language acquisition into content courses and includes a mandatory study abroad semester that provides deep linguistic and cultural immersion. The master enhances regional engagement through a structured and well-supported fieldwork component.
- Highly qualified, internationally connected teaching staff: lecturers bring strong disciplinary expertise, active research profiles and international collaborations with Europe and Latin America; students consistently praise the staff's accessibility, guidance and commitment.
- Coherent and well-structured curricula: both programmes present logically sequenced curricula with strong internal coordination and cumulative skill development, including an integrated research-methodology course in the bachelor and clearly delineated theoretical and methodological training in the master's tracks.
- Effective development of transferable skills: critical thinking, academic writing, research design, digital literacy and intercultural communication are well embedded across courses.
- Rich and varied assessment landscape: a broad mix of assessment formats – including written exams, essays, oral presentations, group assignments, creative/digital tasks and fieldwork-based components – provides strong GenAI-proofing and supports diverse forms of learning and feedback.
- Effective safeguarding of assessment quality: the Examinations Board systematically monitors assessment quality, performs regular checks on theses and assessment forms, and engages proactively with current developments such as GenAI and innovative assessment forms.
- Achievement of the intended final level: all reviewed theses meet the expected bachelor's or master's level, with several exceeding it, and graduates perform well in continued study or professional practice.

In this report, the panel makes several suggestions and observations, which are not strictly recommendations:

- Enhance external communication and visibility: more prominently articulate the distinctive features of the programmes to support recruitment and external profile.
- Strengthen professional engagement and employability orientation: clarify and make more explicit how employability skills and career pathways are addressed across both programmes,

and further strengthen engagement with the professional field. This may include enhancing the visibility of alumni involvement and formalising structured forms of external input – for example through alumni networks, advisory contributions or mentoring.

- Maintain attention to students' workload and support: continue monitoring the workload and local support during the bachelor's study abroad semester.
- Support academic alignment in a diverse student population: continue monitoring academic and linguistic alignment in the master's programme, given the heterogeneous intake.
- Safeguard balance of Portuguese within the curriculum: maintain attention to Portuguese-language visibility especially in light of the discontinuation of the separate Brazil track.
- Strengthen guidance and guidelines for the responsible use of GenAI: continue enhancing guidance on the pedagogical use of GenAI tools within the teaching-learning environment, and establish explicit, programme-appropriate rules for their use in assignments and assessments. This should be done in coordination with forthcoming faculty-wide policies and help ensure that students learn to use GenAI responsibly and effectively in preparation for a labour market that will expect familiarity with its optimal usage.
- Enhance transparency for fieldwork-related assessment (MA): clarify the weighting and criteria for reflective and fieldwork-based components in the master's assessment programme.

The panel recommends several follow-up actions to further improve the programmes. These recommendations do not detract from the positive assessment of quality:

- Formalise calibration practices: formalise calibration practices by developing a more systematic and recurring calibration structure for thesis assessment. This should support consistency across assessors and reduce variation in feedback style, interpretation of criteria and alignment between written feedback and final grades.
- Enhance transparency and consistency in thesis grading: enhance transparency and consistency in thesis grading by clarifying the weighting and interpretation of assessment criteria, and by strengthening the explicit link between criteria, written feedback and the final grade. To support assessors in applying standards consistently, the programme could also provide contextual information – such as typical grade distributions from recent years.

4. Annexes

Annex 1: Administrative data

Institution	
Name in RIO	Universiteit Leiden
Adress	Rapenburg 70, 2311 EZ Leiden
Website	www.universiteitleiden.nl/en
BRIN number	21PB

Programme	
Programme name in RIO	Latijns-Amerikastudies
International name	Latin American Studies
Location	Leiden
Programme number in RIO	56052
Orientation and level	Wo-bachelor
Research master	No
Language of instruction	Dutch
(Legal) professional requirements	No
All study programmes/tracks/specialisations	No
Joint programme	No
Distinctive feature	No
Degree awarded and addition to the degree	B of Arts
Study load in EC	180
Variant(s) (full-time, part-time, dual)	Full-time
Working with units of learning outcomes (full-time, part-time, dual)	No
External assessment group classification	WO Regiostudies 1 / Area Studies 1
Submission date of accreditation report	1 mei 2026
Other (e.g. name change or extension of study duration)	No

Institution	
Name in RIO	Universiteit Leiden
Adress	Rapenburg 70, 2311 EZ Leiden
Website	www.universiteitleiden.nl/en
BRIN number	21PB

Programme	
Programme name in RIO	Latijns-Amerikastudies
International name	Latin American Studies
Location	Leiden
Programme number in RIO	60174
Orientation and level	Wo-Master
Research master	No
Language of instruction	English
(Legal) professional requirements	No
All study programmes/tracks/specialisations	No
Joint programme	No
Distinctive feature	No
Degree awarded and addition to the degree	M of Arts
Study load in EC	60
Variant(s) (full-time, part-time, dual)	Full-time
Working with units of learning outcomes (full-time, part-time, dual)	No
External assessment group classification	WO Regiostudies 1 / Area Studies 1
Submission date of accreditation report	1 mei 2026
Other (e.g. name change or extension of study duration)	The master's programme indicates that it wishes to change its name from master Latijns-Amerikastudies to master Latin American Studies.

Annex 2: Intended learning outcomes

Graduates of the programmes have attained the following learning outcomes, listed according to the Dublin descriptors:

A. Intended learning outcomes of the BA Latijns-Amerikastudies:

Afgestudeerden van een bacheloropleiding die voor het eerst instroomden in september 2022 of later beschikken over de volgende **algemene academische vaardigheden**:

I Kennis en inzicht

1. De afgestudeerde is vaardig in het vinden van (digitaal) beschikbare literatuur via geëigende zoeksystemen.
2. De afgestudeerde heeft inzicht in de beschikbaarheid van voor het vakgebied relevante (digitale) bronnen en tools.
3. De afgestudeerde heeft inzicht in hoe digitale gegevensverzamelingen tot stand zijn gekomen en hoe die gebruikt worden in digitale onderzoeksmethoden.
4. De afgestudeerde is in staat om te reflecteren over de maatschappelijke en wetenschappelijke gevolgen van digitalisering met betrekking tot het eigen vakgebied.

II Toepassen van kennis en inzicht

5. De afgestudeerde is in staat een goed afgebakende probleemstelling te formuleren.
6. De afgestudeerde kan voor het vakgebied vereiste kwalitatieve en/of kwantitatieve (digitale) technieken benutten om gegevens uit (digitale) bronnen te selecteren, te bewerken, te analyseren en/of te visualiseren.
7. De afgestudeerde is in staat om zelfstandig een origineel onderzoeksvoorstel te formuleren, waarbij verschillende bronnen, benaderingen en/of artefacten worden gecombineerd.

III Oordeelsvorming

8. De afgestudeerde heeft inzicht in de mogelijkheden en beperkingen van (digitale) (onderzoeks)bronnen en methoden in het eigen vakgebied, kan deze vergelijken en combineren met andere bronnen en methoden en kan er kritisch gebruik van maken.
9. De afgestudeerde is in staat op basis van eigen onderzoek een beargumenteerde conclusie te formuleren.

IV Communicatie

10. De afgestudeerde is bekend met verschillende moderne methoden en technieken van publicatie, ook in digitale en visuele vormen, en is bekend met de bijbehorende conventies en het bijbehorende vakjargon.
11. De afgestudeerde kan een beargumenteerde keuze maken uit digitale middelen voor mondelinge en schriftelijke presentatie van onderzoekswerk en die middelen gebruiken.
12. De afgestudeerde kan onderzoeksresultaten helder, overtuigend en beargumenteerd uiteenzetten.
13. De afgestudeerde kan actief deelnemen aan een vakinhoudelijke discussie.
14. De afgestudeerde is in staat om in teamverband doelen te realiseren.

V Leervaardigheden

15. De afgestudeerde heeft het vermogen om zelfstandig nieuwe vaardigheden aan te leren die nodig zijn om productief te kunnen werken met (digitale) bronnen en tools van het eigen vakgebied.
16. De afgestudeerde is in staat op constructieve wijze feedback te geven en te ontvangen, en kan gegronde kritiek verwerken tot een herziening van het eigen standpunt of de eigen argumentatie;
17. De afgestudeerde kan een realistische planning maken en zich houden aan overeengekomen planningen en prioritering.
18. De afgestudeerde is in staat te reflecteren op het eigen leerproces en functioneren, zowel zelfstandig als binnen een team, en op de eigen bijdrage aan een in teamverband ontwikkeld eindproduct

Afgestudeerden van de **Bachelor Latijns-Amerikastudies** hebben voorts de onderstaande eindkwalificaties bereikt, gerangschikt volgens de Dublin-descriptoren.

a) Kennis en inzicht Bachelors Latijns-Amerikastudies:

- ▷ beschikken over kennis van en inzicht in de culturen van Latijns-Amerika vanuit taalkundig, cultureel analytisch en geschiedkundig oogpunt;
- ▷ beschikken over kennis van en inzicht in de onderlinge verwevenheid van taal, cultuur en geschiedenis van Latijns-Amerika;
- ▷ beschikken over kennis van en inzicht in de hedendaagse geschiedenis van staat en maatschappij van Latijns-Amerika vanuit sociale, politieke en economische perspectieven;
- ▷ beschikken over kennis van en inzicht in de processen van beeldvorming in literatuur, film en andere culturele uitdrukkingsvormen;
- ▷ beschikken over kennis van en inzicht in de basisbegrippen van de fonologie, morfologie, syntaxis en semantiek en beschikken over kennis van en inzicht in de geografische, historische en sociale varianten van het Spaans of Portugees en de inheemse talen van Latijns-Amerika;

b) Toepassen kennis en inzicht

- ▷ zijn in staat onder deskundige begeleiding de onderzoeksmethodes van de geschiedenis, de taalkunde of de culturele analyse op het Latijns-Amerikaanse gebied toe te passen;
- ▷ zijn in staat hun kennis en inzicht in de geschiedenis, de taalkunde of de culturele analyse van het Latijns-Amerikaanse gebied te hanteren bij de studie van een specifiek thema en over dit onderzoek een gedegen werkstuk te schrijven;
- ▷ zijn in staat tot het schrijven van een wetenschappelijk verslag (ook in het Spaans of het Portugees van Latijns-Amerika).

c) Oordeelsvorming

- ▷ zijn in staat om correct, beargumenteerd en kritisch verslag te doen, in woord en geschrift, van de stand van zaken betreffende onderwerpen binnen één of meer deelgebieden van de Latijns-Amerikastudies;
- ▷ zijn in staat uit deze bevindingen verantwoorde conclusies te trekken.

B. Intended learning outcomes of the MA Latin American Studies:

Graduates of the master's programme have attained the following learning outcomes, listed according to the Dublin descriptors:

1. Knowledge and understanding

- a. Graduates possess comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the subjects which are central in one of the three tracks: Public Policies in Latin America; Cultural Analysis in Latin America; and Language Variation and Bilingualism in Latin America.
- b. Graduates have knowledge of the most important contemporary theoretical debates within the central theme of the track they have chosen, and they are able to critically reflect on those debates.

2. Application of knowledge and understanding

- a. Graduates have the ability to analyse the texts which are treated in the track they have chosen in a critical manner and to place these texts in their linguistic, cultural and/or historical context.
- b. Graduates are able to translate the acquired knowledge on key issues and the academic debates around them into relevant research questions, which in terms of content and scope can be studied through independent research.
- c. Graduates have a thorough knowledge of up-to-date research methods used in the followed path (such as interviewing techniques, cultural analysis, and so forth) and are able to use this knowledge in an independent way within the context of a concrete and feasible research design.
- d. Graduates are able to carry out independent research in the field of Latin American studies and possess the intercultural skills to work there or in the context of their research more broadly with relevant individuals and institutions.

3. Judgement

Graduates are able to make careful considerations about the academic merits and utility of academic arguments and of material that is at the basis of their research and subsequent final report.

Graduates can form a good judgment about the social, cultural and ethical aspects which should be taken into account when conducting and reporting about their research.

4. Communication

- a. Graduates are capable of making well-structured and clear oral presentations on an academic subject for an audience of specialists or non-specialists.
- b. Graduates are able to write scientific reports in Spanish, Portuguese or English.
- c. Graduates are able to present in a concise and clear manner the subject and the goals of their research to individuals and institutions which can contribute to this research.

5. Learning Skills

- a. Graduates possess the learning skills that enable them to pursue a follow-up study which demands a great amount of self-organisation and self-sufficiency.
- b. Graduates are able to apply the acquired knowledge, insights and skills in a work environment, even if it does not totally match the followed disciplinary path or if it is not related to the Latin American region.

Annex 3: Curriculum outline

Programme bachelor Latijns-Amerikastudies

First year

Vak	EC	Semester 1	Semester 2
Gemeenschappelijk semester 1			
Core Curriculum: Introduction to Linguistics	5		
Latijns-Amerika in woord en beeld, een inleiding	5		
Inleiding Moderne Geschiedenis van Latijns-Amerika	5		
Natievorming in Latijns-Amerika	5		
Gemeenschappelijk semester 2			
De talen van Latijns-Amerika	5		
Indigeneity in Latijns-Amerika	10		
Het beeld van de Ander (Latijns-Amerikastudies)	5		
Track Spaans			
Spaans 1	10		
Spaans 2	10		
Track Brazilië			
Portugees 1	10		
Portugees 2	10		

Second year

Vak	EC	Semester 1	Semester 2
Gemeenschappelijk			
Kerncurriculum: wetenschapsfilosofie	5		
Sociolinguïstiek en Dialectologie van Latijns-Amerika	5		
Track Spaans			
Cultures and Identities in Latin America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean	5		
Latin American International Relations	5		
Spaans 3	10		
Track Brazilië			
Nation and Imagination in Brazilian Literature, History, Arts and Culture (Latin American Studies)	10		
Portugees 3	10		
Buitenlandverblijf in Chili, Brazilië of Mexico Hoofdvakstudenten Latijns-Amerikastudies gaan in het tweede semester van het tweede jaar naar Chili, Brazilië of Mexico om vakken te volgen aan de Universidad Diego Portales (Santiago, Chili), de Universidade Federal De Santa Catarina (Florianópolis, Brazilië), de Universidade Federal Fluminense (Niterói, Brazilië) of de Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Mérida, Mexico). De colleges lopen ofwel vanaf begin februari tot eind juni/begin juli (Mexico), ofwel vanaf maart tot half juli (Chili), ofwel vanaf maart tot eind juni (Brazilië).			
Extra-curriculair			
> Portugees 4	10		
> Spaans 4	10		

Third year

Vak	EC	Semester 1	Semester 2
Verplichte vakken			
Latin America in the World	10		
Onderzoeksmethodologie Latijns-Amerikastudies	5		
Gebonden keuzevakken. Kies één van de volgende vakken:			
Kunst en politiek in Latijns-Amerika	5		
Bilingualism in the Hispanic and Portuguese speaking world (Latin American Studies)	5		
Economische processen in Latijns-Amerika	5		
Scriptieseminar: het scriptieseminar wordt trackspecifiek aangeboden in semester 2 en indien nodig aangeboden in semester 1 (gezamenlijk voor alle tracks).			
Bachelor scriptieseminar	0		
Bachelor scriptieseminar	0		
Bachelor Eindwerkstuk			
BA-eindwerkstuk Latijns-Amerikastudies	10		
Vrije keuzeruimte			
Keuzeruimte BA Latijns-Amerikastudies	30		

Programme master Latin American Studies

Semester	Courses		
Sem. 1	Theoretical seminar (Track specific courses) (10 EC)	Methodological seminar (Research seminar on topic of specialisation) (10 EC)	Field work in Latin America (10 EC)
Sem. 2	Elective (10 EC)	MA-Thesis (20 EC)	

While the MA LAS does not have formal specialisations, it does offer three study paths or tracks, in which students receive strong disciplinary training in dedicated courses:

1. Public Policies and Social Programmes in Latin America;
2. Cultural Analysis in Latin America and
3. Language Variation and Bilingualism.

Annex 4: Programme site visit

Cluster WO Regiostudies 1/ Area Studies 1 – site visit 1

Day 1: 3 November 2025

- **MA North American Studies (NAS)**
- **BA/MA African Studies (AS)**

8:30	8:45	Welcome
8:45	9:15	Internal panel discussion
9:15	9:45	Faculty management
9:45	10:30	Programme management MA NAS en BA/MA AS
10:30	11:00	Internal panel discussion
11:00	11:45	Students MA NAS
11:45	12:30	Lunch + internal panel discussion
12:30	13:15	Lecturers MA NAS
13:15	13:30	Internal panel discussion
13:30	14:15	Students BA/MA African Studies
14:15	14:30	Internal panel discussion
14:30	15:15	Lecturers BA/MA African Studies
15:15	15:30	Internal panel discussion
15:30	16:15	Board of Examiners BA/MA AS en MA NAS
16:15	16:30	Internal panel discussion
16:30	17:15	Development dialogue (2 parallel sessions)
17 :15	18 :00	Internal panel discussion / drafting findings + Additional questions programme management

Day 2: 4 November 2025

- **BA/MA Middle Eastern Studies (MOS)**
- **BA/MA Latin American Studies (LAS)**

8:30	9.00	Welcome + internal panel discussion
9:00	9:45	Programme management BA/MA MOS en BA/MA LAS
09:45	10.15	Internal panel discussion
10.15	11.00	Students BA/MA MOS
11:00	11:15	Internal panel discussion
11.15	12.00	Lecturers BA/MA MOS
12:00	12:45	Lunch + internal panel discussion
12.45	13.30	Students BA/MA LAS
13:30	14:00	Internal panel discussion
14.00	14.45	Lecturers BA/MA LAS
14:45	15.00	Internal panel discussion
15.00	15:45	Board of Examiners BA/MA MOS en BA/MA LAS
15:45	16.00	Internal panel discussion
16:00	16:45	Development dialogue (2 parallel sessions)
16.45	18.00	Internal panel discussion / drafting findings + Additional questions programme management

Day 3: 5 November 2025

- **BA/MA Russian Studies (RUS)**

8:30	8:45	Welcome
08:45	09.30	Internal panel discussion
09.30	10.00	Programme management BA/MA RUS
10.00	10:15	Internal panel discussion
10.15	11.00	Lecturers BA/MA RUS
11.00	11.45	Students BA/MA RUS
11.45	12:00	Internal panel discussion
12:00	12.30	Board of Examiners (BA/MA RUS)
12.30	13.15	Lunch
13.15	15.00	Internal panel discussion / drafting findings
14.30	15.00	Additional questions programme management
15:00	15:45	Development dialogue (BA/MA RUS)
15.45	16.30	Final management meeting for all programmes
16:30	17.15	Internal panel discussion
17.15	17.30	Oral report

Annex 5: Documents

Self-evaluation reports and annex

- Self-evaluation report BA Latijns-Amerikastudies & MA Latin American Studies

The digital appendices to the self-evaluation reports are listed below:

- A. Faculty of Humanities 2025 – concise description of the Faculty of Humanities' organisation.
- B. Prospectus BA and MA Latin American Studies (*Studiegidsen*)
- C. Description of the contents of the programme components, with a specification of the learning outcomes, objectives, teaching methods used, method of assessment, assigned literature, teaching staff and number of study credits.
- D. Educational Dashboard (Onderwijsdashboard) – access via guest account.
- E. Course and Examination Regulations
 1. BA and MA Faculty regulations (general stipulations)
 2. BA and MA Latin American Studies (programme-specific stipulations)
- F. Staff overview Latin American Studies
- G. Assessment plan BA and MA Latin American Studies
- H. Rules and Regulations of the Board of Examiners
- I. Vision on Teaching and Learning Leiden University and Faculty of Humanities
- J. Manuals
 1. Guide to Teaching Quality Assurance
 2. Manual for Board of Examiners
 3. Teaching Evaluation Framework
 4. Manual for Programme Committees
 5. Faculty of Humanities Assessment Framework
- K. Thesis Assessment at the Faculty of Humanities

Additional documentation

- AI guide for teachers FGW Leiden University
- Implementing AI in your curriculum FGW Leiden University
- Guidelines for Student Use of Generative AI FGW University Leiden
- Annual Reports of the Board of Examiners
- Minutes of the Programme Committee
- Annual reports BA and MA Latin American Studies

Selection of final products

Prior to the site visit, the panel reviewed fifteen final projects from the bachelor's programme in Latin American Studies. The programme does not offer any specialisations. The selection ensured a balanced distribution in terms of grades, topics, and supervisors.

Grade Range	Number of theses	Selected
5,5-6,9 sufficient	4	2
7,0-8,4 good	44	10
8,5-10 very good	8	3
Total	56	15

The details of the reviewed final projects are known to Odion Onderzoek and are available upon request.

Selection of final products

Prior to the site visit, the panel reviewed fifteen final projects from the master's programme in Latin American Studies. The programme does not offer any specialisations. The selection ensured a balanced distribution in terms of grades, topics, and supervisors.

Grade Range	Number of theses	Selected
5,5-6,9 sufficient	4	2
7,0-8,4 good	24	8
8,5-10 very good	16	5
Total	44	15

The details of the reviewed final projects are known to Odion Onderzoek and are available upon request.