

Bachelor Midden-Oosten Studies
Master Middle Eastern Studies
University of Groningen
Assessment Report

27 maart 2026



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1. SUMMARY

This report describes the programme assessment of the bachelor programme Midden-Oosten Studies (Middle Eastern Studies) and the master programme Middle Eastern Studies, offered by the University of Groningen.

Standard 1 – Intended Learning Outcomes

The panel values the clear and well-defined profile of both the bachelor and master programme in Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Groningen. The bachelor programme offers a broad, multidisciplinary approach, reflected in the combination of language acquisition, academic and personal skills, and substantive knowledge in the fields of history, politics, culture and religion. The panel notes positively that the intended Arabic learning outcomes have been specified at course level.

The master programme is characterised by a research-driven and multidisciplinary approach with an explicit focus on conflict in the modern Middle East. Although the learning outcomes themselves have not yet been revised to reflect the conflict-centred orientation, the panel acknowledges that this thematic focus has already been embedded in course content and assessment since 2022. It recommends embedding the programme's conflict-centred profile explicitly in the intended learning outcomes of the master programme when revising the intended learning outcomes for 2026-2027.

For both programmes, the panel considers the intended learning outcomes to be clearly formulated, coherent, and aligned with the relevant Dublin descriptors (NLQF 6 and 7). The programmes show alignment with international benchmarks such as the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement on Area Studies. The panel also welcomes the initiative of establishing an Advisory Council and encourages the programmes to involve this council in the redesign of the master's intended learning outcomes and in the implementation of curriculum changes, such as the faculty-wide bachelor courses.

Standard 2 – Teaching-learning environment

Overall, the panel concludes that both programmes provide a stimulating and supportive academic environment and enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes at the required level.

The panel finds that the bachelor and master programmes in Middle Eastern Studies offer coherent, well-structured curricula built around clearly defined learning pathways. In the bachelor programme, the pathways of thematic knowledge and understanding, language proficiency, and academic and transferable skills are thoughtfully integrated. Students progress from introductory courses in the first year to advanced thematic modules and research seminars in later years. The integration of Arabic language training with content-based courses has improved since the previous accreditation, supporting

students' engagement with primary sources. The semester abroad, facilitated through accredited partnerships, is well organized and a highlight for most of the students.

The master curriculum is coherent and thematically focused on conflict and contemporary developments in the Middle East. Core courses draw on multiple disciplinary approaches, while the internship or tutorial in the second semester allows students to apply their academic skills in professional or research-oriented settings. The internship in the master programme is seen as a particularly strong element that provides students with real-life experience in the professional field. Although internships can be challenging to arrange, the staff's support, guidance, and networks significantly benefit students who are eager to find suitable internships.

Across both programmes, the learning environment is small-scale, interactive, and student-centred. Teaching methods include seminars, group discussions, and field visits, supported by up-to-date study materials and active discussion of current events in the Middle East. Students emphasize the safe and inclusive atmosphere, especially given the sensitivity of the events in the Middle East. The programmes' proactive approach to integrating generative AI, particularly through reflection assignments and AI literacy within academic skills courses, is viewed positively by the panel.

The panel finds that the programmes are feasible, though demanding at certain moments, especially in the master due to the internship–thesis combination. Improvements in thesis supervision have contributed to better completion rates. Study guidance mechanisms, including mentoring in the bachelor and accessible study advisers, function effectively.

The teaching staff form a small but committed team with strong research expertise and high student appreciation. Their efforts to create an engaging and safe learning environment are commendable. The panel advises enhancing calibration practices in thesis assessment to ensure greater consistency.

Standard 3 – student assessment

The programmes have developed a coherent, well designed and consistently implemented assessment system, ensuring fairness, transparency, and alignment with the intended learning outcomes. The system is grounded in the university-wide assessment policy. Annual assessment plans and course-level assessment matrices ensure systematic alignment between assessment methods, learning outcomes, and curriculum structure.

A broad variety of assessment forms is used in both programmes with increasing complexity across the bachelor curriculum and research-intensive assignments in the master programme. Students report being well informed about assessment criteria and receiving useful feedback. Course syllabi clearly communicate assessment formats, criteria and deadlines.

Thesis assessment procedures are robust and transparent. The bachelor and master theses are assessed using assessment forms, applied independently by two examiners. These forms provide detailed criteria linked to learning outcomes and require structured commentary. Students appreciate the clarity of the criteria, although the panel notes that qualitative comments are sometimes brief. While the process is robust, the panel observes that their assessment of some bachelor theses differed from the assessment of staff members, where weaker theses occasionally received higher grades than stronger ones. The panel recommends systematic grade calibration, for example through structured calibration of grading practices, double-grading near-failing components, mentoring of new staff by experienced examiners.

The Faculty-wide Board of Examiners, working with disciplinary expert teams, safeguards validity, reliability, and compliance with institutional regulations. The panel finds the Board active and committed but advises it to extend its focus from procedural monitoring to fostering discussions on the content of the assessment and the quality of the rubrics, including calibration across programmes and dissemination of good practices. The panel encourages the Board of Examiners to take a more proactive role in coordinating discussions and sharing good practices related to GenAI across the faculty.

Standard 4 – achieved learning outcomes

Based on the quality of the bachelor and master theses, the discussions the panel had with students and alumni, and reports about student and alumni success provided by the programme, the panel concludes that alumni of the bachelor and master programmes Middle Eastern Studies achieve the intended learning outcomes.

The panel commends the introduction of the bachelor thesis seminar and improved supervision structure for the master thesis.

For the bachelor thesis, the panel recommends paying continued attention to grade calibration and the alignment between thesis topics, the programme focus and the methodological quality of the work. As several bachelor theses were found to be predominantly descriptive, the panel recommends supporting students in formulating clear, analytically oriented research questions. The panel further encourages the programme to stimulate and possibly require the use of Arabic sources, in line with the programme's distinctive focus on Arabic language proficiency.

Master theses consistently meet the expectations for this level, displaying clear research questions, solid theoretical frameworks, and in several cases high levels of originality, methodological rigour, and societal relevance.

Bachelor alumni are well prepared for admission to a broad range of master programmes in the humanities and social sciences, and some enter the professional field. Master graduates demonstrate

strong performance in diverse sectors including government, NGOs, security, and academia. The compulsory internship contributes substantially to their labour-market readiness, as confirmed by alumni.

Evaluating this, the panel reaches the advice 'positive' to the NVAO for the accreditation of the bachelor programme Midden-Oosten Studies (Middle Eastern Studies) and the master programme Middle Eastern Studies, at the University of Groningen.

The chair and secretary 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.

Utrecht, 27 March 2026



Prof. Dr. Gert Buelens
(Chair)



Drs. Marjolein Boessenkool
(Secretary)

2. INTRODUCTION

Procedure

The University of Groningen has appointed Odion Onderzoek to coordinate the external quality assessment of the bachelor programmes American Studies and Midden-Oosten Studies (Middle Eastern Studies) and the master programmes North-American Studies and Middle Eastern Studies. This assessment was conducted in the context of the accreditation of a cluster of programmes: WO Regiostudies I. The cluster consists of 24 programmes offered by four different institutions: Radboud University, the University of Groningen, University of Amsterdam and Leiden University. Dr. Alexandra Paffen served as cluster coordinator on behalf of Odion Onderzoek until August 1st 2025. She was succeeded by Julia Roosenboom MSc.

The assessment was conducted in accordance with the procedures and standards of the NVAO's "Assessment Framework for the Accreditation System of Higher Education in the Netherlands" (Government Gazette 2024, no. 6405). The programmes within the cluster Regiostudies I are existing programmes, and all institutions involved hold a positive institutional audit decision on quality assurance.

In consultation with the programmes, Odion Onderzoek composed a panel of peers (assessment panel) to carry out the assessment of the programmes at the University of Groningen:

- Prof. Dr. G. (Gert) Buelens (chair), professor of English and American literature, Universiteit Gent;
- Prof. Dr. C.R. (Christian) Lange (panel member), professor of Arabic and Islamic studies Utrecht University;
- Prof. Dr. E. (Esther) Peeren (panel member), professor of Cultural Analysis, University of Amsterdam;
- W. (Wladimir) Riphagen MA (panel member), Policy Advisor Ministry of Foreign Affairs and PhD candidate, University of Amsterdam
- R.J. (Rashed) Nazrabi BA (student member), master student Middle Eastern Studies at Leiden University;
- Prof. Dr. D. (Damian) Pargas (external reader), Professor of History and Culture of North America, Leiden University;
- Prof. Dr. G.A (Gerard) Wiegers (external reader) Professor of History and Comparative Study of Religions at University of Amsterdam.

The panel was supported by Marjolein Boessenkool as secretary. She has appropriate experience as NVAO-certified secretary. The NVAO reviewed the accountability form concerning the composition of the panel and concluded that the panel met the required expertise criteria. In addition, the panel

members, the institution, and the secretaries submitted written declarations confirming that the panel and secretaries would carry out their tasks independently. On 21 October 2025 the NVAO approved the proposed panel composition.

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 received instructions during a cluster-wide kick-off meeting, where the cluster coordinator and chair informed them about the content and purpose of the assessment framework, as well as the procedure, intended attitude, working methods, and timeline within the cluster.

Prior to the site visit, the programmes submitted a list of recent graduates for each programme to the secretary. In consultation with the secretary, the panel chair selected fifteen final projects per programme, taking into account a spread of final grades, assessors, and programme specializations. The panel reviewed the selected final projects and accompanying assessment forms, as well as the self-evaluation reports of the programmes. The panel assessed the theses in accordance with the NVAO guidelines for the review of final projects (Implementation Regulations, September 2024). An overview of the reviewed materials, including the selected theses, is provided in Annex 5.

After studying the documentation, the panel members formulated their initial impressions and shared these with the secretary. The secretary compiled the input and distributed the compilation to the full panel. During a preparatory meeting on 10 November 2025, the panel discussed these impressions and identified key topics to address during the site visit.

Faculty and students of the programmes were informed in advance by the faculty about the opportunity to speak with the panel in confidence. Interested participants could register with the secretary. A week prior to the site visit, an open consultation hour was scheduled for registered participants. Since no responses were received, the open consultation hour was cancelled.

The panel visited the University of Groningen on 19 and 20 November 2025. The draft programme of the site visit, including representative interviewees, was submitted by the programmes to the chair and the secretary for approval. Further information about the visit schedule is provided in Annex 4.

At the end of the site visit, the panel formed its independent judgement on the programmes, based on the four standards of the NVAO's assessment framework for the accreditation of existing programmes (2024). The chair presented the panel's main conclusions in a public oral feedback session. The

development dialogue took place during the site visit. A separate report was drafted and adopted by the panel chair.

This final report provides a systematic account of the panel's findings, considerations, and conclusions. After the site visit, the secretary 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 the University of Groningen for a check of factual inaccuracies. After processing any corrections, the report was finalized and approved by the chair.

Institution

The programmes are offered by the University of Groningen and part of the Faculty of Arts. The Faculty of Arts is a broad arts faculty with over 5,000 students and 700 staff members. The faculty has a diverse educational offering of 16 Bachelor programmes and more than 40 Master tracks within 20 Master's programmes. The university sees it as its mission to offer students a challenging and activating learning environment that matches their talents and ambitions and prepares them for the often global labour market, where they will participate as professionals equipped with appropriate academic knowledge and skills and an awareness of and sensitivity to intercultural diversity.

The Institute of Education (OWI), led by the OWI director, is responsible for the organisation of education and quality assurance within the Faculty of Arts. To facilitate decision-making with regard to the organisation and staffing of education at a more local level, education is organized into five clusters of (more or less) related programmes. The programmes in Middle Eastern Studies are situated within cluster 4, together with the programmes in Archaeology, American Studies, Classics and History.

Programmes

The profile of the bachelor programme in Middle Eastern Studies is characterized by a broad focus on four main themes: history, politics, culture and religion. The emphasis is on the modern Middle East and the historical, political, cultural and religious embedding of contemporary developments. According to the programme, these thematic key points, in combination with designated academic skills, are the basis for a broad academic education of the students. The programme amounts to 180 EC and is offered full-time.

Because of, among other things, a decrease in student numbers and recent budget cuts, the faculty has developed plans to streamline the curricula of all bachelor programmes. From 2026-2027 onwards faculty-wide courses with a total amount of 20 EC will be introduced in all programmes.

The master programme in Middle Eastern Studies aims to deliver specialised experts who can help meet the increasing demand for experts able to address the many Middle East-related challenges facing both the region itself and our society. The one-year programme is an area study with an annual influx of around 20 students from different bachelor degree programmes in the Netherlands and abroad.

The profile of the programme is characterised by a multidisciplinary and research-driven approach to contemporary developments in the Middle East, with particular emphasis on the theme of conflicts from both regional and international perspectives. In line with the profile of the bachelor degree programme, this includes both Israel and the Muslim world; Judaism and Islam.

The administrative information of the programmes and institution are incorporated in annex 1.

Developments since the last accreditation

The last accreditation of the programmes took place in 2019, where both programmes received a positive assessment. The panel made the following recommendations and suggestions.

Bachelor Midden-Oosten Studies

- The panel recommends to specify, on the basis of any system, the intended level in the regional languages Arabic and Hebrew more precisely.
- The panel wholeheartedly supports the ambitions of teachers to further integrate the substantive learning trajectory with the language learning trajectory and recommends that these ambitions be given ample space.
- The panel also recommends that the theories and methodologies of the disciplines on which the programme is based (history, political science, cultural studies and religious studies) be more explicitly named and distinguished from each other.
- It is important to align the level of the courses during the semester abroad with the level that students have already achieved in Groningen. Students who choose not to go abroad should also be offered the opportunity to obtain the same language level in the Netherlands as those who do go abroad.
- The panel did not always find the final grades for the theses clearly traceable from the judgements on subcategories. This can be remedied by redesigning the assessment forms for the theses, which the panel recommends to the programme. The forms should force examiners to properly substantiate their assessments in writing.

Master Middle Eastern Studies

- The panel recommends including the focus on conflicts explicitly in the intended learning outcomes. It encourages the programme in its plans to install an advisory board.
- However, the internships pose a problem at this moment. Firstly, many students do not succeed in finding a placement. Secondly, if they do find an internship, it often takes up much more time than is officially allotted to it in the curriculum. They are forced to exceed their

nominal study time, which could undermine the feasibility of the programme. The panel recommends fixing this situation.

- The panel recommends that the programme continue on this path and possibly eliminate written exams as an assessment mode altogether in the future.
- The panel recommends applying the programme's laudable focus on conflicts to the master theses as well.

The programmes reflected on the recommendations and the follow-up actions in their self-assessment report. The current panel has investigated how the programmes have implemented these recommendations and discussed this during the site visit. The panel assesses that all recommendations have been implemented adequately initiating a positive development, although at present the focus on conflict is only visible in course materials, but not in the formal intended learning outcomes. This assessment will be further substantiated under the related standards.

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 of the programmes

Bachelor programme

The bachelor programme in Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Groningen aims to deliver academically trained, broadly informed and committed experts on the Middle East, who are able to analyse relevant social and academic developments related to the region and contribute to constructive debates and solutions.

The programme focuses on the contemporary Middle East and has chosen a multidisciplinary approach to the region. The programme's profile is characterised by a focus on four main themes: history, politics, culture and religion. In addition to substantive knowledge and academic skills, students learn Modern Standard Arabic. Through a minor, they can forge their own study path by broadening their expertise or preparing for the labour market. The programme distinguishes itself from other programmes in Middle Eastern Studies by its combination of a thematic profile with a focus on both the Arab world, and Israel, Iran and Turkey in the modern and contemporary Middle East, and on language acquisition.

Where other programmes in the field focus more on language acquisition (e.g. Arabic Language and Culture, University of Amsterdam), concentrate on one of the themes (e.g. Bachelor *Islam and Arabic*, Utrecht University) or offer programmes that focus on themes or language acquisition (e.g. Middle Eastern Studies, University of Leuven) and on Arabic Studies or Hebrew Studies (e.g. Middle Eastern Studies, University of Amsterdam), the Groningen profile is characterised by a broader combination of thematic modules and language proficiency.

Master programme

The aim of the master programme Middle Eastern Studies is to deliver experts who are able to describe, analyse and interpret developments in the modern and contemporary Middle East and to make constructive contributions to current academic research and social debates related to the region. The programme is characterised by a research-driven and multidisciplinary approach to contemporary

developments in the Middle East, with particular emphasis on conflicts, from both a regional and an international perspective. It focuses on both Israel and the Muslim world, and on both Judaism and Islam. It distinguishes itself on the one hand from other master programmes in Middle Eastern Studies (e.g. in Leiden and Amsterdam) by its explicitly defined focus on conflicts, and on the other hand from master programmes in the field of conflict studies (e.g. Religion, Conflict and Globalisation in Groningen and Global Conflicts in the Modern Era in Leiden) by its focus on the Middle East.

Both programmes comply with the relevant domains' international benchmarks, for example the QAA Subject Benchmark Statements for Area Studies (April 2024), English (September 2023), History (March 2022), and Communication, Media, Film, and Cultural Studies (April 2024).

The panel greatly appreciates the profile of the bachelor and the master programme in Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Groningen. It finds the focus on the contemporary Middle East and the attention to multiple regional perspectives, topical and relevant. This makes the programmes a valuable addition to the Dutch educational landscape. The panel also appreciates the programmes' multidisciplinary approach. For the bachelor programme this is reflected in the combination of language acquisition, academic and personal skills, and substantive knowledge in the fields of history, politics, culture and religion. For the master programme this is reflected in the thematic focus on conflict in combination with advanced academic skills.

Based on the documentation and the conversations during the site visit, the panel finds that the programmes offer a broad and solid academic foundation in Middle Eastern Studies, which is underpinned by the diverse specializations of the staff. The panel considers the programme to be of great societal importance. Given the geopolitical relevance of the Middle East, the growing Muslim community in the Netherlands and the cultural-historical importance of the region for European history and culture, there is a need for graduates who know and understand this region. The panel also believes that the programme manages to find a good balance between thematic breadth and depth.

Intended learning outcomes

The intended learning outcomes of both programmes are described in Annex 2.

Bachelor programme

The bachelor programme has defined 20 intended learning outcomes across five categories which align with the Dublin-descriptors. These learning outcomes are in line with the intended learning outcomes of other area studies programmes, but at the same time give substance to the programme's own profile. For example, the first intended learning outcome is that the graduate demonstrably has 'knowledge of and insight into the four focal points of the programme'. The intended learning outcomes in the field of knowledge application emphasise transferable academic skills (such as setting up and conducting one's

own research) and transferable personal skills (such as showing initiative, being able to be an effective member and leader of a team and being original in analysis and argumentation).

The programme has followed the advice of the previous panel by specifying the intended learning outcomes for Arabic language proficiency, but chose to do so in the learning outcomes of the individual courses. In doing so, the programme switched to the (American) ACTFL system, which enables better than other systems (e.g. the previously used CEFR) the specification of the required levels of Arabic per skill and fits well with the teaching methods used and any follow-up courses (e.g. at Nederlands-Vlaams Instituut in Cairo or the American University in Cairo). The intended final level for reading, listening, writing and speaking skills is now specified for each language proficiency course.

The self-assessment report mentioned that an Advisory Council (Raad van Advies) has been set up to advise the programmes on the profile, the intended learning outcomes and the curriculum from the labour market perspective.

The panel commends this initiative and advises the programme to involve this council in the further development of the curriculum, to safeguard continued coherence and alignment between the expectations of the professional field, the programme profile, the intended learning outcomes and the curriculum.

The intended learning outcomes are, according to the panel, coherently phrased and align well with the level of a bachelor programme (NLQF 6) as defined by the Dublin descriptors, as well as with the international orientation of the field of Middle Eastern Studies as defined by the QAA benchmarks. The link between the learning outcomes and the four focal points of the programme is clearly made.

Master programme

The master programme has defined 20 intended learning outcomes across five categories which align with the Dublin-descriptors. The 'applying knowledge and understanding' category is mainly concerned with academic skills, such as 'the ability to deal with complex issues' and 'the ability to scientifically investigate the relationship between characteristics of the western world and the Middle East'. The 'learning skills' category clearly outlines skills for successful professional practice, such as 'showing initiative and personal responsibility' and 'being able to make decisions in complex and unpredictable situations'.

The advice of the previous panel to mention the conflict-centred approach within the learning outcomes has been taken to heart within individual courses: staff members, since 2022, have worked to integrate this thematic focus in their courses and assessments. The revision of the programme learning outcomes themselves has been postponed for different reasons (including the COVID-pandemic, educational reforms and budget cuts), and is planned for the coming year. The implementation of this revision in 2026-2027 will also align the learning outcomes with the planned programme changes. The panel advises

the programme to take the opportunity to explicitly embed the programme's conflict-centred profile in the master programme's intended learning outcomes.

As for the bachelor, the panel advises to involve the Advisory Council in the further development of the curriculum, to safeguard continued coherence and alignment between the expectations of the professional field, the programme profile, the intended learning outcomes and the curriculum.

The intended learning outcomes are, according to the panel, clearly formulated and align well with the level of a master programme (NLQF 7) as defined by the Dublin descriptors, as well as with the international orientation of the field of Middle Eastern Studies as defined by the QAA benchmarks.

Conclusion

The panel greatly appreciates the profile of the bachelor and master programme in Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Groningen. It finds the focus on the modern and contemporary Middle East and the attention to both the Arab world and Israel, Iran and Turkey in the modern and contemporary Middle East, topical and relevant. This makes the programmes a valuable addition to the Dutch educational landscape. The panel also appreciates the programmes' multidisciplinary approach. For the bachelor programme this is reflected in the combination of language acquisition, academic and personal skills, and substantive knowledge in the fields of history, politics, culture and religion. For the master programme this is reflected in the thematic focus on conflict in combination with advanced academic skills.

The panel considers the intended learning outcomes for the bachelor and the master programme in Middle Eastern Studies to be comprehensively and clearly formulated and of an appropriate orientation and level. The learning outcomes fit well with the profile of the programmes. The panel particularly appreciates that both academic and professional skills are clearly outlined. It recommends embedding the programme's conflict-centred profile explicitly in the intended learning outcomes of the master programme. The panel welcomes the planned alignment of the intended learning outcomes for 2026-2027 with the programme's conflict-centred approach and the forthcoming programme changes.

The panel commends the initiative of both programmes to set up an Advisory Council and advises them to involve this council in the redesign of the master's intended learning outcomes and in the implementation of curriculum changes, such as the faculty-wide bachelor courses.

Based on the interviews and the review of the underlying documentation, the panel concludes that the programmes **meet standard 1: Intended learning outcomes**.

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

2.1. Curriculum

Bachelor programme

The bachelor programme consists of 180 EC (a major of 150 EC and a minor of 30 EC) and is structured along three learning pathways: 1. Substantive knowledge, insight and understanding; 2. Language proficiency; 3. Academic and transferable skills.

The foundations for the learning pathways are laid in the first year of the bachelor programme, after which they are explored in greater depth in the second and third years and increasingly interconnected. The first year is characterised by introductory courses, while the second and third years consist mainly of advanced courses and research seminars, in which the core themes and learning pathways come together. This illustrates the increasing depth and complexity within the programme. A full overview of the curriculum can be found in Annex 3.

The content-based learning pathway focuses primarily on the four main themes of the programme: history, politics, culture and religion. In the first year, broad introductory modules are offered around these themes. The second and third years consist of courses that build on the introductory courses and increasingly connect the knowledge, insights and theories acquired there.

The language proficiency learning pathway consists of six courses of Modern Standard Arabic in the first three semesters (30 EC). The combination of intensive language training and supervision in small groups, digital self-study and weekly assignments lays a solid foundation for the semester abroad during the fourth semester (second year). Students then visit a university, or an accredited institution in the Middle East for one semester. The programme is determined in advance on the basis of a so-called *EC Learning Agreement* and submitted to the Examination Board for approval. The Examination Board grants standard approval to the programmes of the Dutch-Flemish Institute in Cairo, Egypt (NVIC) and the Dutch Institute in Rabat, Morocco (NIMAR). The panel learned from the students that almost all students participate in the semester abroad programme and consider it a highlight of the curriculum. Students who are unable or unwilling to participate choose a course package of 30 EC related to Middle Eastern Studies, which must be approved by the Examination Board.

The panel regrets the fact that Hebrew language courses are no longer offered due to waning interest and is concerned about the future of the language options for students in the faculty.

At the time of the previous accreditation the programme had started a stronger integration of language proficiency and content-based courses. The panel is positive about the development as it sees that assignments in the language proficiency courses are aligned with other courses, for example in the form of translation assignments of texts that are related in content. At the same time students work more with Arabic sources in the thematic courses. For example, in Culture and Soft Power in the Middle East, Arabic songs and films are discussed, and in Literature in the Modern Middle East, Arabic texts are read by students who have taken Arabic (and translations by the others).

The academic skills learning pathway takes shape in two courses in the first year and is interwoven with the thematic modules in later years. In semester 1 (Academic Skills Middle Eastern Studies 1), students learn how to search for and evaluate research material via the library and the internet, how to use literature and artificial intelligence, how to compile literature references, and how to identify and reflect on a historiographical debate. They further develop these skills in the second semester of the first year (Academic Skills Middle Eastern Studies 2). Particularly in this course, but also within a number of thematic modules, explicit attention is paid to various academic disciplines and associated theories and methodologies, as was advised by the previous panel. Students are introduced to a number of common research methods, independently set up a research project based on a central research question and present this research in a research paper. Oral presentation skills follow a similar structure. In the second and third years, students conduct more extensive research and present it both orally and in writing. The programme is designed in such a way that different skills are covered in each block and the level of difficulty increases.

The capstone of the bachelor is the thesis of 10 EC. The panel discussed several aspects of the thesis with the students and staff. Since the previous accreditation it has for example become compulsory for students to use primary sources to strengthen their academic skills. Also, the staff encourages the use of source material in Arabic. This is however not compulsory as the staff sees that it is not fitting for all topics, nor for all students. Several developments in the curriculum do stimulate students to use Arabic for their thesis. As the thematic courses are better aligned with the language proficiency, students read more course material in Arabic and are therefore more used to working with Arabic material. The compulsory primary sources used in the thesis are by consequence more often in Arabic.

Based on the documentation and conversations during the site visit, the panel observes that the bachelor programme demonstrates a clear and coherent structure through the three well-thought-out learning pathways. This structure ensures that students acquire knowledge across various facets and disciplines.

Because of the decrease in student numbers and the recent budget cuts, the faculty has developed plans to streamline the curricula of all bachelor programmes and to introduce faculty-wide courses of in total

20 EC in all programmes. The panel discussed the consequences of this development for the curriculum with the students and staff. They all regret the loss of specific Middle Eastern Studies courses, but are engaging actively in the development of the new courses. Students see possibilities to cooperate more with students from different programmes. The panel understands the faculty's stated reasons for scaling down education, as well as the reservations of the students and staff to exchange 20 EC of Middle Eastern Studies courses for general ones. It commends the active and positive engagement of the staff with this development. The panel advises the programme to reassess the alignment of the intended learning outcomes, the curriculum and the assessment criteria of the thesis in view of the implementation of the faculty-wide courses.

Master programme

The first semester of the master curriculum consists of five compulsory courses: 'Conflicts in the Middle East' (10 EC), 'International Organisations, Governance and the Middle East' (5 EC), 'Contemporary Developments in the Middle East' (5 EC), 'Understanding Sectarianism and Minorities in the Middle East: A Global approach' (5 EC) and 'Memory, Heritage and Politics in the MENA' (5 EC). In the second semester, the students do either an internship or a tutorial (10 EC) and write their master thesis (20 EC).

The modules complement each other and combine three learning pathways: thematic knowledge and understanding, academic skills, and practical skills. The focus on contemporary developments in the Middle East – conflicts in particular – is central to all the courses. Each course focuses on particular aspects of the theme of conflict. The courses all contribute to the programme's multidisciplinary character.

The courses also train students in several theoretical approaches and methodologies. For example, 'International Organisations, Governance and the Middle East' brings theoretical approaches and methodologies from the political sciences to international organisations and to regional governance in the Middle East. 'Understanding Sectarianism and Minorities' focuses on historical and anthropological approaches, while social scientific approaches and methods are central to 'Conflicts in the Middle East'.

Lastly, the courses contribute to the development of practical skills and job market orientation by training students in communication skills as well as analytical and synthesising skills and by informing them about job market opportunities. In contrast to the bachelor programme Middle Eastern Studies, language skills in Arabic are not part of the master programme. Students who have already mastered these languages can, however, further develop them in individual assignments as well as in tutorials and the thesis.

The second semester is dedicated to the internship and the thesis, where students are trained to apply theoretical knowledge in practice. Students inform the panel that they appreciate the internship, but that it can be challenging to find placements, as the Groningen area does not have many possibilities. The information and support for the internship has improved. The staff helps students find internships

with information, suggestions and contacts, also abroad. As an alternative, students can opt for a tutorial such as working with a staff member on a publication or a PhD or grant proposal. The panel agrees with the students that the staff do a lot to help students find research-oriented internships and tutorials, providing them with information, suggestions and contacts.

The panel finds that the master programme, covering core courses, an internship and a thesis, offers students a clear structure. This structure allows students to achieve all learning outcomes. Students have ample freedom to creatively develop projects suiting their personal interests, reflecting a student-centred approach. The programme has a clear focus on conflict that is well reflected in the curriculum components.

2.2. Learning environment

Vision on teaching

The programme places the international faculty's research expertise at the heart of its teaching, and trains students to carry out interdisciplinary Middle Eastern Studies research themselves. The staff as much as possible teaches face-to-face in small groups. This allows for intensive interaction between students and instructors, as well as between individual students during joint assignments. As explained in the self-assessment report, the learning experience is increasingly problem- or task-based, requiring students to develop and apply independent learning and research skills over the course of the curriculum. During the interviews, students expressed strong appreciation for this activating approach and the intensive contact they have with the staff. Students also mentioned that the staff incorporates current events and developments in the courses. The panel was impressed by the shared vision on teaching the staff displayed during the interviews and the flexible way of adapting course content to current events in the Middle East.

Teaching methods

Both programmes use a variety of teaching methods to activate different learning styles and to highlight various aspects of Middle Eastern Studies. Teaching methods include a variety of "active learning" methods, including presentations and discussions, visits to archives and cultural institutions, and seminar-based teaching. The panel values the observation of the students that staff makes sure that study material and course content is constantly updated and adapted to current events in the Middle East.

The students praise the small-scale, interactive teaching methods in both the bachelor and master programmes. The students emphasize the efforts of the staff to create a safe learning environment and the opportunities created to discuss difficult topics, including the current situation in the Middle East.

The panel is impressed by the efforts the staff makes to provide this safe space and discuss with the students how to engage in a respectful academic debate with each other.

The bachelor programme features 12 to 14 contact hours per week in the first year, plus several mentor meetings, decreasing to around 8 contact hours per week in the second and third year and one-on-one thesis supervision in the final semester. The master programme starts with about 8 contact hours per week during the first semester, with individual supervision in the thesis-writing phase. Small class sizes in both programmes enable close interaction between students and lecturers, fostering personalized feedback and academic support.

In the bachelor programme, students can tailor their own study path, following their interests by choosing a minor programme, a semester abroad, and electives. The University and the Faculty of Arts offer several minors, including a career-oriented minor.

The panel found that the students in the master programme also have a lot of autonomy and can choose their own direction within the seminars and in the internship. The staff aims to deepen and broaden the students' understanding of the material by encouraging extensive group interaction, students contributing input based on their own reading, which facilitates their autonomous processing of the seminar topics. All courses of the first semester are taught in four-hour blocks, integrating lecture and seminar as teaching methods.

The students praised the small-scale interactive seminars as well as the opportunities to make individual choices in the seminars. In the Student Chapter they note that the staff informs students about career opportunities by giving information and organizing guest lectures with academics working in relevant organisations and sectors, such as the United Nations, the foreign ministry or journalism. The internship, too, is considered a strong point.

Generative AI

Concerning the use of GenAI, students and staff mention that it is rapidly evolving. Every syllabus has information about the responsible use of AI and the staff has introduced assignments that ask students to reflect on the use and results provided by GenAI, for example in the Academic Skills courses. Students and staff informed the panel that they actively experiment with GenAI, for example to critically evaluate generated translations, or by integrating reflection on AI-generated results in assessments. The idea to incorporate AI-literacy in the Academic Skills course is laudable. The panel notes that AI literacy is becoming an increasingly relevant academic competence and compliments the programme on its proactive approach.

Intake and admission

The admission requirements for the bachelor programme require students to hold a Dutch VWO diploma, a propaedeutic or final diploma from a Dutch university of applied sciences, or a propaedeutic or final diploma from a Dutch university. The Faculty of Arts believes that students can decide for themselves whether they match with their chosen programme based on the available information, by visiting the Open Days, and by participating in a Webclass and/or Student for a Day. The programme organizes an additional matching procedure for students. Attendance is optional.

The master programme is open to students who have completed a bachelor degree programme in Middle Eastern Studies, History or International Relations/International Organization. Additionally, UG students with another Humanities/Arts or Law programme in combination with the minor programme in Middle Eastern Studies are admissible. As to other cases, the programme's Admission Board decides about admission to the Master degree programme.

The intake of the master programme has been stable around 20 students a year since 2019. The large majority of students have a background in Middle Eastern Studies, History or International Relations/International Organization. The panel learned from the students that the introduction and onboarding for master students is well taken care of. The students with a non-Middle Eastern Studies background assured the panel that they were well prepared for the programme.

The master programme requires incoming students to have sufficient English language proficiency. The additional English language requirements are: VWO diploma or a subject certificate for VWO English (mark 6 or higher), minimum requirement of TOEFL iBT 90 (with a minimum of 21 on all items), or IELTS 6.5 (with a minimum of 6 on all items) or Cambridge C1 Advanced or C2 Proficiency.

Based on the documentation and the conversations during the site visit, the panel finds that the programmes have appropriate intake requirements. The panel recognizes that the programmes have different strategies in place in order to increase student influx. It learned from the bachelor students that most of them learn about the programme only once they arrive at Groningen University for another programme. Students and staff agreed that it might be helpful on the one hand to work on better profiling and visibility for students at secondary schools, and on the other hand to aim information at first-year students. The panel endorses these ideas and encourages the provision of adequate faculty support in order to ensure the effectiveness of such recruitment activities.

Language of instruction

The primary language of instruction for the bachelor programme is Dutch, with some courses taught in English. Students in English-taught courses may submit assignments in either Dutch or English.

The master programme is taught entirely in English to develop students' command of the global, intercultural lingua franca and to prepare them for employment scenarios in which English is likely to

remain important. The teaching staff possesses near-native proficiency. The programme acknowledges that the field incorporates many languages and that other languages – Dutch in particular, as well as Arabic for many sources – are also relevant to students' placements and future careers. For this reason, it is flexible to some extent with regard to the language that students write their thesis in (English or Dutch).

The panel approves of the choice of the English language for the master programme's education and name. The ability to communicate effectively in English is a key aspect of what the programme wants to teach its students. Teaching in English is well justified for academic, intercultural, and employability reasons. The immersive setting prepares students for an international career and enables the programme to attract international staff. The English proficiency of the teaching staff is sufficient to teach students properly as is also confirmed by the students. The panel endorses the clear choice for English wholeheartedly.

Feasibility

Feasibility of the programmes is supported, among others, by careful curriculum design, with the study load distributed progressively and more demanding courses placed later in the programmes. The panel learned from the data on the programme cards that study duration fluctuates greatly, especially in the master programme. Study duration in the bachelor programme is on average 3.5 years and in the master programme nearly two years.

According to the students, the programmes are feasible but intensive, especially the master programme because of the combination of the internship and the thesis. The students explained during the interview that they are well informed about this in advance by the programme. To help students finish, the programme sets clear guidelines and deadlines during courses and the thesis process.

The new Faculty of Arts bachelor thesis policy, designed to ensure that more students complete the thesis on time, has helped to increase completion. The bachelor thesis seminar that was introduced after the previous accreditation is highly valued by the students. They see the structured supervision as an improvement and the cooperation and interaction between the students as a welcome addition to the seminar. During the writing process, all students supervised by the same instructor meet regularly in small groups. They submit a draft of the thesis and receive written and oral feedback on both this draft and the final version of the thesis.

During the master programme students find it challenging to combine an internship with the thesis. This is partly due to the fact that ambitious, interesting internships take longer than the time allocated in the programme and the organizations involved do not allow shorter placements. The students also know that internships are more easily found in the Randstad region than in or near Groningen. The staff does not want to keep students from choosing longer internships or ones that are further away. The risk of

taking longer to finish is communicated clearly to the students so they can make an informed decision about their planning. In addition, the support for the internship has improved over the years, among others by appointing a staff member as internship coordinator. She helps students find internships, gives information, and has a list of suitable organisations both in the Netherlands and abroad. Other staff members also help students find placements with suggestions and contacts. Students informed the panel that the combination of thesis and internship is still challenging, but that they feel well informed and supported by the programme.

Based on the documentation and the interviews during the site visit, the panel finds that the feasibility of the programmes is adequate.

Information and guidance

Information provision to students is managed through online study guides and course syllabi, detailing course objectives, assessment methods, and transferable skills. To increase students' awareness of the relationship between their courses and employability, each bachelor syllabus includes an "Employability" section highlighting the transferable skills acquired. Communication between lecturers and students is facilitated via the Brightspace platform, which is also used for disseminating course materials and feedback.

The bachelor programme has implemented a mentorship programme during the first year, where a staff member together with a senior student support new students socially and academically, helping them acclimatise to university life. The students find this very helpful to get acquainted with the programme and to find their way in the university and the new academic environment. Supervisors provide one-on-one guidance for theses and internships in both programmes, supplemented by peer feedback in the bachelor thesis seminar.

Master students receive information about the programme from the master programme coordinator and the study advisor, who also provides support and guidance. Students are invited to an introduction event at the start of the semester and during the academic year they receive news and information about the programme in person and via email, with extra information on the online course platform Brightspace, which has an area dedicated to the master programme.

All students have the support of the study adviser who serves as the students' first point of contact for questions and/or problems related to their study. The students told the panel that the study adviser is very well known and accessible. Furthermore, students informed the panel that all syllabi mention the existence of a confidential counsellor, but that they have not needed to turn to them as the staff ensures a safe learning environment.

Regarding facilities for students with special support needs, the faculty study adviser serves as the primary point of contact within the care structure. The study adviser has a mandate, granted by the Board of Examiners (the body ultimately responsible), to assign and register the necessary accommodations. Study advisers consult with the student counsellors at university level about suitable accommodations for students.

The panel sees that students benefit from the well-organized study counselling for guidance and supervision. The bachelor mentorship programme is a great addition, helping students to find their way in the academic environment.

2.3. Teaching staff

The small, dedicated teaching staff is responsible for both the bachelor and the master programme. They come from various disciplinary and cultural backgrounds. They all have a BKO teaching qualification and a PhD, or are in the process of obtaining them. The research and expertise of the staff are related to the broad orientation of the programme and include, for example, minorities in the Middle East as well as and the historical, political and cultural dimensions of religion and violence. They publish internationally and design and teach courses related to their own research.

The core of the teaching staff consists of eight lecturers, with four additional lecturers on Arabic language and literature for the bachelor programme. The staff operates as a strong team and ensures coherence and alignment through regular informal intervention and discussions about developments in the curriculum and the faculty. The staff is actively engaging in the development of faculty-wide courses for the bachelor programme and is willing to incorporate these courses in the curriculum, although they regret the loss of specific Middle Eastern Studies courses (see §2.1). The panel commends the active and positive engagement of the staff with this development.

When assessing the bachelor theses, the panel did notice some unexplainable differences in grading. It therefore advises the staff to introduce a more structured collegial consultation to calibrate assessments (see standard 3).

During the interviews and in the student chapter the students reported that the staff is very active and approachable. Staff appreciation is reflected in high student ratings, with the bachelor programme scoring 4.7 out of 5 on the 2024 National Student Survey and the master programme 4.2. The students also greatly appreciate the atmosphere, giving it a score of 4.8 (4.3 in the master). When asked to identify one thing they would definitely want to retain in the programme, the students singled out the "staff".

The efforts of the staff to create a safe learning environment were mentioned several times and are highly appreciated by the students as the developments and current events in the Middle East are often complex and controversial. The small scale of the programme helps to create this atmosphere, but it is

mainly due to the efforts of the staff as they actively engage in activities with the students and make sure all students are heard. Students praise the staff not only for their efforts to highlight all perspectives, but also for teaching students to engage in a respectful academic debate.

The panel was impressed by the enthusiasm and innovative spirit of the team and especially by the efforts made to create a safe learning environment in difficult times.

Conclusion

The panel appreciates the bachelor and master programmes' thoughtful curriculum design and learning pathways, which not only cover relevant content but also integrate language proficiency, methodology and transferable skills. The panel also appreciates the opportunities for students to focus on their individual interests within the curriculum. The interdisciplinary approach and focus on academic skills contribute to a well-rounded learning trajectory. Both programmes ensure that students achieve all learning outcomes. The panel advises the bachelor programme to reassess the alignment of the intended learning outcomes, the curriculum and the assessment criteria of the thesis in view of the implementation of the faculty-wide courses.

The semester abroad in the bachelor programme is well organized and a highlight for most of the students. The internship in the master programme is seen as a particularly strong element that provides students with real-life experience in the professional field. The panel applauds the efforts of the staff to help students find suitable internships.

The panel values the small-scale and student-centred learning environment of both programmes, although it expresses some concern about the long-term effect on staff workload and hence the sustainability of this laudable choice. The panel compliments the quality of the teaching staff and their efforts to create a safe and supportive learning environment given the sensitivity of the events in the Middle East. It was also impressed by the proactive approach towards generative AI and the flexible way of adapting course content to current events in the Middle East.

All in all, the panel concludes that the bachelor and master programme in Middle Eastern Studies offer their students a stimulating and supportive environment, in accordance with the intended learning outcomes. In its view, the learning environment convincingly enables them to achieve an academically oriented bachelor or master degree.

Based on the interviews and the review of the underlying documentation, the panel concludes that the programmes **meet standard 2: Teaching-learning environment**.

Standard 3: Student assessment

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

Findings and considerations

System of assessment

The assessment policy of the programmes is built on the university's policy on assessment, and the faculty-wide policies, outlined in the faculty's Teaching and Examination Regulations and the Guidelines of the Faculty Board of Examiners. The programmes have implemented several measures to safeguard the quality of assessment. They use annually updated assessment plans that provide a detailed survey of the various modes and moments of assessment and their relative weights. In addition, the Assessment Matrix links courses to the intended learning outcomes of the programmes thus monitoring that all intended learning outcomes are covered in the curricula.

Both programmes adopt a variety of assessment methods designed to evaluate different types of learning outcomes and accommodate diverse learning styles. Assessment methods include short and long essay writing assignments, exams, research reports, oral presentations and occasional group work. All course syllabi contain details about the modes of assessment, the criteria of evaluation, the relative weight of the various components of the aggregate grade, and the deadlines for written assignments. In the bachelor programme, assessments progress in complexity across the years to test more advanced and integrated knowledge and skills. In larger courses, with a teaching team, exams and essay assignments are collaboratively designed. Students told the panel that they are well informed about the assessment forms and criteria, and that they get useful feedback on their work.

Assessment in the master programme takes a variety of forms across the different seminars, from research essays that develop students' ability as independent investigators to in-class group discussions, presentations, and class participation. In line with the research-intensive learning environment, all forms of assessment ask students to conduct independent research and to engage critically with their findings.

The panel finds that the range and well-organised spread of assessment methods throughout the curriculum is well thought through. The assessments are challenging and activating and fit in well with the programme's aims.

Grading guidelines specify the criteria used to mark assignments such as presentations, essays or exams. In the panel's view, these guarantee consistent and transparent assessment throughout the programmes. Combined with the carefully designed assessment plan and assessment matrix, this ensures that the programmes have assessment well under control.

The programmes demonstrate student-oriented communication by providing transparent information about course-specific objectives, assessment formats, and grading criteria in online study guides and syllabi and on Brightspace. This transparency ensures that students are well-informed about what is expected from them and how their performance will be evaluated, which was confirmed during the interviews with the students. Students report positively about the variety and fairness of assessment, rating examinations via the National Student Survey 4.0 (bachelor) and 3.9 (master), in line with or slightly above sector benchmarks.

The panel identifies a clear progression in the complexity of assessment methods in the master programme compared to the bachelor programme, which aligns with the expected more advanced academic development at the master level.

Thesis assessment

The bachelor thesis (10 EC) is a written report of independently designed and conducted research supported by a structured thesis class and individual supervision. The master thesis (20 EC) demonstrates that students are able, with individual supervision, to independently set up and conduct research of the appropriate academic level in the field of Middle Eastern studies.

The theses are assessed on the basis of specific criteria that are outlined in the Bachelor Thesis Guidelines and the Master's Dissertation Guidelines. These guidelines give detailed instructions about the process; a description of the assessment procedure; a list of the learning outcomes; and a detailed set of grading guidelines. All theses are graded independently by two examiners (the supervisor and a second reader, appointed by the thesis coordinator) using thesis assessment forms. Once they have filled out the forms, they discuss the assessments and agree on a final grade. If great discrepancies arise in grading or no agreement can be reached, a third examiner is appointed by the Board of Examiners.

Several years ago, the faculty introduced a digital system for the thesis assessment forms, which has greatly simplified the administration and makes the assessment more transparent for the students. The assessment forms include different areas for comments on specific learning outcomes. The forms thus encourage systematic comments on the separate assessment criteria, ensuring a clear and logical substantiation of the grade.

According to the panel, the thesis protocol and standardized assessment forms for the thesis and internship are clear and well-defined, providing transparency and structure for both students and examiners. The panel finds the criteria in the thesis assessment forms well-chosen. The students commented to the panel that they find the criteria helpful while writing their thesis and that the forms offer enough feedback, although the panel notes that the comments on the assessment forms are sometimes very brief.

The dual assessment approach supports the reliability of the evaluation process, while the incorporation of the four-eyes principle in the assessment of theses contributes to fairness in grading. However, the panel noted that their assessment of some bachelor theses differed from the assessment of staff members. The panel found that some bachelor theses received a high grade, where stronger theses by comparison received a lower grade. To remedy this, the panel recommends paying more attention to grade calibration. The panel noted that another programme it audited at the same institution sets time aside to discuss the grading of theses in staff meetings. Similarly, near-failing grades in larger curriculum components are double-graded to guarantee greater evaluation certainty. This ensures a stronger calibration of the grading system and fosters a strong quality culture in the team. Additionally, extra supervision for new and junior staff, or ensuring that new and junior staff are paired with experienced senior staff, could be useful to calibrate the grading of the theses, as is advice from examiners outside Middle Eastern Studies.

Board of Examiners

The Faculty of Arts has one Board of Examiners which supervises the quality, validity, and reliability of assessment. The Board of Examiners oversees six expert teams for different disciplines within the Faculty. The programmes of Middle Eastern Studies fall under the expert team of Cluster 4. This expert team consists of five staff members (one of whom serves as chair) and an ex officio assessment expert. In accordance with the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (WHW), the Board of Examiners functions autonomously and issues guidelines and instructions for the quality control of assessments. It furthermore determines which staff members are qualified as examiners for the programmes, monitors the programmes' compliance with its Teaching and Examination Regulations and assures the quality of the assessment in individual courses.

The Board of Examiners systematically monitors the latter through quality assurance checks. Every semester, it selects several theses as well as several courses for evaluation, either at random or in response to feedback from student evaluations or the Programme Committee. All examiners must ensure that a so-called "testing report" is made available to the Board of Examiners after a course is completed, which includes the course syllabus, the assignment plus instructions, the assessment criteria, as well as an evaluation form which has been filled in by the examiner and a colleague acting as peer reviewer. The Board of Examiners reports its findings and instructions to the examiners involved and shares the results with the Cluster Board, which takes further action in case of problems.

The panel finds the Board of Examiners to be active and well aware of its duties. The assessments of the programmes are systematically monitored. The Board of Examiners leaves a lot of autonomy in its assessment practices and for differentiation between the programmes. It would be helpful if the Board of Examiners would not only monitor whether the assessment procedures have been followed, but would also facilitate discussions on the content of the assessment and the quality of the rubrics, as well as grade calibration. The panel advises the Board of Examiners to be more active in sharing best practices

and to calibrate grading throughout the faculty. The conclusions and results of the samples could be shared and discussed more widely for the development of teaching and assessment.

Artificial Intelligence

As programmes differ considerably, the Faculty of Arts has not yet adopted a general policy towards generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI). The staff of Middle Eastern Studies showed an active interest in incorporating GenAI in their teaching and discussing the risks and possibilities with the students. Syllabi all have a clear statement regarding how GenAI can or cannot be used in coursework.

The panel discussed the ongoing debate on the use of GenAI with the Board of Examiners and the staff and found them actively thinking about the consequences. The panel understands that these consequences are still unclear and ever changing, but advises the Board of Examiners to be more proactive in discussing the impact of GenAI on the courses and assessments and to actively share best practices, experiences and pitfalls in the faculty.

Conclusion

The panel appreciates the programmes' assessment system for being valid, reliable, transparent, and aligned with the intended learning outcomes. The systematic use of varied assessment forms respects diverse learning styles and assesses different learning outcomes and skills. The panel sees a systematic alignment occurring through the annually updated assessment plans, which help the programmes to achieve coherence throughout the curriculum and to support the validity and transparency of the examination process. The use of standardized assessment forms for the thesis and internship, and the presence of faculty-wide guidelines for assessment, enhance fairness and standardization across courses. The use of dual assessors and standardized thesis forms contributes to consistency and fairness in grading practices for the thesis. The panel observes that constructive feedback is a substantial and integral part of the assessment system, with students regularly receiving feedback on draft versions of assignments. The panel does recommend paying more attention to the calibration of thesis grading, by systematically discussing the grading of theses in staff meetings and by double grading near-failing grades in larger curriculum components. Furthermore, advice from examiners outside Middle Eastern Studies could be useful to calibrate the grading of the theses.

The panel notes that the Board of Examiners carries out its legal duties effectively in overseeing the assessment system, thereby ensuring the quality and integrity of student assessments. The collaboration between the Board of Examiners and the programmes is effective and leads to continuous attention for the quality of assessment. As the Board operates faculty-wide, the panel advises it to focus not only on the procedures, but to become more active in sharing best practices and calibrating grading throughout the faculty thus further enhancing the quality of teaching and assessment. The panel also advises the Board of Examiners to share experiences with GenAI within the Faculty of Arts.

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

Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes

<i>The program demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.</i>

Findings and considerations

Bachelor and master thesis

Prior to the site visit, the panel reviewed a representative selection of 15 recently completed bachelor theses and 15 master theses. The selection process considered a fair distribution across grades and various assessors.

The panel finds that the bachelor theses generally indicate that students demonstrate the achievement of the intended learning outcomes, with some theses being original and “well embedded” in the literature. All theses meet the expectations for the bachelor’s level, although quite a few are very descriptive. The scope of the topics is very diverse and, in a few cases, quite loosely related to the Middle East region. The staff informed the panel that it is a conscious decision to allow a broad range of topics so students can choose one that is relevant for their future careers. The panel appreciates this position, but recommends paying continued attention to the alignment between thesis topics, the programme’s focus and the methodological quality of the work.

In particular, the panel recommends that students receive help in formulating analytical (rather than descriptive) research questions, so the theses will be less descriptive. To further review the scope of the bachelor theses and the way grades are assigned the panel reviewed five extra theses. This extra review convinced the panel that the theses reflect the learning outcomes and the scope of the programme. As mentioned in Standard 3, structured calibration sessions should be implemented.

The panel agrees that the required use of primary sources is an improvement, although it does not seem to have translated yet into a wider use of Arabic sources. The panel suggests further stimulating students to use Arabic sources and to consider making this compulsory, in line with the programme’s distinctive focus on Arabic language proficiency. The panel agrees with the students that the introduction of the thesis seminar and the stronger guidance of the writing process are strong improvements.

The panel assesses the quality of master theses in line with expectations that may be expected at this level. All theses meet the expectations at the master level and engage with relevant and topical themes and issues. They generally provide a well-defined research question and theoretical framework. Some

works demonstrate a very high mastery of methods and literature, considerable originality, and appropriate academic rigour. Quite a few theses bridge the gap between academia and non-academic fields of employment.

Performance of graduates

The majority of Middle Eastern Studies bachelor graduates pursue a master degree, mostly in the humanities. Frequently chosen master programmes are in the fields of Middle Eastern studies, religious studies, international relations or conflict and security studies. On the basis of the documentation and conversations during the site visit, the panel finds that alumni of the bachelor programme are well equipped for admission to master programmes and incidentally to start careers in government (for example, as advisors or employees at ministries and embassies) or with government agencies like COA or IND and NGOs.

Graduates from the master programme demonstrate strong performance in both academic and professional arenas. Graduates are employed in different fields, including government, politics, diplomacy, the NGO sector, media, and security, as well as in academia. The integration of an internship in the second semester ensures a strong job market orientation and contributes positively to the career readiness of graduates. Alumni feedback confirms that the skills developed during the master programme, especially through the thesis and internship, have been instrumental in their career development.

Conclusion

Judging by the quality of the bachelor and master theses, the discussions the panel had with students and alumni, and reports and comments about student and alumni success provided by the programme, the panel concludes that alumni of the bachelor and master programmes Middle Eastern Studies realise the intended learning outcomes.

For the bachelor thesis, the panel recommends paying continued attention to grade calibration and the alignment between thesis topics, the programme focus and the methodological quality of the work, and to supporting students in formulating clear, analytically oriented research questions. The panel further encourages the programme to stimulate the use of Arabic sources in theses, in line with the programme's distinctive focus on Arabic language proficiency.

The theses provide evidence of the programmes' success in preparing their students for academic and professional careers. It pleases the panel to see that the bachelor programme effectively equips students with the necessary competencies to engage successfully in further academic master programmes. The master programme succeeds in developing academic skills that align well with the expectations of the professional field.

Based on the interviews and the review of the underlying documentation, the panel concludes that the programmes **meet standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes**.

Final conclusion

The NVAO approved panel has assessed both programmes against four standards. The panel concludes that the bachelor Midden-Oosten Studies and the master Middle Eastern Studies meet all standards (intended learning outcomes, teaching-learning environment, student assessment and achieved learning outcomes) and thus rates the overall quality of the programmes as positive.

Standard	Judgment bachelor	Judgment master
Intended learning outcomes <i>Standard 1: The intended learning outcomes tie in with the level and orientation of the program; 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 program has an adequate system of assessment in place.</i>	Meets the standard	Meets the standard
Achieved learning outcomes <i>Standard 4: The program 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:

- Rich, multidisciplinary curricula, responsive to current developments in the Middle East region and to the field of Middle Eastern Studies ;
- Small-scale, supportive, and student-centred learning environment;
- A well organised semester abroad in the bachelor programme;
- The internship in the master programme;
- Great attention to a safe learning environment in difficult times;
- High-quality, engaged teaching staff with an innovative spirit;

- Proactive approach to Generative AI;
- Effective preparation for academic and professional careers.

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

For both programmes the panel advises the following:

- to monitor and safeguard the alignment between the intended learning outcomes, the curriculum and (end-level) assessment, particularly in light of ongoing and upcoming curriculum developments
- to involve the Advisory Council when redesigning the learning outcomes of the master and implementing curriculum changes such as the faculty-wide bachelor courses.

For the Board of Examiners, the panel advises the following:

- to share experiences with GenAI across the Faculty of Arts.
- to be more active in sharing best practices, to calibrate grades throughout the Faculty and to discuss the conclusions and results of the samples much more widely for the development of teaching and assessment.

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

- to explicitly embed the programme's conflict-centred profile in the master programme's intended learning outcomes;
- to introduce a more systematic and documented approach to the calibration of bachelor thesis grading among staff, in order to enhance consistency and transparency;
- to pay continued attention to the alignment between thesis topics, the programme focus and the methodological quality of the work, and to supporting students in formulating clear, analytically oriented research questions. The panel further encourages the programme to stimulate the use of Arabic sources in theses, in line with the programme's distinctive focus on Arabic language proficiency.

4. ANNEXES

Annex 1: Administrative data

Institution	
Name in RIO	Universiteit Groningen
Address	Postbus 72, 9700 AB Groningen
Website	www.rug.nl
BRIN number	21PC

Bachelor Programme	
Programme name in RIO	Bachelor Midden-Oostenstudies
International name	Bachelor Middle Eastern Studies
Location	Groningen
Programme number in RIO	56098
Orientation and level	WO bachelor
Research master	No
Language of instruction	Dutch
(Legal) professional requirements	No
All study programmes/ tracks/specialisations	
Joint programme	No
Distinctive feature	No
Degree awarded and addition to the degree	Bachelor 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 cluster Regiostudies I
Submission date of accreditation report	1 May 2026
Other (e.g. name change or extension of study duration)	-

Master Programme	
Programme name in RIO	Master Middle Eastern Studies
International name	Master Middle Eastern Studies
Location	Groningen
Programme number in RIO	60842
Orientation and level	WO master
Research master	No
Language of instruction	English
(Legal) professional requirements	No
All study programmes/tracks/specialisations	-
Joint programme	No
Distinctive feature	No
Degree awarded and addition to the degree	Master 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 cluster Regiostudies I
Submission date of accreditation report	1 May 2026
Other (e.g. name change or extension of study duration)	

Annex 2: Intended learning outcomes

Intended Learning Outcomes Bachelor programme Midden-Oosten Studies

Dublin Descriptors	De afgestudeerde BA Midden-Oostenstudies kan bogen op een aantoonba(a)r(e)
1. Kennis en inzicht Student heeft aantoonbare kennis en inzicht van een vakgebied, waarbij wordt voortgebouwd op het niveau bereikt in het voortgezet onderwijs en dit wordt overtroffen; functioneert doorgaans op een niveau waarop met ondersteuning van gespecialiseerde handboeken, enige aspecten voorkomen waarvoor kennis van de laatste ontwikkelingen in het vakgebied vereist is.	1. kennis van en inzicht in de vier zwaartepunten van de opleiding, te weten (a) geschiedenis, (b) politiek, (c) godsdiensten, en (d) culturen; 2. elementaire kennis van en inzicht in de belangrijkste klassieke en contemporaine theorieën, modellen en benaderingen in de analyse van het Midden-Oosten; 3. kennis van en inzicht in kernbegrippen in de bestudering van politieke verschijnselen, zoals politiek, staat, maatschappij, politiek systeem en macht; 4. kennis van en inzicht in kernbegrippen in de bestudering van culturele en religieuze verschijnselen, zoals literatuur, heilige geschriften, cultureel erfgoed, en religieuze praktijken; 5. elementaire kennis van en inzicht in de politieke en diplomatieke geschiedenis van de internationale betrekkingen tussen het Midden-Oosten en het Westen, inclusief achtergrond en functionering van staten, internationale gouvernementele en non-gouvernementele organisaties en multinationale ondernemingen; 6. elementaire kennis van methoden van zowel historisch en sociaalwetenschappelijk onderzoek;
2. Toepassen kennis en inzicht Student is in staat om zijn/haar kennis en inzicht op dusdanige wijze toe te passen, dat dit een professionele benadering van zijn/haar werk of beroep laat zien, en beschikt verder over competenties voor het opstellen en verdiepen van argumentaties en voor het oplossen van problemen op het vakgebied.	1. vermogen tot het opzetten en uitvoeren van een probleemgericht onderzoek en tot het weergeven van de resultaten in een analytisch betoog in gesproken en/of geschreven vorm; 2. beheersing van algemene academische vaardigheden, zoals het logisch redeneren en argumenteren, en het vermogen om ongestructureerde problemen op wetenschappelijke wijze te ordenen, en snel en efficiënt – met gebruikmaking van relevante theorieën, methoden en technieken – substantiële informatie te verzamelen, te selecteren en te verwerken in gesproken en/of geschreven vorm; 3. vermogen om verworven kennis, begrip en vaardigheden toe te passen bij (1) het systematisch evalueren van een grote verscheidenheid aan denkbeelden, ideeën en gegevens (die wellicht nog onvolledig zijn), en (2) bij het identificeren en analyseren van complexe problemen en vraagstukken het vakgebied betreffende;

	4. vermogen om op basis van een kritisch cultuurbegrip overeenkomsten en verschillen tussen culturen te identificeren en om kennis van normen, waarden en gewoonten te verwoorden en hiermee om te gaan in wetenschap en praktijk; 5. vermogen vaardigheden toe te passen die relevant zijn binnen het vakgebied. Hierbij wordt van de student verwacht dat hij / zij: persoonlijke verantwoordelijkheid, zelfdiscipline en initiatief toont; een zekere mate van originaliteit en creativiteit toont in argumentatie en analyse; kan werken onder tijdsdruk; kan functioneren als lid en leider van een team; effectief gebruik kan maken van ICT bij het verzamelen, ordenen, analyseren, en presenteren van wetenschappelijke gegevens
3. Oordeelsvorming Student is in staat om relevante gegevens te verzamelen en te interpreteren (meestal op het vakgebied) met het doel een oordeel te vormen dat mede gebaseerd is op het afwegen van relevante sociaal-maatschappelijke, wetenschappelijke of ethische aspecten.	1. vermogen tot het systematisch en kritisch evalueren van een grote verscheidenheid aan denkbeelden, ideeën en gegevens en bij het identificeren en analyseren van complexe problemen en vraagstukken; 2. vermogen om de maatschappelijke implicaties van oordelen te overzien en, begrip hebben voor andere culturen en opvattingen, morele verantwoordelijkheid te nemen voor de gevormde en gegeven oordelen; 3. vermogen op basis van een eenduidige vraagstelling een onderzoek van beperkte tot redelijke omvang over een maatschappelijk relevant thema op te zetten en uit te voeren alsook te rapporteren over de uitkomsten daarvan conform de conventies van het vakgebied.
4. Communicatie Student is in staat om informatie, ideeën en oplossingen over te brengen op publiek bestaande uit specialisten of niet-specialisten.	1. vermogen om algemene informatie en ideeën over te brengen op basis van adequate luister-, lees-, spreek- en schrijfvaardigheden in het Arabisch en om deze vaardigheden in de alledaagse praktijk toe te passen; 2. vermogen om op betrouwbare en accurate wijze te communiceren en discussiëren met anderen over het eigen vakgebied, onder meer door het schriftelijk en mondeling becommentariëren van onderzoek van vakgenoten /collega's en het mondeling presenteren en verdedigen van eigen onderzoek, daarbij rekening houdend met de diversiteit aan opvattingen van andere individuen en groeperingen 3. vermogen om te spreken en te debatteren over actuele, politieke vraagstukken in het Midden-Oosten.

5. Leervaardigheid Student bezit de leervaardigheden die noodzakelijk zijn om een vervolgstudie die een hoog niveau van autonomie veronderstelt aan te gaan.	1. vermogen om zelfstandig, effectief en efficiënt grote hoeveelheden informatie en kennis te kunnen verwerven en verwerken; 2. vermogen tot het kunnen schrijven van gestructureerde, helder geformuleerde en taalkundig correcte teksten; 3. Vermogen om zelfstandig de in het programma opgedane taalvaardigheid Arabisch uit te breiden en toe te spitsen, zowel op de specifieke eisen van het werkveld als op algemenere ontwikkelingsdoelen.
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Intended Learning Outcomes Master programme Middle-Eastern Studies

Dublin descriptors	The graduate students in the Master programme MES demonstrate
1. Knowledge and understanding Students have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with the first cycle, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context.	1. Specific knowledge in the field of political and religious developments in the contemporary Middle East. 2. Insight in order to study the field from a theoretical and methodological point of view. The student is aware of current approaches. 3. Knowledge of the scientific codes of conduct /ethics with regard to referring to and making use of the work and insights of others, and with regard to the collection and processing of empirical data (data). 4. In-depth knowledge and insight into current developments within the field
2. Applied knowledge and understanding Students can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem-solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study	5. The ability to formulate independently a scientific problem and to choose and use an adequate theoretical framework and one or more relevant research methods. 6. The ability to deal with complex issues systematically and creatively, and to arrive at a well-founded opinion. 7. The ability to write independently and scientifically, and speak as a well-informed critic, or as an empirically oriented scientist, while making adequate use of relevant issues, debates and developments in media and culture. 8. The ability to investigate scientifically the relationship between characteristics of the western world and the Middle East. 9. The ability to investigate scientifically how concepts and activities contribute to the social functioning of utterances related to the Middle East.

	10. The ability to provide a scientific analysis of a genre, a period, a movement or an oeuvre in relation to the Middle East. 11. The ability to carry out independently theoretical and empirical research within their own field. 12. The ability to use the acquired scientific knowledge, insights and skills in the performance of a social and / or academic function with due regard for ethical and societal issues.
3. Making judgements Students have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements.	13. The ability to adopt a well-considered position in current developments within the discipline independently and to defend this in debate (oral and written). 14. The ability to provide an independent well-founded (comparative) analysis and interpretation of aspects of the Middle East. 15. The ability to assess critically theoretical and empirical research within their own field.
4. Communication Students can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously	16. The ability to use scientific research and present the results of this research both in writing and orally to an audience of specialists and non-specialists
5. Learning skills Students have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous	17. The ability to process large amounts of complex information efficiently and effectively. 18. To realize that the developments in the field and beyond require continuous training, as well as the necessary written and oral skills to be able to (continue to) follow the scientific literature and the debate in his / her field. 19. The ability to keep track of developments in the scientific field, to deepen and supplement their own knowledge and insights, and to apply these in a professional practice. 20. The skills required for successful professional practice. These include: a. showing initiative and personal responsibility; b. being able to make decisions in complex and unpredictable situations; c. the ability to work independently; d. the ability to function as a member of a team.

Annex 3: Curriculum outline

Programmaoverzicht 2024-2025 Bachelor Midden-Oosten Studies

JAAR 1	JAAR 2	JAAR 3
Semester 1	Semester 1	Semester 1
Taalvaardigheid Arabisch 1 en 2 (2x5 ECTS)	Taalvaardigheid Arabisch 5 en 6 (2x5 ECTS)	Minor (30 ECTS)
Geschiedenis van het Moderne Midden-Oosten (5 ECTS)	Cultuur en Soft-Power in het Midden-Oosten (10 ECTS)	
Joden en Jodendom in het Moderne Midden-Oosten (5 ECTS)	Joden en Moslims in het Moderne Midden-Oosten (5 ECTS)	
Islam en Moslims in het Moderne Midden-Oosten (5 ECTS)	Islam, Politiek en Moderniteit in het Midden-Oosten (5 ECTS)	
Academische Vaardigheden Midden- Oostenstudies 1 (5 ECTS)		
Semester 2	Semester 2	Semester 2
Taalvaardigheid Arabisch 3 en 4 (2x5 ECTS)	Buitenlandverblijf / Vrije ruimte (30 ECTS)	Conflict en Co-existentie in het Moderne Midden-Oosten (5 ECTS)
Politiek en Internationale Betrekkingen in het Midden-Oosten (5 ECTS)		Literatuur in het Moderne Midden-Oosten: Identiteit en Verbondenheid (10 ECTS)
Steden in het Midden-Oosten (5 ECTS)		Europa in het Midden-Oosten, het Midden-Oosten in Europa (5 ECTS)
Eetcultuur in het Midden-Oosten: erfgoed, cultuur en herinnering (5 ECTS)		Bachelorscriptie Midden-Oostenstudies (10 ECTS)
Academische Vaardigheden Midden- Oostenstudies 2 (5 ECTS)		

Programmaoverzicht 2024-2025 Master Middle Eastern Studies

Semester 1	ECTS	Semester 2	ECTS
Conflicts in the Middle East	10	Placement / Tutorial	10
Contemporary developments in the Middle East	5	Master's thesis	20
International Organisations, Governance and the Middle East	5		
Understanding Sectarianism and minorities in the Middle East. A Global approach	5		
Memory, Heritage and Politics in the MENA region	5		

Annex 4: Programme of the site visit

Date: 19 and 20 November 2025

Location: Röling Building,, Oude Boteringestraat 18, Groningen

Day 1 19 November 2025

8:45	9:30	Ontvangst + intern overleg
9:30	10:15	Gesprek faculteitsbestuur
10:15	11:00	Gesprek programmamanagement (programmacoördinatoren en clusterbestuur)
11:00	11:30	Intern overleg panel
11:30	12:30	Gesprek studenten & alumni B and M Middle Eastern Studies
12:30	13:30	Lunch en intern overleg panel
13:30	14:30	Gesprek docenten B and M Middle Eastern Studies
14:30	14:45	Intern overleg panel
14:45	15:45	Gesprek studenten & alumni BA and MA American Studies
15:45	16:00	Intern overleg panel
16:00	17:00	Gesprek docenten & alumni BA and MA American Studies
17:00	17:45	Intern overleg panel

Day 2: Thursday, November 20

8:45	9:15	Welkom en Intern overleg
9:15	10:00	Gesprek examencommissie
10:00	10:45	Intern overleg panel/voorbereiden afsluitend gesprek
10:45	11:30	Eindgesprek opleidingsmanagement alle opleidingen en eventuele vragen
11:30	13:15	Lunch en Intern overleg panel/opstellen conclusies
13:15	13:45	Ontwikkelgesprek
14:00	14:15	Mondelinge rapportage

Annex 5: Documents

Self-evaluation report Bachelor Midden-Oosten Studies

Appendices:

- appendix 1: Eindkwalificaties
- appendix 2: Visitatie 2019
- appendix 3: Matrix van eindkwalificaties
- appendix 4: programma overzicht 2024-2025
- appendix 5: Kwantitatieve gegevens leeromgeving
- appendix 6: Docententeam 2024-2025
- appendix 7: Onderwijs- en examenregeling en Toetsplan
- appendix 8: Scriptiehandleiding en scriptiebeoordelingsformulier
- appendix 9: Overzicht eindwerken

Extra bijlagen / Additional appendices:

- Onderwijs- en examenreglementen deel A, deel B en Toetsplan
- Onderwijsjaarkaart BA Midden-Oosten Studies - 2024
- Thesis Documentation
 - BA Midden-Oosten Studies - syllabus
 - Thesis Assessment Form BA Midden-Oosten Studies
- Annual reports programme committee 2022-2023; 2023-2024, 2024-2025

Self-evaluation report Master Middle Eastern Studies

Appendices:

- appendix 1: Intended learning outcomes (2024-2025)
- appendix 2: Matrix of intended learning outcomes (2024-2025)
- appendix 3: Programme overview 2024-2025
- appendix 4: Quantitative data of teaching-learning environment
- appendix 5: Teaching team (MA, 2024-2025) (zie onder Documenten voor panelleden)
- appendix 6: Teaching and examination regulations
- appendix 7: Thesis course manual and Thesis assessment form
- appendix 8: List of graduates and information on the final works

Additional appendices:

- Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER) Part A, part B and Assessment plan
- Onderwijsjaarkaart / Educational annual card MA Middle Eastern Studies - 2024

- MA Middle Eastern Studies - work placement manual
- MA Middle Eastern Studies -Thesis course manual and Thesis assessment form
- Annual reports programme committee 2022-2023; 2023-2024, 2024-2025

Faculty introduction self-evaluation

- Appendix 1: Strategic Plan UG 2021-2026 (English version)
- Appendix 2: Strategic Plan Faculty of Arts 2021-2026 (English version)
- Appendix 3: RUG Toetsbeleid 2021-2026 / RUG Assessment Policy 2021-2026 (only available in Dutch)
- Appendix 4: Rules and Regulations faculty Board of Examiners (ECL)
- Appendix 5: Annual reports faculty Board of Examiners (ECL):2021-2022; 2022-2023; 2023-2024
- Appendix 6: Beleidsplan Studeren met een functiebeperking / Policy plan about studying with a disability (only available in Dutch)

Final projects

The programmes made available a list of final projects. This list contained all final projects of the last four academic years. The chair of the panel selected 15 final projects per programme. Care was taken during the selection to obtain a balanced overview of grades, majors or tracks and diversity of examiners.

5. Bachelor Midden-Oosten Studies:

The list covering the period 01-01-2022 to 01-07-2025 includes 49 recent graduates. From these, the following selection of 15 final projects was made:

Grade range	Total theses	Selection
5.5 - 6.9 sufficient	7	5
7.0 - 8.4 good	28	7
8.5 - 10.0 very good	14	3

6. Master Middle Eastern Studies:

The list covering the period 01-07-2022 to 01-09-2025 includes 50 recent graduates. From these, the following selection of 15 final projects was made:

Grade range	Total theses	Selection
5.5 - 6.9 sufficient	9	5
7.0 - 8.4 good	23	5
8.5 - 10.0 very good	18	5

Further details on the selected final projects are available on request from Odion Onderzoek.

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