

## Peer Review Master of Political Science – public report

### Most important conclusions off the peer review

The report of the peer review team 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 peer review are summarized below.

#### Strengths of the programme

The bachelor's programme has a broad and strong social-scientific and methodological profile. The master's programme is characterized by a **research-driven curriculum** with attention for analytical skills and critical thinking. Students have **extensive options** during their master's programme that enable them to set their own accents. This clear social science approach with a focus on methodology is an important distinguishing feature of the programmes. This profile is also much **appreciated by the working field**. Since 2017-2018 the English Master of Political Science is organized. The international context thus created, is an enormous enrichment for all students.

All courses are designed by a team of passionate lectures with **an open and self-critical attitude**. This reflective attitude is a strong and clear signal of quality assurance. The lecturers take many initiatives that contribute to a varied group of used work and assessment methods. The principle of blended learning is used and they also work on internationalization. Students f.e. are very enthusiastic about the compulsory course '**Skills lab**'. Students have to write a position paper and policy documents, but also have to participate in an online negotiation seminar.

#### Suggestions for further improvement

The strong social-scientific and methodological **profile** can be used **more clear** in all communication towards new students. The programme also wants to clear the importance and use of broad social-scientific skills to their own students. This way the students can become more aware of their learned **competences and skills** to start more self-secure in the working field.

The programme intends to pay more attention to **non-western conceptual frameworks** and political contexts. Cases and literature of non-western countries and by non-western authors will be discussed more often. They also want to take a look at the quantitative and qualitative **research methods**. At the moment qualitative research methods seem underserved and too few different methodologies are discussed. They will also discuss whether the theoretical mathematical basis in quantitative methods should be obtained.

The programme wants to focus on **community building**. For example, by organizing separate information sessions for each programme, social cohesion between students can be increased. In addition the programme also wants to **involve alumni** more often. They can act as a role model for other students.

## Most recent peer review Master of Political Science

### Timing

The site visit of the peer review team took place on **16-17 November 2023**.

### Peer review team

The programme suggested external and internal candidates as members of the peer review team. The student member was suggested by the Departement of Education, with approval of the Student association of UAntwerp. Chair of the peer review team was the vice-rector Education. The composition of the peer review team was validated on 22 April 2022 by the Board of Programme Evaluation.

Composition of the peer review team:

Chairwoman:

- Ann De Schepper, vice-rector Education at UAntwerp

External members:

- Caelesta Braun, professor Public Governance and Civil Society, University Leiden
- Bogdan Vanden Berghe, political director Groen
- Marjolein Meijer, consultant in the field of governance, management and organizational change

Internal member:

- Marnix Beyen, professor Contemporary Political History, UAntwerp

Student member:

- Fien Vlemincx, student Biomedical Sciences, UAntwerp

### Result Peer Review

The peer review team decided to **confirm confidence** in the programme Master of Political Science.

### Creation

With regard to the peer review, 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 peer review team and the programme the CIKO staff member of the Faculty was present.

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

### Report and follow up

All findings of the peer review team 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 8 May 2023 and was presented to the Education Board on xxx and the Executive Board of UAntwerp on xxx.