



# NVAO report "Ontwikkelgesprek"

13 February 2024

During the development conversation on 11 May 2021, the committee along with colleagues from the *Erasmus Mundus Journalism, Media and Globalisation* programme discussed several points for consideration in the coming years. These points can be grouped around several themes:

1. Student Expectation Management
2. Transition Support
3. Linking Study to Practice

Each is further discussed below. Altogether, the dialogue was highly productive and provided important inspiration for the programme's continued renovation.

## 1. Student Expectation Management

It was discussed that students can – at points – be surprised by the academic nature of the programme and may instead wrongly assume that the programme is oriented towards the practical training of journalism. Moreover, it was highlighted that some students do not properly anticipate the research method rigor that is part of the Amsterdam specialisation. It was discussed that, to ensure students understand the programme of study, the programme might leverage social media for information sharing (e.g., via 'student takeover days') and ensure that students are repeatedly directed to the website for complete information. Further, it was discussed that first-year teachers can emphasise the research-intensive paradigm of the Amsterdam specialisation; that this message can further be echoed in newsletters to students in the first year prepared by Amsterdam; and that this information can be shared with student representatives in the first year as well.

## 2. Transition Support

The transition from year 1 to year 2 (Denmark to the Netherlands) was discussed to be bumpy for some students. To reduce this, the group discussed offering more guidance on the study load, rules, regulations, and other practical issues associated with the transition. Here, ideas included using a special newsletter for 1st year students; having a "knowledge transfer moment" between student representatives in each year; visiting Aarhus in the Spring semester to meet students and discuss these points face-to-face; and holding a specialised digital session in the spring semester with an immigration expert to answer the policy questions that tend to cause the most stress. Moreover, it was discussed to reignite the programme consistency committee (PCC) to ensure that lecturers in the first and second year are speaking about their courses and can align content, as relevant.

## 3. Linking Study to Practice

There was also a strong recognition that the students in the programme are seeking a clear connection to the practical space of journalism, and often struggled to understand how an empirical programme aids their skills in the practice of journalism. There was strong support for continuing with the programme's plans to engage its alumni network for a range of extracurricular options; and moreover, there was discussion about ways to strengthen the practical element of the Journalistic Product course in the Amsterdam specialization – for example, by offering more training on storyboarding; editing; and digital content creation. In this dialogue, it was discussed why internships are not formally supported in the 2nd year (i.e., as they are extracurricular content; not within the curriculum) and – for that reason – why it is valuable to emphasize to students that the first year is an important place to consider following an internship (i.e., it is within curriculum in the first year of the programme) if the direct application to practice is deemed particularly valuable by the student.