



# NVAO report "Ontwikkelgesprek"

29 February 2020

**Discussion about future developments Bachelor's and Master's programme in Communication Science at the University of Amsterdam**

## Introduction

The panel that assessed the Bachelor's and Master's programme in Communication Science at the University of Amsterdam for re-accreditation, confirmed that both programmes meet and regularly exceed the criteria laid down in the NVAO Assessment framework for higher education accreditation in the Netherlands.

Below follows a summary of a meeting that took place with the accreditation panel, the programme management and senior staff members at the end of the site-visit day, and where future developments of the programmes in Communication Science at UvA were discussed ('ontwikkelgesprek'). Three focal points for future developments were discussed:

### 1. Further integration of digital research methods into the programmes

Digital communication technologies are currently developing at a very fast pace, and so are related methods of research and data handling. The in-home research institute ASCoR is at the international forefront of these developments in the field of Communication Science. The integration of digital research methods in the Communication Science teaching programmes at the UvA has therefore taken a head start. The accreditation panel and staff agreed that integration of these methods into the programme curriculums should be continued for the next few years to come.

### 2. Students' transfer from the Bachelor's to the Master's programme

Dutch higher education law has introduced a division

between Bachelor's and Master's programmes as of the year 2012-2013. Graduates from the bachelor's programme thereafter increasingly transferred to different master's programmes, while the master's programme witnessed an increasingly diverse population of students coming from different (international) fields. Panel members and staff discussed the desirability of this development. On the one hand, students' aspirations to build an individual study profile through combining bachelor's and master's programmes from different fields should be recognized. On the other hand, there is a need for continuation of students' knowledge base from the bachelor's into the master's programme. Most panel members agreed that an optimal share would be reached by a transfer from the bachelor's programme into the master's programme in Communication Science at UvA by around a third of the students in the years to come.

### 3. Perception of career orientation opportunities

The programmes in Communication Science at the UvA are academic-level programmes, teaching students to independently and critically analyze and produce knowledge about the role of the media and communication in society. In addition, there is a consistent offer of opportunities for the students for career orientation and professional skill acquisition in the field of media and communication, among which the bachelor internships, professional skills workshops, and interactive sessions with communication professionals. Though this offer is popular and well-received by students, this is not reflected in the relevant dimensions on student surveys. Panel and staff discussed that efforts of the next few years should target a better recognition by students of existing initiatives as career orientation opportunities.