

Outcomes Development Dialogue
Bachelor Liberal Arts & Sciences (LAS)
Amsterdam University College
held on 28 September 2018, Amsterdam

According to the NVAO assessment framework each study programme should conduct a 'development dialogue' (*ontwikkelgesprek*) parallel to the assessment visit that happens every six years. In this dialogue with the panel possible improvements are identified from a development perspective.

The development dialogue is an integral part of the programme review, but the outcomes are not part of the accreditation assessment. Following the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act, Article 5.13, paragraph 6, the recommendations that arose from the dialogue should, however, be shared publicly, which is what this document is intended for.

Most recent programme accreditation:

<https://www.nvao.net/en/decisions/universiteit-van-amsterdam/b-liberal-arts-and-sciences-joint-degree>

Report of the dialogue

As part of the site visit for Amsterdam University College's successful reaccreditation by NVAQ, a development dialogue was held including colleagues from AUC and panel members on Friday 28 September 2018. The dialogue focused on the topic of a contemporary and relevant Liberal Arts and Science (LAS) curriculum, and included discussion of how our approach to LAS is informed by interdisciplinarity, civic engagement and consideration of the contexts of learning and science. For each of these topics, there was a clear sense of how the forward development of our curriculum can be shaped by our approach.

Interdisciplinarity at AUC entails attending to emerging, dynamic and present connections, often from the ground up. Core courses, such as Academic Writing Skills, introduce the concept and engage students in the methods and skills it requires, and this is built upon in later courses, both within and across disciplines, such as the Big Questions courses (for example about big data), with the aim of sequencing learning over the three years. Panelists commended AUC on the excellent opportunity this approach affords for incorporating reflection within learning and encouraged the College to continue on this path, and also work with smaller questions too, as they can often be just as complex!

Our current strategic vision, AUC 21, emphasises civic engagement and social responsibility within and beyond the curriculum. Courses such as Global Identity Experience foster awareness and engagement with social and personal issues as part of learning, particularly in our own communities. In the process students acquire critical thinking, group working and communication skills, and develop cross cultural competencies while addressing issues such as diversity, migration and community cohesion. Over a third of our students are involved with activities outside of class, such as Right2Education, which inculcates collaborative learning. Others build on this aspect through the Community Projects and Internships they complete.

Our Amsterdam Science Park location offers the perfect opportunity to develop a scientific mindset, and all of our students develop analytical skills regardless of their choice of major. Importantly, we focus on how scientific knowledge is produced and used in society and teach students to become critical users of information.