



Report

Date

7 October 2020

Subject

Development dialogue Research Master Archaeology

1. How to strengthen the profile of the Programme?

The management of the Programme indicates that its collaboration with Heritage & Memory Studies has at times led to a lack of clarity among students about the differences between their respective MA programmes. Changing the name of the RMA into 'Archaeology, Memory and Heritage' is considered to highlight the distinction with Heritage Studies and enhance the profile of the Programme. The panel agrees that the visibility of the RMA can be improved and putting 'Archaeology' at the beginning of its name could be an effective way of doing so. The programme management and the panel are in agreement that 'Heritage' and 'Memory' are important strategic markers in the name of the Programme, not in the least because of their increasing importance within the discipline of Archaeology. Including them in the name would of course mean that they ought to be pillars of the RMA, equal to 'Archaeology', and this should be reflected in the curriculum. It could be worthwhile, the panel suggests, to ask the students and alumni how essential including 'Memory' in the name is from their perspective. Relatedly, promoting the Programme is strongly advised by the panel members, because the innovative research and teaching within the RMA deserve more attention. A concrete tip is training students to become ambassadors for their Programme, for instance by promoting it on social media. The enthusiastic alumni of RMA can hopefully fulfill a similar role.

2. How can the role of embedded research in the Programme be enhanced?

The programme management emphasizes its continuous search for ways to involve students in research projects, notably in electives and tutorials, allowing students to acquire valuable, hands-on experience. A clear desire is expressed to strengthen the scientific dimension of the Programme, especially considering the excellent, but currently under-utilized facilities that students and staff have at their disposal. A plan will be drafted to connect the research facilities, such as human and animal bone laboratories, more closely to activities within the RMA. It can be a challenge to obtain enough material, however, especially in the Dutch context with its many commercial excavation activities, which is why many students currently visit dig sites abroad. More staff members to supervise the research activities of students would also be helpful and a positive dynamic in which more students will enable the hiring of more lecturers may very well be on the horizon, considering that the number of students in the BA programme has tripled over the last few years. Clearly, the infrastructure is present for embedded research activities in the Programme and there are several promising research projects underway to which RMA students actively contribute. The panel members are positive about the examples they have seen of this during the visitation, such as the 4D research lab. They are supportive, moreover, of the programme management's choice to stimulate group research projects, which will become a more defined part of the RMA in the next years. In this context the close ties of the Programme with the Allard Pierson Museum can be of use, because this museum provides an excellent setting for such group projects.