

Bestuurlijke reactie BA Religiewetenschappen en MA Religious Studies

The programme appreciates all recommendations, advice and suggestions of the assessment panel. Based on the assessment report, the programme has drawn up a Plan of Action and is already implementing it to improve the quality of education.

The development meeting focused on receiving advice on the MA programme revisions. Since the visitation, we have responded to the advice offered in the following specific ways:

In response to the advice to think of more attractive names for the specialised pathways:

- The pathways have been re-designed (see Standaard 1).

In response to the advice to guard the space for electives:

- The OLB and Study Coordinator have worked to not only guard this space (total of 20 EC's), but also to increase the range of options available to students. We were also able to negotiate with the LIAS OD to continue offering the elective on *Sharia in the West*.

In response to the advice to increase PR:

- This has been slightly derailed by the corona pandemic. While we have taken steps to improve communication surrounding the programme and to increase the web presence, some of the plans (e.g. revive the *Leiden Religie Blog*) have been pushed back by a year.

In response to the advice to make PR among those presently enrolled in the BA and minor:

- This is already happening and will continue to happen. A high percentage of our BA students go on to our MA programme and increasingly we are seeing some minor students do the same.

In response to the advice to continue to include students who wish to study subjects (e.g. new age spirituality) not necessarily visible in the new MA programme:

- There are substantial opportunities for students to explore their own interests throughout the programme. These opportunities are detailed in Standaard 1.

In response to the advice to try to attract BA international Studies and MA International Relations students through career perspectives:

- In November 2019, LUCSoR held a workshop on 'Religion in the BA International Studies Programme' (details under Standaard 2). This initiative is already seeing concrete results in terms of LUCSoR involvement in this programme. In addition to Prof. dr. Maurits Berger teaching *Introduction to International Studies*, other LUCSoR staff continue to teach a wide range of courses (Politics of the Middle East, Research Methods, Thematic Seminars, and Thesis Seminars).
- The MA International Relations programme is less likely to produce a flow of students to the MA Religious Studies. This is mainly due to the fact that they are both MA programmes. LUCSoR involvement in this programme (primarily through Dr. John-Harmen Valk's courses) does, however, provide MA Religious Studies students with access to relevant courses for the Religion, Politics, and Governance pathway.

In response to the advice to encourage and continue efforts for apprenticeships, internationalisation/study abroad, and job market preparation:

- Once again a staff member has secured one of the Faculty Research Traineeship grants for 2020-2021. The OLB will continue to encourage LUCSoR staff members to apply for these grants, which provide a critical research apprenticeship for some of our most ambitious students.
- The issue of internationalisation/study abroad is applicable to the BA Religiewetenschappen and is covered in the other Plan van Aanpak.
- Regarding job market preparation, the current plans for the programme are covered under Standaard 4. Relatedly, the plans for increasing internship possibilities are covered under Standaard 2.

In response to the advice to unite job market efforts with others in LIAS through the hiring of a staff member at the Institute level: This has the full support of the OLB and will be discussed at the *bestuurlijk overleg* in November 2020.