

Peerreview Master of Biology – public report

Most important conclusions of the peerreview

The report of the peerreviewteam identifies a number of strengths of the programme, as well as suggestions for further improvement. These suggestions have already been incorporated into the programme development plan for the coming period. The most important conclusions of the peerreview are summarized below.

Strengths of the programme

The peerreviewteam met a very **involved and approachable teaching team**. Additionally, the team is clearly very passionate about their domain and the training of the biology students. The extensive **(research) expertise** of the staff is also a major asset for the programme. The core team of the programme shows a **development-oriented quality culture** that continuously strengthens the programme and the students.

The biology courses at UAntwerp have a clearly **defined and strong profile**. For example, the bachelor's programme has a strong and broad scientific base; the master's programmes have a strong nexus between research and education.

Another asset is the strong interweaving of **theory and competences** throughout the study programmes. This asset is expressed, among other things, in a rich diversity of used teaching methods. The peerreviewteam considers the *entrepreneurship & management* option that the programme offers a good practice, as does the *conservation internship*.

The peerreviewteam appreciates the efforts of the programmes for **inclusiveness and diversity** among its students. In particular, the programmes are strong in attracting, guiding and supporting foreign students and they do a lot for starting, incoming students.

Suggestions for further improvement

The programme will set up a working group to thoroughly examine the **master's thesis process** in order to strengthen the organization, the progress and the supervision throughout the process. In this way, it meets various concerns of the students.

In addition, the programme will map out where more attention is needed on **feedback on tasks and assignments** in the master's programme(s). The programme will also encourage its teachers to make an overview of common mistakes in tasks and assignments, an initiative that the peerreviewteam values.

Contact with the **professional field** is a concern of the programmes. To this end, it will set up a working group to develop an active and dynamic **alumni network**. In this way, the programmes will also be able to connect more with the professional field and, moreover, have more opportunities to involve representatives of the professional field in its educational practice. The peerreviewteam also suggests that the programme shares its expertise with the professional field, for example with lifelong learning initiatives.

The programmes can be further strengthened by organizing foreign-language courses, the use of inter- or multidisciplinary projects and by continuing the thinking exercise about the Master in Global Change Biology.

Most recent peerreview Law

Timing

The site visit of the peerreviewteam took place on **23 and 24th of May 2022**.

Peerreviewteam

The programme suggested external and internal candidates as members of the peerreviewteam. The student member was suggested by the Departement of Education, with approval of the Student association of UAntwerp. Chair of the peerreviewteam was the vice-rector Education. The composition of the peerreviewteam was validated on November 19th 2021 by the Board of Programme Evaluation.

Composition of the peerreviewteam Biology:

Chairwoman:

- Ingrid De Meester, professor (FFBD, UAntwerp)

External members:

- Hans Van Gossum, senior advisor biodiversity (Arcadis)
- Hans Van Dyck, professor (UC Louvain)

Internal member:

- Thalia Kruger, professor (FREC, UAntwerp)

Student member:

- Jens Mathé, student (FBE, UAntwerp)

Result Peerreview

The peerreviewteam decided to **confirm confidence** in the programme Biology.

Creation

With regard to the peerreview, the programme made a self-assessment report, describing its vision, good practices, challenges and future prospects. The Department of Education developed a datasheet in consultation with the programme, containing both qualitative (learning outcomes, study programme, staff information, etc.) and quantitative data (amount of enrolments, student success rates, cohort analysis, etc.) about the programme. In consultation with the Department of Education the programme created a time schedule to interview the staff responsible for the programme, students, lecturers, assistants, external partners and alumni. During the interviews between the peerreviewteam and the programme the CIKO staff member of the Faculty was present.

The peerreviewteam evaluated the programme based on qualitative and quantitative information, as the interviews and the preparatory documents: the self-assessment report, the datasheet and the education portfolio of the programme.

The peerreview took place conform to the [European Standards & Guidelines](#).

Report and follow up

All findings of the peerreviewteam are written down in a review report. The review report names several strengths of the programme, and some suggestions for further improvement. The programme incorporated these suggestions in a development plan.

The integrated report – review report and development plan – was validated together with the public information by the Board of Programme Evaluation on October 27th 2022 and was presented to the Education Board on 15 November 2022 and the Executive Board of UAntwerp on 22 November 2022.