

**Outcomes Development Dialogue
Bachelor Sociale Geografie en Planologie (SGPL),
Master Human Geography (HG) &
Master Urban and Regional Planning (URP)**

held on April 10, 2019, Amsterdam

In line with the NVAO assessment framework, each study programme or cluster of study programmes conducts a ‘development dialogue’ (*ontwikkelgesprek*) with the assessment panel during the assessment visit. During this development dialogue, possible 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, the recommendations are not part of the accreditation assessment. Pursuant to the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act, Article 5.13, paragraph 6, we publish the recommendations that follow from this development dialogue with this document.

The most recent results of the programme accreditation can be consulted at <https://www.nvao.net/nl/besluiten/opleidingen> or <https://www.nvao.net/en/decisions/educations>

Please note that the dialogue was held for three programmes together. Recommendations often concerned all three programmes. Therefore, there is one document for the three programmes.

The dialogue took place on April 10, 2019, between the expert panel, the programme directors, the directors of the College and Graduate School of Social Sciences, the chair of the department of Geography, Planning and International Development Studies (GPIO, chair of the meeting), the chair and other members of the examinations board, members of the programme committee, the programme coordinators and the study advisors of the programmes and other interested staff.

The dialogue was held directly after the feedback on the accreditation standards proper, in which the panel expressed appreciation for the community of staff and students and the openness of all participants. Also, there was praise for the strong constructive alignment in the curricula of the programmes. The panel welcomed the measures taken to increase the diversity of methodological approaches and techniques in the bachelor’s programme. The panel also suggested to stimulate students to explicitly reflect on their spatial perspective (human geography or planning) in the thesis. For the master’s programmes, the panel encourages the programme to keep paying attention to intensifying and/or pointing out the connection with the work field. It also supports the plans (HG) to allow for more differentiation in methodological skills training. For URP, it finds that the focus of the programme is more specialised than the name implies. For all programmes, the panel suggests looking into ways of documenting the findings of the supervisor and the second reader more transparently and to keep discussing grade calibration with staff.

Agenda for the dialogue

- a) English language in the bachelor’s programme. Should we keep it the way it is (Dutch, with some English-taught courses) or should we ‘go English’?
 - b) Work pressure: How can we economize work pressure without compromising education quality?
- a) English language in the bachelor’s programme Should we keep it the way it is (Dutch, with some English-taught courses) or should we ‘go English’?**
- There is consensus that a switch in instruction language ought to be motivated intrinsically, thus by content, target population and expertise of staff, rather than joining in the ‘rat race’ for English-taught programmes.
 - Amsterdam seems to be the perfect place for an international programme.
 - Scientific education needs nuance: you need to be sure that students’ and staff’s language proficiency is good enough to ensure this.
 - When defining the target population, the – hitherto underrepresented – group of students with a non-university (among which, but not exclusively so migration) background from the Amsterdam region ought not to be forgotten.
 - Teaching in English may increase student numbers dramatically. One of the strengths of the programmes now is small-scale teaching. That ought not to be jeopardized.

- In order to cater for different groups, it is even more important than now to create a safe learning environment
- If you want to reach underrepresented groups, for example students with migrant background, you may need to change the way you communicate. Active outreach is necessary.
- Do not forget the labour market in the language discussion: for graduates in the Netherlands, mastery of the Dutch language is necessary for most policy positions.

b) Work pressure: How can we economize work pressure without compromising education quality?

- This point on the agenda was not covered due to lack of time.