

B South and Southeast Asian Studies

Leiden University

Assessment report

8 april 2026



Content

1.	Summary	3
2.	Introduction	6
	Procedure	6
	Institution	9
	Programme	9
	Developments since the last accreditation	9
3.	Programme assessment	11
	Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes	11
	Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment	13
	Standard 3: Student assessment	19
	Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes	23
	Final conclusion	26
4.	Annexes	29
	Annex 1: Administrative data	29
	Annex 2: Intended learning outcomes	30
	Annex 3: Curriculum outline	32
	Annex 4: Programme site visit	33
	Annex 5: Documents	35

1. Summary

This report describes the programme assessments of the academic bachelor's programme South and Southeast Asian Studies offered by Leiden University.

Standard 1 – Intended learning outcomes

The bachelor's programme in South and Southeast Asian Studies has a clear and distinctive profile as the only programme in the Netherlands that integrates both regions within a single programme, combining multidisciplinary area studies with substantial language training in Hindi, Indonesian, Sanskrit or Classical Tibetan. Students can specialise in the second and third year through one of two tracks—*Classical Cultures of South and Southeast Asia* or *Modern South and Southeast Asia*—which allow students to specialize in specific subfields while maintaining a coherent regional focus. The panel values the thoughtful transition from the former specialised programmes in Indonesian Studies and Indian and Tibetan Studies to a unified regional programme that preserves the strengths of both traditions. At the same time, the panel notes that small enrolment numbers, faculty-wide budget constraints and the development of shared courses with adjacent Area Studies programmes require continued attention to safeguarding the programme's unique identity. The intended learning outcomes are clearly formulated, aligned with the Dublin Descriptors and appropriate for a bachelor's programme, articulating the expected integration of regional knowledge, language proficiency and academic skills that prepare graduates for further study and a wide range of professional contexts.

Overall, the panel concludes that **Standard 1 – Intended learning outcomes** is met.

Standard 2 – Teaching-learning environment

The bachelor's programme in South and Southeast Asian Studies (180 EC) offers a coherent and well-structured teaching-learning environment in which students progress from broad introductory courses and intensive language training to more advanced, research-oriented components. The curriculum combines multidisciplinary perspectives on the histories, cultures and societies of South and Southeast Asia with a sustained language trajectory, and allows students to specialise through one of two tracks—*Modern South and Southeast Asia* or *Classical Cultures of South and Southeast Asia*. A key strength is the semester abroad in Yogyakarta, Hyderabad or Kathmandu, which deepens linguistic proficiency and cultural immersion. The panel considers the curriculum coherent and academically robust, while noting that the planned increase in shared courses with adjacent Area Studies programmes (China Studies, Korean Studies and South and Japan Studies) from 2026-2027 onwards requires careful implementation to safeguard the programme's distinctive regional focus.

Students benefit from a supportive and internationally oriented learning environment, strengthened by the choice for English as the language of instruction and by the expertise and dedication of the teaching

staff. The panel values the strong sense of community fostered by small-scale teaching and accessible study guidance, though students report variation in thesis supervision and would benefit from more consistent feedback and additional research support. Students also express a wish for stronger connections to the professional field, including internship matchmaking or facilitated contact with employers. Given the programme's relatively small annual intake, the panel encourages continued efforts to enhance its visibility and attractiveness.

Overall, the panel concludes that **Standard 2 – Teaching-Learning environment** is met.

Standard 3 – Student assessment

The bachelor's programme in South and Southeast Asian Studies has an adequate and consistently implemented assessment system that is firmly embedded in faculty-wide regulations and constructive alignment. Assessment formats are well matched to course objectives, with a clear progression from written exams and short assignments in the first year to more complex essays, presentations and research papers in later years, while language courses employ an intensive mix of written and oral testing. Quality and transparency are supported through the structural application of the four-eyes principle, systematic archiving of assessment materials and collegial monitoring of study-abroad assessment practices. The Board of Examiners fulfils its statutory responsibilities, conducts regular sampling of theses and other assessments, and has taken steps toward a more systematic and professionalised approach. However, its current role remains largely reactive; the panel recommends a more proactive and strategically embedded stance. Thesis assessment is carried out by two independent examiners, with a third examiner appointed in cases of major discrepancies, but the panel identifies the need for more systematic calibration to ensure consistent grading and shared standards, particularly given the occasional involvement of external assessors. The panel also values the programme's clear attention to the challenges posed by generative AI, while encouraging a more integrated strategy that explicitly links GenAI to intended learning outcomes, teaching-learning environment and assessment practices.

Overall, the panel concludes that **Standard 3 – Student assessment** is met.

Standard 4 – Achieved learning outcomes

A review of a representative selection of bachelor's theses shows that graduates of the BA South and Southeast Asian Studies achieve the intended learning outcomes. The bachelor's thesis enables students to demonstrate their ability to conduct academic research at bachelor's level, and the panel found that the theses generally meet the required standard. Two cases required further discussion—one borderline pass and one thesis graded higher than the panel deemed warranted—leading the panel to emphasise the importance of consistently ensuring that at least one examiner is a member of the teaching team. Graduates are well prepared for further study, progressing to master's programmes in Asian Studies,

Anthropology, Cultural Studies and related fields, and alumni survey data indicate positive labour-market outcomes across sectors such as culture, IT, government and NGOs. The panel also welcomes the programme's strengthened alumni engagement, including the active LinkedIn community, which supports students' connection to the professional field and which the panel encourages the programme to continue developing.

Overall, the panel concludes that **Standard 4 – Achieved learning outcomes** is met.

The bachelor's programme South and Southeast Asian studies meets all four standards. Considering this, the panel arrives at the final opinion 'positive' to the NVAO for the accreditation of the Bachelor South and Southeast Asian Studies at Leiden University.

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.

8 April 2026:



Dr. Remco Raben
(chair)



Julia Roosenboom MSc, drs. Vladimir Bartelds
(secretary)

2. Introduction

Procedure

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

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

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

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

- Dr. Remco Raben (chair), Utrecht University, Associate professor, Department of History of International Relations
- Prof. dr. Henning Klöter (member), Humboldt University of Berlin, professor of Modern Chinese Languages and Literatures
- Prof. dr. Mark Teeuwen (member), University of Oslo, professor of Japanese Language and History
- Dr. Lisa Gaufman (member and external reviewer), University of Groningen, Assistant professor of Russian Discourse and Politics
- Elliott Bickerton (student-member), University of Amsterdam, student American Studies
- Dr. Vladimir Glomb (external reviewer), Free University of Berlin, Guest professor at the Institute of Korean Studies
- Dr. Anders Karlsson (external reviewer), University of London, senior lecturer in Korean Studies
- Prof. dr. Christian de Pee (external reviewer), University of Michigan, professor of Chinese History
- Prof. dr. Christoph Anderl (external reviewer), Ghent University, professor of Chinese Language and Culture
- Dr. Jonathan Spencer (external reviewer), University of Edinburgh, emeritus professor of South Asian Language, Culture and Society
- Prof. Roger Goodman (external reviewer), University of Oxford, professor of Modern Japanese Studies
- Dr. Lorena De Vita (external reviewer), Utrecht University, Associate professor in the History of International Relations
- Prof. dr. Gerben Nooteboom (external reviewer), Radboud University, Professor Anthropology and Development Studies

The panel was supported by Odion Onderzoek through Julia Roosenboom MSc (process coordinator and secretary for the bachelor Japan Studies, bachelor Korean studies, bachelor South and Southeast Asian Studies, de master Asian Studies 60 EC and the master Asian Studies 120 EC), together with drs. Vladimir Bartelds, and Inge van der Hoorn (secretary for the bachelor China Studies and the bachelor International Studies). Both secretaries have extensive experience as NVAO-certified secretaries. The NVAO reviewed the accountability form for the panel composition and confirmed that the panel meets the required expertise. In addition, the panel members, the institution, and the secretaries provided written declarations confirming that the panel and secretaries perform their tasks independently. On 23 October 2025, the NVAO approved the panel composition (approval form PA-2492b).

Prior to the assessment process, the chair was trained by Julia Roosenboom MSc and Daniëlle de Koning MSc on the NVAO's *Assessment Framework for the Accreditation System of Higher Education in the Netherlands* (2024). The cluster coordinator reviewed the standards, procedures, and responsibilities

with the chair, in line with the *Profile of the Chair* (NVAO 2016) and the guidelines from the NVAO training *Train the Chair*. The other panel members were instructed and informed during a cluster-wide start meeting by the cluster coordinator and chair about the content and intent of the assessment framework, as well as the procedure, attitude, working methods, and planning within the cluster.

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

After reviewing the documentation, the panel members formulated their initial impressions and shared them with the secretaries. The secretaries compiled these and distributed the compilation to the panel. During a preparatory meeting prior to the site visit on 8, 9, 10 December, the panel members discussed their first impressions and identified key topics for discussion.

Staff and students of the programmes within the visitation group *Area Studies 2 at Leiden University* were informed in advance by the faculty about the opportunity to speak confidentially with the panel. They could register for this through the secretaries. An *open consultation hour* was scheduled during the preparatory meeting for potential participants. As no registrations were received, this *open consultation hour* was cancelled. The development dialogue took place on 17th of February 2026. A separate report was drafted and adopted by the panel chair.

On 8, 9, 10 December 2025, the panel conducted a site visit at Leiden University. The draft programme of the visit, including representative stakeholders, had been submitted in advance by the programmes to the chair and secretaries. Appendix 4 contains information about the site visit.

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

This final report provides a systematic account of the panel's findings, considerations, and conclusions. After the site visit, the secretaries drafted a preliminary version of the report and submitted it to the panel members for feedback. Based on their comments, the report was revised in consultation with the

chair. The draft report was then sent to Leiden University for a check of factual inaccuracies. After processing any corrections, the report was finalized and approved by the chair.

Institution

Leiden University (LU) was founded in 1575 and is therefore the oldest university in the Netherlands. The institution is publicly funded. Over the past three years, the number of LU students has fluctuated around 36,000, spread across 48 bachelor's programmes and 83 master's programmes¹. The university has seven faculties: Archaeology, Humanities, Medicine (LUMC), Governance & Global Affairs, Law, Social Sciences, and Science. The university's profile is described on its website². In short, Leiden University aims to equip new generations to make a difference in a global society. Its core values are Connecting, Innovative, Responsible, and Free. Leiden University attaches great importance to partnerships. Within the Netherlands, it collaborates extensively with Delft University of Technology and Erasmus University Rotterdam³, and internationally, among others, within the League of European Research Universities⁴.

Programme

The three-year bachelor's programme in South and Southeast Asian Studies (SSEAS) was established in 2010–2011 through the consolidation of the former Dutch-taught programmes *Talen en Culturen van Indonesië* and *Talen en Culturen van India en Tibet*. In the current academic year (2025–2026), the Faculty of Humanities has asked the four bachelor's programmes in Asian Studies—China Studies, Japan Studies, Korean Studies and South and Southeast Asian Studies—to intensify their cooperation by offering more shared courses in the second and third year. These developments are driven by the faculty's current financial situation and the relatively modest enrolment numbers across the programmes. A phased implementation of the shared curriculum components is planned from 2026–2027 onwards.

Developments since the last accreditation

The bachelor's programme in South and Southeast Asian Studies received a positive assessment during the previous accreditation in 2019. At that time, the panel issued several recommendations, which the current panel reviewed during the site visit. It concludes that the programme has adequately followed up on these points. The 2019 panel recommended strengthening the language component, particularly by integrating elements of language acquisition more explicitly into content-based courses and seminars. According to the current panel, this has been addressed by encouraging students to use materials in the four taught languages in their thesis where feasible and by further embedding research methodology—especially digital methods—into both substantive and language-acquisition courses. The previous panel

¹ See: <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/over-ons/feiten-en-cijfers>

² See: <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/over-ons/profiel>

³ See: <https://www.leiden-delft-erasmus.nl/nl/home>

⁴ See: <https://www.leru.org/>

also recommended harmonising the intended learning outcomes across the faculty's Area Studies programmes; the current intended learning outcomes are now aligned with those of related programmes. In addition, the recommendation to review the guidelines on plagiarism and fraud has been implemented through several updates to the CER and faculty regulations, which now also include provisions on the use of generative AI. Finally, the 2019 panel recommended ensuring that comments from the second reader were clearly visible to students and that the rationale for the final grade was transparent; the theses reviewed for this assessment show that feedback from both examiners is now included and that the grading process is clearly documented.

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 programme

The bachelor's programme South and Southeast Asian Studies is the only programme in the Netherlands that focuses specifically on both South and Southeast Asia. It has a distinctly international profile, is taught entirely in English, and combines multidisciplinary area studies with intensive language training in one of four regional languages (Hindi, Indonesian, Sanskrit or Classical Tibetan). The programme offers students a broad geographical scope across major countries in both regions and a coherent structure with two tracks in the second and third year—*Classical Cultures of South and Southeast Asia* and *Modern South and Southeast Asia*—which enable specialisation while maintaining an overarching regional focus. The panel considers the profile of the programme to be both important and distinctive. It appreciates the thoughtful way in which the programme has implemented the earlier repositioning from the former specialised programmes *Languages and Cultures of Indonesia* and *Languages and Cultures of India and Tibet* to a broader South and Southeast Asian Studies profile. According to the panel, the programme has succeeded in merging these two distinct academic traditions into a coherent whole, while preserving their individual areas of expertise and their ability to attract different groups of students. The combination of these traditions offers clear added value, a development that is recognised and supported by the programme management, staff and students.

Most graduates continue with a master's programme—often at Leiden University—where the bachelor's degree provides direct access to the MA Asian Studies, including its South Asian and Southeast Asian tracks. At the same time, the programme prepares students for a wide range of professional contexts, such as cultural and governmental organisations, development cooperation, and the private sector, demonstrating the versatility of the knowledge and skills acquired.

The panel observes that the programme has succeeded in creating a high-quality and nationally unique programme in South and Southeast Asian Studies. At the same time, the programme continues to face structural pressures, including faculty-wide budget cuts, the need to share courses with adjacent programmes such as Japan Studies, Korean Studies and China Studies (see Standard 2), and a relatively small student intake. These factors make it challenging to safeguard the full disciplinary diversity of the programme in the long term. The panel notes that expanding the student base would strengthen the

sustainability of the programme and help ensure that its broad and diverse course offering can be maintained. Planned collaboration with related programmes may offer opportunities for thematic enrichment and shared expertise, but it also requires continued attention to preserving the programme's distinct profile and disciplinary diversity.

Intended learning outcomes

The intended learning outcomes (as listed in Annex 2) are specified in accordance with the Dublin Descriptors, ensuring that they meet the expected bachelor's level in terms of knowledge, skills and academic competencies. In addition, the general academic skills embedded in the programme align with the faculty-wide learning outcomes for all BA programmes in the Faculty of Humanities.

The programme aims to produce graduates with knowledge and understanding of the cultures, societies, politics and history of South and Southeast Asia in a global context. Graduates are able to speak and write one of the modern regional languages (Indonesian or Hindi) or read and interpret texts in one of the classical languages (Sanskrit or Tibetan). They can evaluate and debate issues in academic and applied formats, conduct independent research, and demonstrate intercultural awareness and self-critical reflection, particularly regarding culturally shaped assumptions. In addition to specialist regional knowledge, graduates acquire broadly applicable academic skills that prepare them for professional engagement with South or Southeast Asian countries or diasporic communities. With respect to the language component, the programme requires a minimum of 40 EC of language training spread over two years, and for the living languages (Hindi and Indonesian) specific CEFR-aligned proficiency levels (B1 or B2) in listening, reading, speaking and writing. The learning outcomes relating to history, current affairs, religion and cultural expression require knowledge of both South and Southeast Asia.

The panel considers the intended learning outcomes to be clearly formulated, coherent and appropriate for a bachelor's programme. It finds that the outcomes reflect the required level through their alignment with the Dublin Descriptors and through the explicit integration of regional knowledge, language proficiency and academic skills.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme has a clear and distinctive profile, characterised by its unique focus on the comparative and integrated study of South and Southeast Asia, in combination with a specialization on one of the language areas, its international orientation and its integration of multidisciplinary area studies with substantial language training. The panel considers the positioning of the programme coherent and academically well founded, while acknowledging the challenges posed by limited enrolment numbers and the necessity to offer courses in a wide range of disciplinary specialisations. It therefore emphasises the need for continued attention to safeguarding the programme's distinct profile in the context of planned collaboration with adjacent programmes, even as

such collaboration offers opportunities for thematic enrichment. The intended learning outcomes are, in the panel's view, clearly formulated, coherent and appropriate for a bachelor's programme. They align with the Dublin Descriptors and adequately reflect the required level through the integration of regional knowledge, language proficiency and academic skills.

Based on the interviews and the review of the underlying documentation, the panel concludes that the programme **meets 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

Curriculum restructuring

This report reflects the programme's current situation and its development over the past six years. From 2026–2027, the programme will undergo a phased restructuring prompted by faculty-wide financial constraints, increasing the use of shared courses in BA2 and BA3 with adjacent Asian Studies programmes (China Studies, Japan Studies and Korean Studies). The panel recognises that reducing the number of South and Southeast Asia-specific ECs may somewhat dilute the area-specific curriculum. At the same time, it acknowledges the programme's rationale that broader thematic offerings can help students situate South and Southeast Asia within its wider regional context and benefit from cross-programme synergies. While the panel sees the potential analytical gains and efficiencies, it encourages the programme and the faculty to use joint offerings selectively and only where they demonstrably enhance student learning, ensuring that the programme's distinctive profile is safeguarded (see Standard 1).

Content and structure of the curriculum

The curriculum is designed to achieve the intended learning outcomes while allowing students to shape their own academic profile. In the first year, students follow 35 EC of non-language courses that introduce the premodern and modern histories, classical and contemporary cultures, political economy, and linguistics of South and Southeast Asia. Of these seven courses, six are compulsory, while one 5 EC course offers a choice between introductory modules on Islam, Buddhism or Hinduism. Alongside these content courses, students complete 20 EC of language instruction in one of four languages (Indonesian, Hindi, Sanskrit or Tibetan). The first year also includes a 5 EC faculty-wide course in Area Studies.

From the second year onward, the programme offers more room for specialisation. Students choose one of two thematic tracks—*Modern South and Southeast Asia* or *Classical Cultures of South and Southeast*

Asia—and complete 20 EC of track-specific courses, in addition to 20 EC of continued language training. To maintain coherence across the programme, all students also take a 5 EC compulsory thematic course that bridges classical and modern perspectives and covers both South and Southeast Asia (e.g. *Reading South and Southeast Asia*). In addition, they follow the 5 EC Philosophy of Science course, the 5 EC Programme Seminar II—which strengthens academic skills and prepares students for independent research—and a 5 EC elective from the track they are not otherwise following.

In the third year, most students spend the first semester abroad (30 EC) in Yogyakarta, Hyderabad or Kathmandu, where they follow advanced language courses and regionally relevant electives (see *Study abroad*). Students who remain in Leiden complete 15 EC of programme courses (including a 10 EC advanced language course and a 5 EC second-year non-language course they have not yet taken) and 15 EC of free-choice electives. The second semester consists of the 10 EC BA thesis, the 5 EC Programme Seminar III, and 15 EC of additional free-choice space, allowing students to pursue electives, minors or internships.

Throughout the curriculum, academic skills are taught progressively. Programme Seminars I, II and III guide students from introductory academic training toward the thesis writing process. Students indicated that they would benefit from additional guidance during thesis preparation, and the panel encourages the programme to explore ways to strengthen research support, potentially by connecting students to the new workshops in the MA Asian Studies programmes (60 and 120 EC).

Overall, the panel concludes that the curriculum is coherent, well-structured and fit for ensuring students achieve the intended learning outcomes. This coherence is supported by the high level of interaction, collegiality and regular consultation among the staff. The integration of former area-specific tracks into a unified regional curriculum has broadened the programme's scope while preserving depth for students focusing on either South or Southeast Asia. According to the panel, the curriculum now strikes an appropriate balance between regional breadth and opportunities for specialisation, a development that students and alumni explicitly value. The foundational courses in the first year provide a solid grounding in academic skills, while the continuous sequence of content and language courses—approximately half of the total study load, including the semester abroad—ensures unity and progression. The programme also offers sufficient elective space for students to develop an individual academic profile.

Study abroad

The vast majority of students spend the first semester of the third year abroad. Depending on their chosen language and thematic focus, students study at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta (Indonesian), the University of Hyderabad (Hindi and Sanskrit), or the Rangjung Yeshe Institute in Kathmandu (Sanskrit and classical Tibetan). These partner institutions offer intensive formal and informal language training, complemented in most cases by non-language courses followed alongside regular

students. The study-abroad period is designed to provide both linguistic and cultural immersion, ensuring continuity in the programme's emphasis on regional expertise and deepening students' engagement with the societies they study. In exceptional cases, students may arrange an alternative placement or remain in Leiden, where they follow a structured combination of compulsory courses and elective components that mirrors the academic progression of the cohort abroad.

The panel considers the study-abroad period to be instrumental to students' academic and personal development. It values the programme's commitment to making this opportunity accessible to all students and appreciates the guidance provided to help them prepare for, navigate and maximise the learning experience. According to the panel, the immersion abroad strengthens students' linguistic proficiency, cultural understanding and academic maturity, and is therefore a valuable component of the curriculum.

Professional orientation and internships

Students report being generally satisfied with the transferable skills they acquire in the programme. These skills—such as analytical thinking, communication, intercultural competence and project management—are embedded throughout the curriculum and align with the thirteen transferable skills defined by Leiden University. At the same time, both the programme and the NSE results indicate that students feel less well connected to the professional field. While the overall NSE score for “Connection to the professional field” was above the faculty and university average in 2024 (3.25), it dropped below the faculty average in 2025 (2.67).

In this context, the panel notes that internships can offer students opportunities to apply their academic skills in a professional environment, which many students consider valuable. The programme acknowledges that the structure of the curriculum—including the mandatory study abroad period—offers limited room for internships without causing study delay. It therefore aims to intensify contact between students and alumni and to more actively connect students with potential internship opportunities, both during their studies and after graduation. Internships, however, require staff supervision, and students experience the guidance provided by the institutional Career Services as limited.

The panel understands the challenges faced by small academic programmes in offering structured professional-orientation opportunities, particularly in a context where the primary responsibility is to deliver a robust academic bachelor's programme. It appreciates the programme's efforts to strengthen students' awareness of professional orientation and to expand alumni involvement. While recognising that financial constraints require careful prioritisation, the panel notes that students express a clear wish for internship matchmaking or other forms of facilitated contact with the professional field, and encourages the programme to explore possibilities in this direction.

Thesis process

The programme promotes the quality of the bachelor thesis (10,000 words) by offering students a clear structure through the thesis seminar and by providing individual supervision throughout the writing process. Students are encouraged to integrate their language skills into their thesis research by working with source material in Indonesian, Hindi, Sanskrit or Tibetan where this is relevant and feasible. Given the programme's emphasis on language acquisition, the panel recommends requiring the use of regional-language primary sources in the final thesis, while allowing students to request a well-substantiated exception if necessary. Preparation for the thesis takes place in two dedicated seminars in the third year. Students may indicate a preference for a particular supervisor, after which the Board of Examiners formally appoints the examiner. Each student is entitled to at least four contact moments with their supervisor.

Although the panel judges the thesis supervision to be well designed, some students reported that supervision during the thesis process was at times limited—particularly challenging when combined with the study-abroad period—or, conversely, delayed or very succinct. The programme has taken note of these remarks and is considering how to ensure greater consistency in supervisory practices. The panel endorses this and advises the programme to remain attentive to students' experiences and strive for a balanced and timely supervisory approach. According to the panel, the joint meeting of the Programme Board and the Programme Committee (including student members) could serve as an appropriate platform for monitoring this issue on a regular basis.

Study advice and student guidance

The programme applies a structured approach to study advice and student guidance. The study adviser plays a central role in supporting students throughout their studies, offering both coaching and academic advice. Students can readily approach the adviser for questions about study progress, programme options or personal circumstances. The adviser monitors students' development, provides individual guidance and functions as an independent contact point separate from teaching staff. In addition, first-year students are paired with a second-year mentor. The small scale of the programme further contributes to close contact between staff and students and fosters a close-knit learning community. Students with special needs have access to institutional support through the Fenestra Disability Centre and a dedicated counsellor within the Faculty of Humanities.

The panel is positive about the guidance provided to students, a view shared by the students themselves. It considers the dedication of staff to be instrumental in creating a supportive and cohesive learning environment.

Student intake

The programme has a relatively small annual intake, fluctuating between 7 students in 2024–2025 and 17 students in 2021–2022, while it aims for an annual intake of 25 students. The programme identifies several contributing factors, most notably increased competition from other bachelor's programmes within the institute, such as International Studies, International Relations and Organisations, and Urban Studies. Owing to the participation of incoming exchange students and students from the BA Japanstudies and Chinastudies as well as from the BA History at Leiden University, most courses are taught to larger groups than the core cohort of South and Southeast Asia students. Joint electives with other bachelor's programmes (see *Curriculum restructuring*) are intended to strengthen synergies across the faculty, and the programme is working to intensify its marketing efforts with institutional support.

The panel recognises the structural vulnerability of small Area Studies programmes in a context of budgetary constraints and increasing internal competition. It encourages the programme to continue strengthening its market position and to further develop strategies that enhance its visibility and attractiveness to prospective students.

Language of instruction

The choice for English as the language of instruction is evident, according to both the programme and the panel. All lectures are taught in English, which facilitates communication across cultural and linguistic backgrounds and supports the programme's international learning environment. The diversity of the teaching staff and student population reinforces the international character of the programme. This exposure is intended to prepare students for an international job market, an objective that aligns with the programme's profile as well as with Leiden University's Vision on Teaching and Learning, in which intercultural and international competence plays an important role. The use of English is also appropriate given the inherently global orientation of South and Southeast Asian Studies, where scholarship, academic debates and source materials are predominantly available in English. According to the panel, the bachelor's programme would be considerably less attractive without the influx of international exchange students, and the use of English as the medium of instruction is therefore both pedagogically and structurally justified.

Teaching staff

According to the panel, the teaching staff of the programme is highly qualified. Most staff members teach in multiple programmes within the university and hold part-time appointments in South and Southeast Asian Studies alongside their research activities. The team consists of five full professors, six university lecturers, three researchers and two lecturers. Their disciplinary and regional expertise covers the full breadth of the programme, and several staff members lead major research projects (including NWO and ERC-funded projects) that directly feed into their teaching. Most lecturers are part of the Leiden University Institute for Area Studies (LIAS), ensuring strong connections with broader regional and disciplinary research networks. All staff members meet the required CEFR C1 level to teach in English,

and the permanent teaching staff hold the University Teaching Qualification. Due to recent retirements, the collective expertise has shifted slightly from classical to more modern specialisations, as staff members explained to the panel during the site visit.

The panel is impressed by the expertise and dedication of the teaching staff. Students are likewise highly appreciative of their lecturers, as expressed during the panel discussion and reflected in the National Student Survey, where teaching quality and content expertise received scores above 4 on a 5-point scale.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme offers a coherent and academically rigorous teaching-learning environment that enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The curriculum is well structured, with a clear progression in academic skills, regional expertise and language proficiency, and the study-abroad semester provides substantial added value through linguistic and cultural immersion. The panel is impressed by the expertise and dedication of the teaching staff and by the strong sense of community fostered within this small-scale programme. The choice for English as the language of instruction is well justified, and the programme's commitment to close student guidance contributes to a supportive and engaging learning environment.

At the same time, the panel identifies several areas that warrant continued attention. The planned curriculum restructuring with adjacent Area Studies programmes requires careful monitoring to ensure that joint course offerings are used selectively and only where they demonstrably enhance student learning, safeguarding the programme's distinctive profile. Students would benefit from more consistent and timely thesis supervision, and the panel supports the programme's intention to monitor this systematically, for example through the joint meetings of the Programme Board and Programme Committee. Additional research support—potentially through the new workshops offered in the MA Asian Studies programmes (60 EC and 120 EC)—could further strengthen the thesis trajectory. The panel also recommends requiring students to use regional-language primary sources in the bachelor's thesis, while allowing them to request a well-substantiated exception where appropriate, in order to strengthen the integration of language acquisition into the thesis trajectory. Furthermore, students express a clear wish for more structured connections to the professional field, including internship matchmaking or facilitated contact with employers. The panel also notes the programme's relatively low intake numbers and encourages continued efforts to strengthen its visibility and attractiveness to prospective students.

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

Standard 3: Student assessment

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

Findings and considerations

Testing principles

The programme's assessment policy is embedded in the Faculty-wide Course and Examination Regulations, the Faculty Assessment Framework and the joint Rules and Regulations of the Boards of Examiners. These documents set out the core principles of validity, reliability, transparency and usability, and ensure that assessment is systematically aligned with the learning objectives of each course and, indirectly, with the programme's intended learning outcomes through constructive alignment. The panel considers this policy framework coherent and robust, and observes that it is consistently applied in practice. Lecturers, as examiners with subject-matter expertise, are responsible for selecting assessment formats and determining grading, while the Programme Board and the Board of Examiners monitor the overall balance and diversity of assessment across the curriculum. The panel finds this division of responsibilities appropriate and effective, noting that lecturers demonstrate ownership of assessment while programme-level bodies provide meaningful oversight. The assessment plan demonstrates a coherent and varied system of examination that supports students' learning. Each course includes at least two assessment moments, and many include three or more separate graded tests or assignments, often combining different types of assessment. This frequent evaluation provides both instructors and students with regular insight into academic progress and contributes to lower failure rates.

Non-language courses employ a mix of written examinations, written assignments, oral presentations, weekly online postings and, in some cases, participation grades, with a clear progression from short written tests in Year 1 to longer written assignments, oral presentations and essay-based examinations in later years. Language courses use specialised and intensive assessment methods, including frequent graded homework, vocabulary tests and both written and oral examinations. In Sanskrit and Tibetan, assessment focuses primarily on written examinations, supplemented in Tibetan by graded in-class translation exercises, with a progression from grammatical and syntactical analysis to textual interpretation over the three years. The Programme Seminars explicitly assess both thematic knowledge and academic skills, ranging from basic writing and referencing in Year 1 to primary-source interpretation in Year 2 and thesis-related skills in Year 3. The panel considers the variety of testing methods to be appropriate, with a clear increase in complexity that adequately supports students' learning processes.

The programme safeguards the quality and transparency of assessment through clear procedures for the preparation, approval and archiving of examinations. Every examination paper must be approved by at least two qualified staff members before it is administered, ensuring that the four-eyes principle is structurally embedded in the assessment process. The programme follows the Faculty's examination

archiving policy, in which examination papers, answer and grading keys, and student scripts are systematically stored. These measures provide a consistent quality assurance framework and enable transparent review of assessment materials when required.

Specifically for the mandatory third-year first-semester abroad for students of Indonesian and Hindi, partner institutions apply their own assessment systems, whose quality is safeguarded through established international frameworks. The Indonesian semester is organised via the ACICIS consortium, while the semester in Hyderabad is offered through the Study in India Programme (SIP) under the umbrella of the Nordic Centre in India (NCI), of which Leiden University is a member. Within Leiden University, two coordinators from the BA SSEAS programme maintain contact with both partner universities to monitor the academic content and the language-learning components of the courses followed abroad. The Board of Examiners consults these coordinators when clarification is needed, and the Faculty of Humanities regularly evaluates all study-abroad programmes, including those integral to the BA SSEAS. The panel understands that the programme has limited scope for direct quality control at partner institutions, but considers the collegial monitoring arrangements fit for purpose, also in light of the clear growth in students' language competencies upon their return.

Board of Examiners

The programme shares its Board of Examiners with the BA Korean Studies and the MA Asian Studies programmes (60 EC and 120 EC). Given the wide range of statutory responsibilities—such as granting exemptions, overseeing examination facilities, issuing binding study advice (BSA), and approving electives and internship proposals—the workload of the five-member Board is considerable in relation to its role in safeguarding the quality of assessment and degree certification. Over the past years, the work of the Asian Studies Board of Examiners has become increasingly systematic and professional. This development is reflected in the formal training of Board members, the appointment of an official secretary, and the establishment of a dedicated subcommittee for the quality assurance of assessment.

The panel considers that the Board of Examiners fulfils its statutory responsibilities and conducts regular quality checks of theses and other assessments. Through systematic sampling, the Board reviews completed theses and reports that the majority of these theses, together with their assessments, meet the required standards. When irregularities or concerns are identified, these are discussed with the assessors involved or communicated to the Programme Board for follow-up. At present, however, the panel observes that the Board's approach is largely reactive in nature. While the Board demonstrably performs its formal duties and periodic checks, the panel considers that a more proactive role would further strengthen the programme's assessment quality culture. The panel acknowledges that the Board is evolving in its role and is confident that a more forward-looking stance, focused not only on monitoring but also on anticipating assessment-related risks and developments, would significantly enhance quality assurance. Such a role requires clear institutional positioning and sufficient organizational support,

enabling the Board to fully assume ownership of its mandate. The panel therefore recommends that the programme further strengthens the institutional positioning of the Board of Examiners by facilitating a more proactive and strategically embedded role in safeguarding and enhancing assessment quality.

Thesis assessment and quality assurance

The Board reviews the quality of course assessment on a six-year cycle, while retaining the flexibility to intervene earlier when course evaluations provide reason to do so. In these reviews, the Board examines the alignment between course objectives, assessment methods and assessment criteria, and stresses the importance of systematic archiving of assessment materials to ensure transparency, traceability and effective quality control.

The Board conducts an annual blind quality check of approximately 15% of completed theses to verify whether grading is consistent with thesis quality. All theses are subjected to a plagiarism check using Turnitin. Theses are assessed independently by two examiners. In cases where the assessments differ by two grade points or more, the Board of Examiners appoints a third examiner.

The programme makes purposeful use of external assessors, which the panel understands given the breadth of disciplines and specialised expertise required within South and Southeast Asian Studies. For thesis assessment, the student selects a supervisor (first examiner) based on subject-matter expertise, while the Board appoints the second examiner in light of relevant expertise and availability. As a guiding principle, the Board ensures that at least one examiner is internal or otherwise demonstrably familiar with the programme's standards.

The panel reviewed several theses for which the awarded grades did not fully align with the panel's own judgement. In this light, the panel notes that the assessment form, structured around the Dublin Descriptors, contains relatively broad categories. During the site visit, attention was therefore paid to how these criteria are weighted in practice and how the Board safeguards consistent application across examiners, particularly given the significant reliance on external assessors. The Board acknowledged the need for a shared benchmark and indicated that calibration sessions have been organised—also in response to the arrival of new colleagues. The panel appreciates these efforts, but concludes that calibration is not yet embedded in a fully systematic and programme-wide manner. The panel therefore recommends that the programme and the Board of Examiners further strengthen and institutionalise calibration practices for thesis assessment to support a shared understanding of standards, improve consistency in grading and feedback, and safeguard reliable decision-making, particularly in borderline cases.

Generative AI

The programme is aware of the increasing use of Generative AI tools in written assignments. Instructors have observed a significant rise in the use of AI tools for essay writing in recent years. As there are currently no reliable detection tools, lecturers have resorted to additional measures—such as oral examinations or in-class essay writing—to verify authorship. Students are regularly informed about the inappropriate use of GenAI, with explicit warnings regarding its misuse in written work.

At faculty level, rules and guidelines have recently been issued to provide teaching staff with a common framework for addressing GenAI and academic integrity. The faculty does not permit the use of GenAI-generated material in any form of examination unless explicitly authorised by the examiner under specified conditions. Any verbatim copying or reproduction of GenAI-generated material without full source attribution is not permitted. The guidelines also aim to support staff and students in understanding the appropriate and very limited use of GenAI in the context of assessment, including requirements for disclosure and awareness of potential pitfalls such as issues related to sourcing, bias and factual inaccuracies.

The panel appreciates the programme's clear attention to the challenges posed by GenAI and the measures already taken to safeguard academic integrity. However, it observes that the programme's current approach is predominantly restrictive, focusing on preventing misuse. While this is understandable in the early stages of AI integration, the panel encourages the programme to work towards a more integrated and strategic perspective on GenAI, in which implications for intended learning outcomes, the teaching-learning environment and assessment are explicitly addressed. Given the rapid development of AI technologies, a more forward-looking strategy may help the programme maintain both academic integrity and pedagogical relevance.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme has a solid and well-structured system of student assessment. Assessment principles are firmly embedded in faculty-wide regulations, and the variety of testing methods across the curriculum is appropriate, coherent and supportive of students' learning. The programme applies clear procedures for the preparation, approval and archiving of examinations, and the study-abroad arrangements are monitored in a manner that the panel considers fit for purpose. The Board of Examiners fulfils its statutory duties and has taken steps towards a more systematic and professionalised approach.

At the same time, the panel identifies several areas for further strengthening. It recommends enhancing the institutional positioning of the Board of Examiners to enable a more proactive and strategically embedded role in safeguarding assessment quality. With regard to thesis assessment, the panel recommends further strengthening and institutionalising calibration practices to support a shared understanding of standards, improve consistency in grading and feedback, and safeguard reliable

decision-making, particularly in borderline cases. Finally, while the programme's cautious approach to Generative AI is understandable, the panel encourages the development of a more integrated strategy that explicitly links GenAI to learning outcomes, the teaching-learning environment and assessment practices.

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

Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes

The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Findings and considerations

Final projects

All assessments in the programme contribute to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes, with the final project serving as the key integrative assessment. Positioned at level 400—the highest level within Leiden's academic framework for a BA programme—the final project consists of a 10 EC bachelor's thesis of approximately 10,000 words in which students demonstrate their ability to conduct academic research at bachelor's level under supervision. Average thesis grades over recent years range between 7.5 and 7.8, with a substantial proportion graded 8.0 or higher.

Based on its review of a representative selection of fifteen bachelor's theses, including the accompanying assessment forms, the panel concludes that graduates of the BA South and Southeast Asian Studies achieve the intended learning outcomes. In most cases, the panel's assessments aligned with those of the programme's examiners, confirming that the theses meet the expected bachelor level. Although the panel noted some differences in grading—both in terms of consistency between examiners and the precision of the assigned marks (see also Standard 3)—these did not affect its overall judgement of sufficiency.

Two theses prompted more extensive discussion with the Board of Examiners and the assessors. In one case, the thesis had initially been awarded a borderline pass (6.0). The panel was not fully convinced of its sufficiency, but after receiving additional substantiation during the site visit, it accepted the grade as a just-sufficient performance. In the other case, the panel judged that the thesis, awarded with an 8, did not meet the required standard, particularly regarding the formulation of the research question and methodological rigour. This thesis had been assessed by two external examiners appointed for their topic-specific expertise. The panel considers this an isolated case. However, since this situation unintentionally deviated from the programme's rule that at least one examiner must be a member of

the teaching team (see Standard 3), the panel advises the programme to adhere strictly to this requirement to safeguard consistent expectations and alignment.

Performance of graduates

The panel finds that graduates are well prepared for further study and professional practice. A considerable number continue into master's programmes at Leiden University—such as the MA Asian Studies, the Research MA Asian Studies, or Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology—or at other institutions, including the University of Amsterdam. Alumni survey data indicate that 43% of respondents (BA and MA combined) secure employment within two months of graduation. Graduates work in a wide range of fields, including art and culture, IT, information management, and governmental and non-governmental organisations, in roles such as researcher, adviser, coordinator, trainer, editor and communicator. These outcomes suggest that graduates acquire the skills and competencies required to transition successfully into further study or the labour market.

The programme has recently intensified its alumni engagement efforts, responding to students' desire for stronger connections with the professional field. Supported by the faculty's communication specialists, the programme launched a LinkedIn community for South and Southeast Asian Studies, which now includes more than 2,000 members and serves as an active platform for networking, sharing opportunities and highlighting alumni achievements. The panel welcomes these developments and considers them a valuable step toward strengthening the programme's professional orientation. It encourages the programme to continue and further develop such initiatives, as they contribute meaningfully to students' connection with the professional field.

Conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved, as confirmed by the overall quality of the bachelor's theses. While one thesis was judged insufficient by the panel due to divergent grading and the absence of an internal examiner, the panel considers this an isolated case. It therefore advises adhering strictly to the rule that at least one thesis examiner must be a member of the teaching team to safeguard consistent expectations and alignment. Graduates progress successfully into a range of relevant master's programmes and find employment across diverse professional fields, indicating that they acquire the skills and competencies needed for further study and the labour market. The panel also welcomes the programme's strengthened alumni engagement efforts and encourages the continuation and further development of such initiatives, as they enhance students' connection with the professional field and support the programme's overall quality.

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

Final conclusion

The NVAO approved panel has assessed the programme against four standards. The panel concludes that the **bachelor's programme South and Southeast Asian studies** meets all standards (intended learning outcomes, teaching-learning environment, student assessment and achieved learning outcomes) and thus rates the overall quality of the programme as positive.

Standard	Judgement
Intended learning outcomes <i>Standard 1: The intended learning outcomes tie in with the level and orientation of the programme; they are geared to the expectations of the professional field, the discipline and international requirements.</i>	meets
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
Student assessment <i>Standard 3: The programme has an adequate system of assessment in place.</i>	meets
Achieved learning outcomes <i>Standard 4: The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.</i>	meets
Final conclusion	positive

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

- The panel considers the programme's profile clear, coherent and nationally unique, characterised by its integrated focus on both South and Southeast Asia, its international orientation, and its combination of multidisciplinary area studies with substantial language training.
- The panel is impressed by the successful integration of the previously separate South Asia and Southeast Asia study programmes into a coherent and academically robust regional curriculum, in which the distinct area specialisations and various disciplinary approaches have been thoughtfully preserved.
- The panel values the coherence and progression of the curriculum, which offers a well-structured trajectory from foundational courses to advanced, research-oriented components, supported by a systematic embedding of academic skills. The panel appreciates that the curriculum offers

students meaningful opportunities to shape their own academic profile within a coherent regional framework.

- The panel is impressed by the strong and continuous integration of language learning, noting that the sustained trajectory in Indonesian, Hindi, Sanskrit or Tibetan—reinforced by the study abroad semester—enables students to meaningfully engage with primary sources and regional contexts.
- The panel judges the teaching staff to be highly qualified, academically active and strongly committed to student learning, with expertise that covers the full breadth of the programme and is enriched by staff involvement in major research projects.
- The panel praises the supportive and close-knit learning environment, facilitated by the programme's small scale, the accessibility of staff, and the structured system of study advising and mentoring.
- The panel considers the assessment system coherent, varied and robust, with clear quality assurance procedures, a well-implemented four-eyes principle, and constructive involvement of the Board of Examiners in safeguarding assessment quality.
- The panel concludes that graduates demonstrably achieve the intended learning outcomes, as evidenced by the overall quality of the bachelor's theses, successful progression into relevant master's programmes, and positive early career trajectories; it also appreciates the programme's strengthened alumni engagement efforts, which enhance students' connection with the professional field.

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

- The panel advises the programme to safeguard its distinct profile in South and Southeast Asian Studies within the planned collaboration at faculty level with adjacent programmes such as Korean Studies, Japanese Studies, and Chinese Studies.
- The panel advises the programme to leverage joint offerings with adjacent programmes within the faculty selectively, using them only where they demonstrably enhance student learning.
- The panel advises the programme to explore ways to strengthen research support for thesis preparation, potentially by connecting students to the new workshops in the MA Asian Studies programmes (60 and 120 EC).
- The panel advises the programme to explore possibilities for internship matchmaking or other forms of facilitated contact with the professional field.
- The panel advises the programme to remain attentive to students' experiences of varied thesis feedback and strive for a balanced and timely supervisory approach, in which the joint meeting of the Programme Board and Programme Committee could serve as appropriate platform for monitoring this issue on a regular basis.

- The panel advises the programme to continue strengthening its market position and to further develop strategies that enhance its visibility and attractiveness to prospective students.
- The panel advises the programme to consider a more integrated strategy that explicitly links GenAI to intended learning outcomes, the teaching-learning environment and assessment practices.
- The panel advises the programme to adhere strictly to the existing rule that at least one examiner in thesis assessment must be a member of the teaching team to safeguard consistent expectations and alignment.
- The panel advises the programme to continue and further develop alumni engagement, as they contribute meaningfully to students' connection with the professional field.

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

- The panel recommends requiring students to use regional-language primary sources in the bachelor's thesis, while allowing them to request a well-substantiated exception where appropriate.
- The panel recommends that the programme further strengthens the institutional positioning of the Board of Examiners by facilitating a more proactive and strategically embedded role in safeguarding and enhancing assessment quality.
- The panel recommends that the programme and the Board of Examiners further strengthen and institutionalise calibration practices for thesis assessment to support a shared understanding of standards, improve consistency in grading and feedback, and safeguard reliable decision-making, particularly in borderline cases.

4. Annexes

Annex 1: Administrative data

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

Programme	
Programme name in RIO	B Zuid- en Zuidoost-Aziëstudies
International name	South and Southeast Asian Studies
Location	Leiden
Programme number in RIO	56099
Orientation and level	Wo-bachelor
Research master	No
Language of instruction	English
(Legal) professional requirements	No
All study programmes/tracks/specialisations	No
Joint programme	No
Distinctive feature	No
Degree awarded and addition to the degree	B of Arts
Study load in EC	180
Variant(s) (full-time, part-time, dual)	Full-time
Working with units of learning outcomes (full-time, part-time, dual)	No
External assessment group classification	WO Regiostudies 1/ Area Studies 1
Submission date of accreditation report	1 May 2026
Other (e.g. name change or extension of study duration)	No

Annex 2: Intended learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

1. General knowledge of the language map of South and Southeast Asia and of the position of the languages of this region, in particular Hindi, Indonesian, Sanskrit and Tibetan, within language families;
2. General knowledge of different scholarly approaches to language;
3. Insight into the functioning of language in various socio-political contexts in South and Southeast Asia;
4. Basic knowledge of historical and current developments in South and Southeast Asia, in particular India, Indonesia and Tibet, and a broad knowledge of the study of history;
5. Basic knowledge of the history and institutions of at least one of the major religions in South and Southeast Asia (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam), and a broad knowledge of the study of religion;
6. Basic knowledge of various cultural expressions (language, literature, art and material culture, performing arts, popular culture) in South and Southeast Asia, in particular India, Indonesia and Tibet, and a broad knowledge of the various scholarly approaches to these cultural expressions;
7. Deeper knowledge of, and insight into, one of the two specialized areas of study in the programme (1. Modern South and Southeast Asia or 2. Classical Cultures of South and Southeast Asia);
8. Knowledge of, and insight into, the history and state of the art of the study of South and Southeast Asia.

Applying knowledge and understanding

9. Language proficiency: the learning outcomes with regard to the component language acquisition depend on the chosen language (Hindi, Indonesian, Sanskrit, or Tibetan) and the level at which the student completes this component. The minimum allowable completed language component is 40 EC;

Aims and objectives of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

Hindi:	Propaedeutic	Bachelor
Listening	A1	B1
Reading	A2	B2
Spoken interaction	A1	B1
Spoken production	A1	B1
Writing	A1	B1
Indonesian:		
Listening	A2	B2
Reading	B1	B2
Spoken interaction	A1	B1
Spoken production	A2	B2
Writing	A2	B2

Sanskrit

Knowledge and understanding of the idiom of different text genres in classical Sanskrit; ability to read authentic material on specific topics within the student's individual research interests and to interpret this material in its cultural context;

Tibetan

Knowledge and understanding of the idiom of different text genres in classical Tibetan; ability to read authentic material on specific topics within the student's individual research interests and to interpret this material in its cultural context.

Judgement

10. The ability to answer basic research questions regarding the study of South and Southeast Asia using secondary sources and, depending on the language chosen and the level achieved in this language, primary sources;

Learning skills

11. Ability to be self-critical, in particular the ability to put culturally instilled attitudes into perspective.

Furthermore, each humanities programme at Leiden University trains students in the general academic skills formulated by the Faculty. These skills relate to the Dublin descriptors Judgement, Communication, and Learning skills.

Annex 3: Curriculum outline

B South and Southeast Asian studies

Year 1				
Core curriculum: Area Studies (5 EC, blok 1)	Histories of Modern South and Southeast Asial (5 EC)	Premodern History of South and Southeast Asia (5 EC)	Elective Religion (5 EC)	Elective language 1* (10 EC)
Languages of South and Southeast Asia: History, Context and Structure (5 EC)	Nation, Community, Self: Questions of Culture in South and Southeast Asia (5 EC)	State, Politics and Economy in Modern South and Southeast Asia (5 EC)	Seminar I: Classical Cultures of South and Southeast Asia (5 EC)	Elective Language 2* (10 EC)
Year 2				
Reading South and Southeast Asia (5 EC)	Elective SSEAS (5 EC)	Course 1 Track A or B** (5 EC)	Course 2 Track A or B** (5 EC)	Elective Language 3* (10 EC)
Core Curriculum: Philosophy of Science (5 EC)	Seminar II: Current Affairs - South and Southeast Asia (5 EC)	Course 3 Track A or B** (5 EC)	Course 4 Track A or B** (5 EC)	Elective Language 4* (10 EC)
Year 3 (Stay abroad)				
Discretionary space at guest university (15 EC)		Language courses at guest university (15 EC)		
Discretionary space (15 EC)		Seminar III: Heritage of South and Southeast Asia (5 EC)	Bachelor Thesis (10 EC)	
Year 3 (Stay at home)				
Discretionary space (15 EC)		Course 5 Track A or B** (5 EC)	Elective Language 5* (10 EC)	
Discretionary space (15 EC)		Seminar III: Heritage of South and Southeast Asia (5 EC)	Bachelor Thesis (10 EC)	

* Students choose one of the following languages: Hindi, Sanskrit or Tibetan

** Students choose from courses on offer in either Track A: Modern South and Modern Southeast Asia or Track B: Classical Cultures of South and Southeast Asia.

Annex 4: Programme site visit

Cluster Area studies 2 – Site visit

Day 1: 8th of December 2025

8:30	8:35	Reception
8:35	9:15	Internal deliberations panel
9:15	9:45	Session faculty management (voertaal: NL)
9:45	10:00	Break
10:00	10:45	Session programme management BA International Studies and BA China Studies
10:45	11:00	Break
11:00	11:45	Session lecturers BA China Studies
11:45	12:30	Session students BA China Studies
12:30	13:15	Lunch
13:15	13:45	Session Examinations Board BA China Studies
13:45	14:15	Break
14:15	15:00	Session lecturers BA International Studies
15:00	15:45	Session students BA International Studies
15:45	16:00	Break
16:00	16:30	Session Examinations Board BA International Studies
16:30	17:15	Discussing future development BA International Studies
17:15	18:00	Internal deliberations of the panel

Day 2: 9th of December 2025

09.00	10.00	Session programme management BA Korean Studies / MA Asian Studies 60 EC / MA Asian Studies 120 EC / BA SSEAS
10.00	10.30	Break
10.30	11.15	Session lecturers BA SSEAS
11.15	12.00	Session students BA SSEAS
12.00	13.00	Lunch
13.00	13.45	Session lecturers MA Asian Studies 60 EC & 120 EC
13.45	14.30	Session students MA Asian Studies 60 EC & 120 EC
14.30	15.00	Break
15.00	15.45	Session lecturers BA Korean Studies
15.45	16.30	Session students BA Korean Studies
16.30	16.45	Break
16.45	17.30	Session Examinations Board Asian studies
16.15	17.30	Internal deliberations of the panel

Day 3: 10th of December 2025

09.00	09.30	Internal deliberations of the panel
09.30	10.00	Session programme management BA Japan Studies
10.00	10.15	Break
10.15	11.00	Session lecturers BA Japan Studies
11.00	11.45	Session students BA Japan Studies
11.45	12.00	Break
12.00	12.30	Session Examinations Board Japan Studies
12.30	13.15	Lunch
13.15	15.00	Internal deliberations of the panel
15.00	15.45	Pending issues programme management all programmes
15.45	16.15	Internal deliberations of the panel
16.15	17.00	Discussing future development MA Asian Studies 60 & 120 EC
17.00	18.00	First feedback of the panel

Annex 5: Documents

Self-evaluation report B South and Southeast Asian Studies

- Self-evaluation report B South and Southeast Asian Studies
- Appendixes
 - Faculty Appendix SER
 - Prospectus BA South and Southeast Asian Studies
 - Education Dashboard FGW
 - Bachelor Course and Examination Regulations – Faculty of Humanities
 - Bachelor Course and Examination Regulations – South and Southeast Asian Studies
 - Staff overview
 - Assessment plan BA South and Southeast Asian Studies
 - Rules and Regulations Board of Examiners
 - Vision on Teaching and Learning
 - Guide to Teaching Quality Assurance
 - Manual for Board of Examiners
 - Teaching Evaluation Framework
 - Manual for Programme Committees
 - Assessment Framework
 - Thesis assessment at the Faculty of Humanities

Additional documentation

- AI guide for teachers FGW Leiden University
- Implementing AI in your curriculum FGW Leiden University
- Guidelines for GenAI use students FGW Leiden University
- Annual report Board of Examiners
- OLC Meeting notes
- Annual Report BA South and Southeast Asian Studies

Selection of final products

Prior to the site visit, the panel reviewed fifteen final projects from the bachelor's programme in South and Southeast Asian Studies. The programme does not offer formal specialisations. The sample reflected a balanced distribution in terms of grades, topics and supervisors.

Grade Range	Number of theses	Selected
5,5-6,9 sufficient	2	1
7,0-8,4 good	45	12
8,5-10 very good	7	2
Total	54	15

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