



Report on Development Dialogue

Programme details	
School	Erasmus School of Social and Behavioural Sciences (ESSB)
Programme	Liberal Arts and Sciences
CROHO	50393

Accreditation details		
NVAO Framework	2024	
Date site visit	3 -10-2024	
Panel	<i>Chair</i>	Em. prof. dr. T. (Ton) van Haaften
	<i>Member</i>	Prof. dr. H. (Helen) Brookman
	<i>Member</i>	Dr.-Ing. S. (Sabine) Sané
	<i>Member</i>	Prof. UAS. dr. J.I.A. (Irene) Visscher-Voerman
	<i>Student member</i>	N.B. (Nara) Coutinho
	<i>Secretary</i>	Dr. Fiona Schouten
Panel conclusion	<i>Standard 1</i>	meets the standard
	<i>Standard 2</i>	meets the standard
	<i>Standard 3</i>	meets the standard
	<i>Standard 4</i>	meets the standard
	<i>Final conclusion</i>	Positive
NVAO decision	19-06-2025	
The most recent results of the programme accreditation can be consulted at https://www.nvao.net/nl/besluiten/opleidingen .		

Development dialogue details	
Date	3 -10-2024
Participants	Representatives of the panel and programme management

Context development dialogue
In line with the NVAO assessment framework, each programme or cluster of programmes conducts a 'development dialogue' (ontwikkelgesprek) with the assessment panel following the assessment visit. During this development dialogue, future developments and potential improvements are discussed from a development perspective. The agenda is drawn up by the study programme. Although the development dialogue is part of the programme review, outcomes are not part of the accreditation assessment. Pursuant to the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act (WHW), Article 5.13 paragraph 6, we publish the report of these discussions with this document.

Discussion points

On 3 October 2024, EUC-LAS was assessed by a peer review panel in the context of the Liberal Arts and Sciences cluster assessment. During the site visit, the programme management and the assessment panel conducted a development dialogue. This dealt with some themes regarding the curriculum update EUC-LAS is currently working on.

The three topics were

- Major-Minor system
- The end product
- Resit policy

Discussion takeaways

Major-minor system

The curriculum comprises 17 majors (both mono-and interdisciplinary) and 18 minors. Although interdisciplinarity lies at the heart of the EUC-LAS programme's mission, the programme aims to make this ambition more tangible by streamlining its curriculum, while still ensuring that students demonstrate sufficient specialisation to remain eligible for a wide range of master's programmes. So, the question arises whether the current major-minor system will still be the most optimal structure for our redesigned curriculum or not. Possible alternatives include broader, more interdisciplinary majors; a thematic or pillar-based structure with specific tracks; majors with fewer pre-defined courses and greater flexibility to take courses outside the major; and minors without fixed course requirements but centered on broad LAS themes.

The panel advises the programme management to start with the aims and vision of the programme. What does it want to achieve? In line with that vision, the panel observes that the programme is currently trying to serve multiple goals: fostering interdisciplinarity on the one hand, while at the same time ensuring alignment with disciplinary master's programmes on the other. Furthermore, it suggests looking into the option of reducing the number of majors in favour of stronger interdisciplinarity. Finally, according to the panel, the programme could be made more attractive by reshaping its narrative to highlight students' interest in addressing societal challenges and making a meaningful contribution to society.

The end product

The Capstone Thesis, 15 EC, represents the culmination of students' studies, allowing them to demonstrate proficiency in their chosen field through independent research and a written thesis. However, in light of developments in AI, this format has been critiqued for its limitations. The programme is therefore considering alternative formats to allow for greater differentiation, such as an interdisciplinary research portfolio, design-based projects, or the inclusion of presentations. The programme management asks the panel for advice on how best to explore and implement such alternative formats.

According to the panel, any such changes should be guided by the programme's overall vision and objectives, while carefully weighing the additional workload for both students and staff. In addition, the panel outlined the necessity of clear grading rubrics for all different formats.

Resit policy

EUC's academic rules and regulations document (ARR) outlines that students can use a resit opportunity during the Summer Term for a maximum of two courses per academic year without restrictions on the grade obtained during the first attempt and that only the highest grade obtained will be used to compute the final course grade. This resit policy is addressed as an issue by staff and students, since its timing creates work pressure. The programme management therefore asks the panel for suggestions on how to address this issue.

The panel suggests placing a maximum on the resit grade (e.g., 60%) to reduce the number of students who take a resit. This makes the resit period less stressful for staff and nudges students to avoid resits and thus, study delay. This, however, does not encourage students to improve their grade which might be required for access to certain master.