

# **International Studies**

**Brussels School of International Studies  
The University of Kent**

Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities (QANU)  
Catharijnesingel 56  
PO Box 8035  
3503 RA Utrecht  
The Netherlands

Phone: +31 (0) 30 230 3100  
E-mail: [info@qanu.nl](mailto:info@qanu.nl)  
Internet: [www.qanu.nl](http://www.qanu.nl)

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# Report on the master's programmes MA International Conflict and Security, LLM in International Economic Law, LLM in International Law with International Relations, MA in International Political Economy, and MA in International Relations of The University of Kent

This report takes as a starting point the NVAO assessment framework for accreditation at programme level in Flanders.

## Administrative data regarding the programmes

### **Master's programme MA International Conflict and Security**

Name of the programme:	MA International Conflict and Security
HOR registration:	yes
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	90 or 120 EC
Specializations or tracks:	-
Location(s):	Brussels City
Mode(s) of study:	full time, part time
Expiration of accreditation:	30-09-2014

### **Master's programme MA in International Relations**

Name of the programme:	MA in International Relations
HOR registration:	yes
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	90 or 120 EC
Specializations or tracks:	Political Science; International Politics
Location(s):	Brussels City
Mode(s) of study:	full time, part time
Expiration of accreditation:	30-09-2014

### **Master's programme MA in International Political Economy**

Name of the programme:	MA in International Political Economy
HOR registration:	yes
Level of the programme:	master's
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	90 or 120 EC
Specializations or tracks:	Political Science; International Politics
Location(s):	Brussels City
Mode(s) of study:	full time, part time
Expiration of accreditation:	30-09-2014

### **Master's programme LLM in International Law with International Relations**

Name of the programme:	LLM in International Law with International Relations
HOR registration:	yes
Level of the programme:	master of laws
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	90 or 120 EC
Specializations or tracks:	Political Science; International Politics; Public Law
Location(s):	Brussels City
Mode(s) of study:	full time, part time
Expiration of accreditation:	30-09-2014

### **Master's programme LLM in International Economic Law**

Name of the programme:	LLM in International Economic Law
HOR registration:	yes
Level of the programme:	master of laws
Orientation of the programme:	academic
Number of credits:	90 or 120 EC
Specializations or tracks:	International Politics; Law and Politics; Economic Law
Location(s):	Brussels City
Mode(s) of study:	full time, part time
Expiration of accreditation:	30-09-2014

The visit of the assessment committee International Studies to the Brussels School of International Studies of The University of Kent took place on 2-4 June 2014.

### **Administrative data regarding the institution**

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Name of the institution:	The University of Kent
Status of the institution:	registered
Result institutional quality assurance assessment:	not applied

### **Quantitative data regarding the programmes**

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The required quantitative data regarding the programmes are included in Appendix 5.

### **Composition of the assessment committee**

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The committee that assessed the master's programmes MA International Conflict and Security, LLM in International Economic Law, LLM in International Law with International Relations, MA in International Relations, and MA in International Political Economy consisted of:

- Prof. dr. Pierre Vercauteren, chair of the committee
- Prof. dr. Arild Saether, member
- Drs. Ron Ton, member
- Dr. Freya Baetens, member
- Ms. Tessa Baeck MA, student-member

The committee was supported by Mark Delmartino MA, who acted as secretary. Adrienne Wieldraaijer-Huijzer prepared and managed the assessment on behalf of QANU.

The board of the University of Kent and the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) approved the composition of the panel. Appendix 1 contains the curricula vitae of the members of the panel. All members of the panel and the secretaries signed a declaration of independence as required by the NVAO protocol to ensure that they judge without bias, personal preference or personal interest, and the judgement is made without undue influence from the institute, the programme or other stakeholders (see Appendix 8).

## **Working method of the assessment committee**

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### *Preparations*

On 21 April 2014, QANU received the critical reflection on each of the five master programmes under review. After a check on relevance and completeness, the QANU project manager requested the Brussels School of International Studies (further: BSIS) of the University of Kent (further: UoK) to submit additional information and distributed the reports and the additional materials to the members of the committee. They read the reports and provided feedback on their findings to the secretary, who compiled this information for discussion during the panel's preparatory meeting. Furthermore, the secretary produced a list of issues the committee could raise during discussion with one or more stakeholder groups.

In addition, each committee member read 10 recent dissertations covering the full range of marks given, two per programme. The committee members received QANU's checklist for the assessment of theses to ensure that their assessments were comparable. Since the programmes lead to scientific degrees, the committee paid specific attention to the scientific level of the theses, the academic requirements, carefulness of judgement by the reviewer of the programme, and the assessment procedure used. Prior to the site visit, the committee requested insight into the structure, content, assessment and evaluation of a selection of courses. During the site visit, it assessed the quality of the course descriptions, student information, and exams in more detail. An overview of all documents and theses reviewed by the committee is included in Appendix 8.

The secretary visited BSIS on 29 April 2014 to prepare the site visit. The meeting focused on three issues: the programme of the various sessions, the materials to be made available for review on site and the logistics of the three-day visit. As requested by QANU, the institution carefully selected discussion partners. The proposal was discussed with, and eventually approved by, the chair of the committee. An overview of the sessions and the respective participants is included in Appendix 7.

### *Site visit*

The site visit to the Brussels School of International Studies took place on 2-4 June 2014. It started with a preparatory meeting, during which the committee was installed, instructed, and its tasks and functioning were discussed. The committee members exchanged key observations on the programmes and agreed on internal working arrangements during the visit. Finally, the committee identified the issues to be raised in the respective interviews.

During the site visit, the committee also studied the materials put at disposition by BSIS, such as module descriptions, convenor notes, coursework, module evaluations, and minutes of meetings of the Board of Studies, Board of Examiners and the Joint Council.

During the site visit, the committee interviewed the programme management, teaching staff, administrative staff, students, alumni, as well as members of the Board of Studies and the Board of Examiners. Prior to the site visit, both staff and students were informed about the opportunity to speak to the committee confidentially during the 'consultation hour'. No requests were received.

In the absence of specific domain-specific frameworks of reference (Appendix 2) for any of the five programmes under consideration, the committee paid specific attention to the intended learning outcomes of each programme which are listed in Appendix 3.

After the concluding meeting with the management, the committee formulated its considerations and preliminary conclusions per programme and quality standard. The site visit was concluded with a short feedback by the chairman of the committee highlighting the key observations of the committee.

#### *Report*

After the visit, the secretary produced a draft version of the report, which was submitted to the committee for review and feedback. The input of the committee members was processed in a revised draft report, which was then sent to the UoK to check for factual errors. The comments and suggestions provided by the UoK were discussed with the chair of the committee. Based on the committee's decisions to incorporate or ignore comments and suggestions, the secretary compiled the final version of the assessment report.

#### *Decision rules*

In accordance with the NVAO's Assessment framework for limited programme assessments (as of 22 November 2011), the committee used the following definitions for the assessment of both the standards and the programme as a whole.

#### **Generic quality**

The quality that can reasonably be expected in an international perspective from a higher education bachelor's or master's programme.

#### **Unsatisfactory**

The programme does not meet the current generic quality standards and shows serious shortcomings in several areas.

#### **Satisfactory**

The programme meets the current generic quality standards and shows an acceptable level across its entire spectrum.

#### **Good**

The programme systematically surpasses the current generic quality standards across its entire spectrum.

#### **Excellent**

The programme systematically well surpasses the current generic quality standards across its entire spectrum and is regarded as an (inter)national example.



## Summary judgement

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This report provides an overview of the panel's findings and considerations regarding the master's programmes International Conflict and Security, International Relations, International Political Economy, International Law with International Relations, and International Economic Law of the Brussels School of International Studies, University of Kent. The panel based its judgement on information acquired from the critical reflection, a number of selected theses, the interviews held during the site visit, additional reading material which was available during the site visit, and the digital learning environment. The panel found positive aspects as well as points for improvement. Although the panel is critical about Standard 2 of the master's programme International Economic Law, it concludes that the all master's programmes satisfy the requirements for re-accreditation.

### **MA in International Conflict and Security**

The MA in International Conflict and Security addresses a very specific area within the broader field of international relations studies and targets students with a particular motivation. According to the committee, this programme features three characteristics that – taken as a combination – sets it apart from other master programmes in related fields at other universities: interdisciplinarity, contacts with the professional field and a multi-national and multi-cultural student and staff body. In the absence of a domain-specific reference framework for International Conflict and Security studies in either the UK or Flanders, the committee established that the learning outcomes of the programme are formulated adequately for its purpose as master programme of academic orientation. The programme will address not only concepts and theories to understand contemporary international conflicts and security issues, but also learn students about security policies, conflict prevention, early warning and conflict management through negotiation and mediation. The committee, moreover, considers that the intended learning outcomes reflect the requirements of the discipline in an international perspective. Graduates from this programme are likely to find suitable employment according to the committee, as there is a significant demand for professionals working in countries experiencing conflict and/or managing, mitigating or resolving conflicts.

The one-year programme (90 EC, 1800 study hours) consists of two compulsory modules, four electives and one dissertation, which accounts for one third of the regular programme load. The extended variant (120 EC, 2400 study hours) consists of three more elective modules or an additional study period abroad. According to the committee, the curriculum allows students to gain an in-depth understanding of the core concepts of conflict, violence and security. Through their choice of electives, students can add a component on for instance migration or gender. Some modules are taught by practitioners with an academic background who spend most of their time in the field, e.g. as international mediator. These external specialists often start from their own professional expertise and gradually add the academic research perspective, an approach which is much appreciated by the students and brings a particular type of understanding and skills. On the basis of a sample of modules it reviewed, the committee considers that the intended learning outcomes and objectives of the programme are adequately translated in the learning goals of the curriculum modules.

The study load of the programme is feasible. Students are aware that they should take their education in hand, but can rely on the availability and commitment of convenors, thesis supervisors, PhD students and administrative staff. According to the committee, lecturers have the adequate research and didactical expertise to deliver their modules. The number of

permanent staff is limited, but sufficient for the delivery of the programmes in their current form. Moreover, the committee is impressed by the opportunities for study leave by academic staff. The facilities at the Brussels School of International Studies are sufficient. The intranet link with the University of Kent provides students with good access to the library and the virtual learning network. The academic area, however, is not conducive for individual research and the lecture/seminar rooms lack state-of-the art equipment, such as smartboards.

The assessment system follows the provisions established at the University of Kent and is implemented adequately across all programmes in Brussels. The committee thinks highly of the information that is provided to students in the programme and module specifications, as well as of the feedback lecturers provide to students' individual coursework. On the basis of the sample it reviewed, the committee considers the assessments to be valid, reliable and transparent. The key assessment product invariably being an essay, the committee suggests the programme to diversify its assessment within and across modules.

The committee reviewed a sample of ten dissertations and considers each of these to be of sufficient academic quality. Apart from reading many (high/good) quality dissertations, the committee also noticed that students with lower marks had difficulties in either formulating an adequate research question or in building an argumentation based on the research findings. Students are satisfied with the extensive and qualitative support they receive from their supervisors. More than 90% of the students who enrol on the programme eventually complete it. Notwithstanding the economic crisis, International Conflict and Security graduates continue to find suitable employment in line with the level and orientation of their studies: some are now PhD students at BSIS, others have taken on functions with the Pacific Council in Los Angeles, the National Democratic Institute in Washington DC or the South Asia Democratic Forum in Brussels.

The Brussels School of International Studies follows the internal quality assurance provisions of the University of Kent. The composition and tasks of the Board of Studies differ somewhat from 'Opleidingscommissies' at Flemish universities, but its members are competent, according to the committee. Students are represented on the Board, but could do with a more prominent and visible role. Individual module evaluations are comprehensive and constitute a useful complement to more informal evaluations. The committee appreciates that student concerns are taken seriously and that issues arising from either formal evaluations or informal discussions are addressed swiftly. The committee noticed that the network of individual staff members has expanded over the years, which in turn creates more opportunities for academic and professional cooperation, as well as for students to spend time studying, researching or working outside BSIS. Alumni, however, deserve further attention of the programmes, as they are not structurally involved in quality assurance yet.

The committee assesses the standards from the Assessment framework for programme accreditation in the following way:

*MA International Conflict and Security:*

Standard 1: Intended exit level	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching and learning process	satisfactory
Standard 3: Exit level achieved	satisfactory
Standard 4: Set-up and organisation of the internal quality assurance	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

## **MA in International Relations**

The MA in International Relations provides students with advanced training in the methods, scope, theories and findings in the field of International Relations. According to the committee, this programme features three characteristics that – taken as a combination – sets it apart from other master programmes in related fields at other universities: interdisciplinarity, contacts with the professional field and a multi-national and multi-cultural student and staff body. In the absence of a domain-specific reference framework for International Relations studies in either the UK or Flanders, the committee established that the learning outcomes of the programme are formulated adequately for its purpose as master programme of academic orientation. The programme focuses on theory and methodology: students are acquiring a solid knowledge of the theories, heritage, development and major debates of the International Relations discipline. It also prepares students explicitly for postgraduate research. The committee, moreover, considers that the intended learning outcomes reflect the requirements of the discipline in an international perspective.

The one-year programme (90 EC, 1800 study hours) consists of one compulsory module, five electives and one dissertation, which accounts for one third of the regular programme load. The extended variant (120 EC, 2400 study hours) consists of three more elective modules or an additional study period abroad. The curriculum allows students to gain an in-depth understanding of the core concepts of international relations while offering a high degree of choice. The programme particularly caters for students who have graduated in other fields and wish to transfer to international relations. Notwithstanding the options, the committee considers the programme to be coherent: it is strongly informed by theory, the dissertation process is guarded carefully and the programme convenor is providing personalised advice to students when deciding on their elective modules. On the basis of a sample of modules it reviewed, the committee considers that the intended learning outcomes and objectives of the programme are adequately translated in the learning goals of the curriculum modules.

The study load of the programme is feasible. Students are aware that they should take their education in hand, but can rely on the availability and commitment of convenors, thesis supervisors, PhD students and administrative staff. According to the committee, lecturers have the adequate research and didactical expertise to deliver their modules. The number of permanent staff is limited, but sufficient for the delivery of the programmes in their current form. Moreover, the committee is impressed by the opportunities for study leave by academic staff. The facilities at the Brussels School of International Studies are sufficient. The intranet link with the University of Kent provides students with good access to the library and the virtual learning network. The academic area, however, is not conducive for individual research and the lecture/seminar rooms lack state-of-the art equipment, such as smartboards.

The assessment system follows the provisions established at the University of Kent and is implemented adequately across all programmes in Brussels. The committee thinks highly of the information that is provided to students in the programme and module specifications, as well as of the feedback lecturers provide to students' individual coursework. On the basis of the sample it reviewed, the committee considers the assessments to be valid, reliable and transparent. Furthermore, the committee supports the convenor's approach to test students' understanding of the issues addressed in the compulsory module.

The committee reviewed a sample of ten dissertations and considers each of these to be of sufficient academic quality. Apart from reading many (high/good) quality dissertations, the committee also noticed that students with lower marks had difficulties in either formulating

an adequate research question or in building an argumentation based on the research findings. Students are satisfied with the extensive and qualitative support they receive from their supervisors. More than 90% of the students who enrol on the programme eventually complete it. Notwithstanding the economic crisis, International Relations graduates continue to find suitable employment in line with the level and orientation of their studies, for instance as PhD researchers, at non-profit organisations (Network of European Foundations in Brussels, Forsvarets Forskningsinstitut in Oslo) or the European Commission.

The Brussels School of International Studies follows the internal quality assurance provisions of the University of Kent. The composition and tasks of the Board of Studies differ somewhat from ‘Opleidingscommissies’ at Flemish universities, but its members are competent, according to the committee. Students are represented on the Board, but could do with a more prominent and visible role. Individual module evaluations are comprehensive and constitute a useful complement to more informal evaluations. The committee appreciates that student concerns are taken seriously and that issues arising from either formal evaluations or informal discussions are addressed swiftly. The committee noticed that the network of individual staff members has expanded over the years, which in turn creates more opportunities for academic and professional cooperation, , as well as for students to spend time studying, researching or working outside BSIS. Alumni, however, deserve further attention of the programmes, as they are not structurally involved in quality assurance yet.

The committee assesses the standards from the assessment framework for programme accreditation in the following way:

*MA in International Relations:*

Standard 1: Intended exit level	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching and learning process	satisfactory
Standard 3: Exit level achieved	satisfactory
Standard 4: Set-up and organisation of the internal quality assurance	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

**MA in International Political Economy**

The MA in International Political Economy addresses the geopolitical and social transformation fostered by intensified trans-national economic integration. According to the committee, this programmes features three characteristics that– taken as a combination – sets it apart from other master programmes in related fields at other universities: interdisciplinarity, contacts with the professional field and a multi-national and multi-cultural student and staff body. In the absence of a domain-specific reference framework for International Political Economy studies in either the UK or Flanders, the committee established that the learning outcomes of the programme are formulated adequately for its purpose as master programme of academic orientation. The programme focuses explicitly on bringing together the disciplines of politics, law and economics to better understand the issues in the field of international political economy. The committee, moreover, considers that the intended learning outcomes reflect the requirements of the discipline in an international perspective.

The one-year programme (90 EC, 1800 study hours) consists of two compulsory modules, four electives and one dissertation, which accounts for one third of the regular programme load. The extended variant (120 EC, 2400 study hours) consists of three more elective

modules or an additional study period abroad. The programme is coordinated in close cooperation with the LLM programme in International Economic Law, and its curriculum is composed of politics, economics, law and sociology modules. Moreover, Brussels-based policy practitioners are involved as teachers, tutors and guest-lecturers. On the basis of a sample of modules it reviewed, the committee considers that the intended learning outcomes and objectives of the programme are adequately translated in the learning goals of the curriculum modules. Currently, the programme is open to students with a variety of first cycle backgrounds. Because students with no/hardly any previous background in the subject seem to experience more difficulties in understanding all materials, the committee suggests the programme to consider sharpening the entry requirements admitting only students with a reasonable background in economics and politics. This suggestion, however, does not affect the overall positive appreciation of the committee regarding the quality of the individual modules or their alignment with the intended learning outcomes.

The study load of the programme is feasible. Students are aware that they should take their education in hand, but can rely on the availability and commitment of convenors, thesis supervisors, PhD students and administrative staff. According to the committee, lecturers have the adequate research and didactical expertise to deliver their modules. The number of permanent staff is limited, but sufficient for the delivery of the programmes in their current form. Moreover, the committee is impressed by the opportunities for study leave by academic staff. The facilities at the Brussels School of International Studies are sufficient. The intranet link with the University of Kent provides students with good access to the library and the virtual learning network. The academic area, however, is not conducive for individual research and the lecture/seminar rooms lack state-of-the art equipment, such as smartboards.

The assessment system follows the provisions established at the University of Kent and is implemented adequately across all programmes in Brussels. The committee thinks highly of the information that is provided to students in the programme and module specifications, as well as of the feedback lecturers provide to students' individual coursework. On the basis of the sample it reviewed, the committee considers the assessments to be valid, reliable and transparent. The committee also supports the convenor's approach to test students' understanding of the issues addressed in the compulsory module.

The committee reviewed a sample of ten dissertations and considers each of these to be of sufficient academic quality. Students with lower marks on their dissertation usually had difficulties in either formulating an adequate research question or building an argumentation based on the research findings. However, any possible weakness in disciplinary know-how at the start of the programme seems to have been repaired by the time students deliver the dissertation. Students, moreover, are satisfied with the extensive and qualitative support they receive from their supervisors. More than 90% of the students who enrol on the programme eventually complete it. Notwithstanding the economic crisis, International Political Economy graduates continue to find suitable employment in line with the level and orientation of their studies, for instance as consultant or at international organisations such as the UN or EFTA.

The Brussels School of International Studies follows the internal quality assurance provisions of the University of Kent. The composition and tasks of the Board of Studies differ somewhat from 'Opleidingscommissies' at Flemish universities, but its members are competent, according to the committee. Students are represented on the Board, but could do with a more prominent and visible role. Individual module evaluations are comprehensive and constitute a useful complement to more informal evaluations. The committee appreciates that student concerns are taken seriously and that issues arising from either formal

evaluations or informal discussions are addressed swiftly. The committee noticed that the network of individual staff members has expanded over the years, which in turn creates more opportunities for academic and professional cooperation, as well as for student placement. Alumni, however, deserve further attention of the programmes, as they are not structurally involved in quality assurance yet.

The committee assesses the standards from the assessment framework for programme accreditation in the following way:

*MA in International Political Economy:*

Standard 1: Intended exit level	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching and learning process	satisfactory
Standard 3: Exit level achieved	satisfactory
Standard 4: Set-up and organisation of the internal quality assurance	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

**LLM in International Law with International Relations**

The LLM in International Law with International Relations aims to provide a level of integration among two disciplines that will allow each domain to be informed by the other. According to the committee, this programme features three characteristics that – taken as a combination – sets it apart from other master programmes in related fields at other universities: interdisciplinarity, contacts with the professional field and a multi-national and multi-cultural student and staff body. In the absence of a domain-specific reference framework for studies in International Law with International Relations in either the UK or Flanders, the committee established that the learning outcomes of the programme are formulated adequately for its purpose as initial master programme of academic orientation. The programme considers the theoretical bases of international law and enables students to understand and evaluate public international law and its role, potential and limitations in international affairs. The committee, moreover, considers that the intended learning outcomes reflect the requirements of the discipline in an international perspective. Graduates from this programme are likely to find suitable employment according to the committee, as there is a significant demand for professionals with a legal qualification outside the traditional legal professions.

The one-year programme (90 EC, 1800 study hours) consists of four law modules, two international relations modules and one dissertation, which accounts for one third of the regular programme load. The extended variant (120 EC, 2400 study hours) consists of three more elective modules or an additional study period abroad. The committee noticed that modules often overlap with the MA programme in International Relations. On the basis of the indications set by the respective programmes, it is possible to tailor a curriculum that is identical for five out of six taught modules. Furthermore, the committee points to the different situations in England and Flanders with regard to awarding LLM degrees to students with no or hardly any previous background in law. The committee therefore invites the programme to consider awarding such students an MA rather than an LLM degree. With regard to the contents of the curriculum, the committee has no reservations on the quality of the individual modules or on the alignment of their learning goals with the overall programme objectives and learning outcomes. On the contrary, the programme addresses an interesting niche in the field of international studies, as well as a specific need of students who choose

this programme out of academic interest, potential professional career opportunities, or a combination of both.

The study load of the programme is feasible. Students are aware that they should take their education in hand, but can rely on the availability and commitment of convenors, thesis supervisors, PhD students and administrative staff. According to the committee, lecturers have the adequate research and didactical expertise to deliver their modules. The number of permanent staff is limited, but sufficient for the delivery of the programmes in their current form. Moreover, the committee is impressed by the opportunities for study leave by academic staff. The facilities at the Brussels School of International Studies are sufficient. The intranet link with the University of Kent provides students with good access to the library and the virtual learning network. The academic area, however, is not conducive for individual research and the lecture/seminar rooms lack state-of-the art equipment, such as smartboards.

The assessment system follows the provisions established at the University of Kent and is implemented adequately across all programmes in Brussels. The committee thinks highly of the information that is provided to students in the programme and module specifications, as well as of the feedback lecturers provide to students' individual coursework. On the basis of the sample it reviewed, the committee considers the assessments to be valid, reliable and transparent. The key assessment product invariably being an essay, the committee suggests the programme to diversify its assessment within and across modules.

The committee reviewed a sample of ten dissertations and considers each of these to be of sufficient academic quality. The dissertation topics are very much in line with the focus of the programme. Apart from reading many (high/good) quality dissertations, the committee also noticed that students with lower marks had difficulties in either formulating an adequate research question or in building an argumentation based on the research findings. The approach in all cases reflected the core discipline (Law) of the LLM programme. Students are satisfied with the extensive and qualitative support they receive from their supervisors. More than 90% of the students who enrol on the programme eventually complete it. Notwithstanding the economic crisis, graduates in International Law with International Relations continue to find suitable employment in line with the level and orientation of their studies, e.g. as legal officer with the special Tribunal for Lebanon in The Hague, as director of the Forest Legislation Initiative in London, or as programme manager with the German Institute for International and Security Affairs in Brussels.

The Brussels School of International Studies follows the internal quality assurance provisions of the University of Kent. The composition and tasks of the Board of Studies differ somewhat from 'Opleidingscommissies' at Flemish universities, but its members are competent, according to the committee. Students are represented on the Board, but could do with a more prominent and visible role. Individual module evaluations are comprehensive and constitute a useful complement to more informal evaluations. The committee appreciates that student concerns are taken seriously and that issues arising from either formal evaluations or informal discussions are addressed swiftly. The committee noticed that the network of individual staff members has expanded over the years, which in turn creates more opportunities for academic and professional cooperation, as well as for student placement. Alumni, however, deserve further attention of the programmes, as they are not structurally involved in quality assurance yet.

The committee assesses the standards from the assessment framework for programme accreditation in the following way:

### *LLM in International Law with International Relations:*

Standard 1: Intended exit level	satisfactory
Standard 2: Teaching and learning process	satisfactory
Standard 3: Exit level achieved	satisfactory
Standard 4: Set-up and organisation of the internal quality assurance	satisfactory
General conclusion	satisfactory

### **LLM in International Economic Law**

The LLM in International Economic Law draws on the 'law-in-context' tradition and the 'world society' approach to offer an integrated interdisciplinary perspective on the global economy. It aims to provide students with knowledge and understanding of the legal structures, institutions and principles underpinning efforts to regulate the international flow of goods, services and capital. Students acquire methodological skills and conceptual tools to understand and evaluate the interplay of law and social, political and economic factors in the structure of the global economy. According to the committee, this programme moreover features three characteristics that – taken as a combination - sets it apart from other master programmes in related fields at other universities: interdisciplinarity, contacts with the professional world and a multi-national and multi-cultural student and staff body. In the absence of a domain-specific reference framework for International Economic Law studies in either the UK or Flanders, the committee established that the learning outcomes of the programme are formulated adequately for its purpose as master programme of academic orientation. The committee, moreover, considers that the intended learning outcomes reflect the requirements of the discipline in an international perspective, as well as the above-mentioned core objectives of the programme.

The one-year programme (90 EC, 1800 study hours) consists of three compulsory modules, three electives and one dissertation, which accounts for one third of the regular programme load. The extended variant (120 EC, 2400 study hours) consists of three more elective modules or an additional study period abroad. The committee has a number of concerns with regard to the design and implementation of the programme. Reviewing the curriculum, the committee noticed a considerable overlap with the MA programme in International Political Economy. On the basis of the indications set by the respective programmes, it is even possible to tailor the same curriculum of taught modules. The main difference lays in the topic and approach of the dissertation, which is informed by law rather than political economy. Moreover, the committee thinks it is important to take into account that in Flanders, LLM degrees are usually not awarded to students with no or hardly any first-cycle background in law. The committee therefore invites the programme to consider awarding such students an MA rather than an LLM degree. Whilst recognising the programme is fulfilling the formal requirements for an LLM degree according to the programme specifications, the committee is above all concerned that the legal component is under-emphasised across the programme modules and that the curriculum as a whole pays insufficient attention to the various specialisms that constitute international economic law. According to the committee, this situation is particularly problematic when students enter the programme with hardly any background in law but are awarded an LLM degree in a specific domain of law by producing a dissertation in the legal field and following four law modules which do not cover the breadth of international economic law. While the programme is aiming to attract students with a variety of backgrounds, some of these students seem to experience more difficulties in understanding all materials, hence the committee's suggestion



to consider sharpening the entry requirements admitting only students with a reasonable background in law. Finally, the committee noticed the limited number of student intake over the past few years and wonders to what extent this programme remains viable and sustainable.

The study load of the programme is feasible. Students are aware that they should take their education in hand, but can rely on the availability and commitment of convenors, thesis supervisors, PhD students and administrative staff. According to the committee, lecturers have the adequate research and didactical expertise to deliver their modules. The number of permanent staff is limited, but sufficient for the delivery of the programmes in their current form. Moreover, the committee is impressed by the opportunities for study leave by academic staff. The facilities at the Brussels School of International Studies are sufficient. The intranet link with the University of Kent provides students with good access to the library and the virtual learning network. The academic area, however, is not conducive for individual research and the lecture/seminar rooms lack state-of-the art equipment, such as smartboards.

The committee concludes that in terms of the teaching and learning process, staff and facilities are adequate and sufficient, but considers that the current curriculum on international economic law does not contain sufficient subject-specific clout for a one-year LLM programme.

The assessment system follows the provisions established at the University of Kent and is implemented adequately across all programmes in Brussels. The committee thinks highly of the information that is provided to students in the programme and module specifications, as well as of the feedback lecturers provide to students' individual coursework. On the basis of the sample it reviewed, the committee considers the assessments to be valid, reliable and transparent. The key assessment product invariably being an essay, the committee suggests the programme to diversify its assessment within and across modules.

The committee reviewed a sample of ten dissertations and considers each of these to be of sufficient academic quality. Students with lower marks for their dissertation usually had difficulties in either formulating an adequate research question or building an argumentation based on the research findings. However, any possible weakness in disciplinary know-how at the start of the programme seems to have been repaired by the time students deliver the dissertation. Students, moreover, are satisfied with the extensive and qualitative support they receive from their supervisors. More than 90% of the students who enrol on the programme eventually complete it. Notwithstanding the economic crisis, International Economic Law graduates continue to find suitable employment in line with the level and orientation of their studies, for instance at the European Central Bank, in a law firm or at the US Consulate General.

The Brussels School of International Studies follows the internal quality assurance provisions of the University of Kent. The composition and tasks of the Board of Studies differ somewhat from 'Opleidingscommissies' at Flemish universities, but its members are competent, according to the committee. Students are represented on the Board, but could do with a more prominent and visible role. Individual module evaluations are comprehensive and constitute a useful complement to more informal evaluations. The committee appreciates that student concerns are taken seriously and that issues arising from either formal evaluations or informal discussions are addressed swiftly. The committee noticed that the network of individual staff members has expanded over the years, which in turn creates more opportunities for academic and professional cooperation, as well as for student placement.



## Description of the standards from the Assessment framework for limited programme assessments

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### Preliminary comments

The University of Kent is a public institution established under Royal Charter in 1965. The University established a centre in Brussels in 1998 to offer postgraduate programmes in a range of international studies based on politics, law and economics. These are offered through the Brussels School of International Studies. The programmes offered in Brussels are full programmes of the University and the degrees awarded are those of the University of Kent. These programmes are 'owned' by the relevant Schools of the University, principally the School of Politics and International Relations and the Kent Law School. As a chartered institution, the University of Kent is subject to the provisions of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in England (QAA). The University is subject to a quality audit by the QAA and programmes are monitored through periodic programme reviews, module evaluations and external examiners' reports. The five programmes under consideration have been part of the overall review of programmes in the respective Schools.

Under the provisions of the European Higher Education Area and respecting the freedom of establishment enshrined in EU Treaties, the University is entitled to offer these programmes in Brussels without further accreditation. However, in order to simplify recognition of awards in some third countries and to identify itself as a recognised institution of higher education within Belgium, the University sought initial accreditation of its core programmes through NVAO in 2010. It obtained this accreditation in September 2011 and was recognised by the Flemish Ministry of Education in October 2011. The period of accreditation is limited in time and expires at the end of September 2014. The scope of the current assessment exercise is to establish whether the existing five programmes continue to fulfil the four generic quality standards of the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders. Compliance with these standards will lead to a renewed period of accreditation in Flanders and thus continued recognition by the education authorities in Flanders.

The committee has studied self-evaluation reports, dissertations and programme materials of five different academic master programmes, i.e. those programmes that have been accredited by NVAO in 2011. The BSIS brochure mentions that it currently offers ten master programmes and three PhD programmes, hosting five academic schools of the University of Kent. This set-up allows students to specialise in one programme while informing their personal approach to international studies with courses spanning such disciplines as political science, law, sociology, history and economics. The BSIS representatives emphasised during the discussions on site that they tend not to think in terms of individual programmes, but rather look at the comprehensive picture of programmes and modules on offer at BSIS. Much of what has been written in the self-evaluation reports or discussed during the site visit is valid for all (master) programmes at BSIS. Nevertheless, this assessment report only applies to the five programmes under review. Moreover, the way education and learning is organised at BSIS makes it difficult for the committee to always point to specific features of individual programmes. All findings and considerations therefore apply to all five programmes under review, unless the programme(s) concerned are/is named explicitly.

The five programmes under consideration have been designed in accordance with the norms for a master's degree established by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in England (QAA). They are full programmes of the University of Kent, which is also awarding the degrees. The committee found it particularly challenging at times to apply an evaluation framework that reflects the Dutch and Flemish higher education situation to programmes

which are established in line with the British system. In cases where programme elements differ from what is customary in Flanders, the committee has reported these divergences. The committee has tried in its findings to pay due respect to (the status of) the five programmes and the University of Kent / Brussels School of International Studies as properly recognised and accredited institutions and programmes in England. In its considerations, however, the committee has been guided by the NVAO accreditation framework. The committee would in any case have welcomed more precise guidelines from the education authorities on how to address these differences.

## Standard 1: Intended exit level

The intended exit level is determined based on the manner in which the subject/discipline-specific learning outcomes are translated into programme-specific learning outcomes.

### Criteria:

The intended programme-specific learning outcomes match the level and orientation (Bachelor's or Master's degree; professional or academic orientation) within the Flemish qualification framework and, if available, the validated subject/discipline-specific outcomes framework. They correspond with the current requirements that are set from an international perspective in the professional field and the discipline for the content of the programme.

## Findings

This section on the intended exit level reports on the committee's findings regarding the domain-specific reference framework, the intended learning outcomes, as well as the level and orientation of the programmes. The first half of this section covers general elements that apply equally to all five programmes. The latter half of this section is dedicated to the specific profile and objective of each programme and the way this specificity is confirmed in the intended learning outcomes and the career perspectives of future graduates.

### *General findings*

The five programmes submitted for assessment are all conceived as initial master programmes of academic orientation in a specialist field. Initial means in this context that the programmes are open to students with an appropriate bachelor's degree who can enrol directly, without work experience. Three programmes lead to a Master of Arts degree, while two others confer the title of Master of Laws. For each programme BSIS has prepared a separate self-evaluation report. The sections describing the intended exit level contain the profile of each programme, as well as its objectives and the intended learning outcomes the student is expected to have achieved on completion of the master programme. According to the committee, these descriptions are adequate and sufficiently specific for each of the five programmes.

The intended learning outcomes for each programme are listed in Appendix 3 to this report. They are organised under four headings: knowledge and understanding, intellectual skills, subject-specific skills and transferable skills. Reviewing and comparing the different sets of intended learning outcomes, the committee noticed that on completion of their MA programmes, students from the three MA programmes are expected to have achieved the same intellectual and transferable skills. The learning outcomes in terms of intellectual skills, knowledge and understanding are to a very large extent specific for the three different programmes. The learning outcomes for the two LLM programmes are organised under the same four headings, are very similar to each other but different from the three MA programmes. On completing their LLM programme, graduates in International Economic Law and International Law with International Relations will have achieved the same intellectual, transferable and subject-specific skills. They will also dispose of the same types of knowledge and understanding, albeit in the separate domains of international economic law and international public law, respectively.

As part of the assessment exercise, the committee was tasked to validate the domain specific reference framework for each of the five programmes. The procedure leading to this validation is detailed in Appendix 2 to this report. According to BSIS, there are no domain specific reference frameworks established in the UK which cover the areas under review. In Flanders, such frameworks are called domain specific learning outcomes ('domeinspecifieke leerresultaten'), which are set in common by all higher education institutions offering a

specific programme. The frameworks that have been validated until now do not include any of the domains under review in this assessment exercise. The committee has checked for each of the five programmes whether the learning outcomes are in line with what can reasonably be expected of a master's programme of academic orientation in this particular field. On the basis of this review, the committee considers that the domain specific learning outcomes of the five master programmes are formulated adequately.

All five programmes are designed in accordance with the norms for a degree at master's level as established by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in England (QAA) and should meet the expected standards of a Master's degree according to the Dublin descriptors. The committee compared the intended learning outcomes for each of the five programmes with the Dublin descriptors at master's level and noticed that the different sets of learning outcomes indeed encompass the outcomes of the Dublin descriptors.

According to the committee, the intended learning outcomes for each of the five programmes are formulated in such a way that they reflect aptly a master degree of academic orientation. The programmes and their learning outcomes do refer to the professional context and contain skills and attitudes that will also be useful on the labour market. However, the programmes prepare primarily for original postgraduate research or a demanding international career. Nevertheless, the committee noticed that BSIS also pays proper attention to the professional orientation of its programmes. Over the years, it has built relationships with a range of international Brussels-based organisations (European Commission, European Parliament, NATO, international NGOs, etc.). These contacts enable students to gain practical experience through internships and enrich the programmes and modules through guest lectures and workshops. The committee acknowledges the efforts of BSIS in integrating the professional world into its academic work and recognises that this contributes to the successful transition of graduates from the programme into employment or further study. Furthermore, the committee reviewed in the self-evaluation reports the professional opportunities the different programmes are likely to offer to their graduates and compared these descriptions to the discussions with both staff and alumni. Taking into account that the current economic crisis is an obstacle to employment in almost all sectors, the committee considers the announced professional perspectives to be realistic.

#### *Findings MA in International Conflict and Security*

According to the self-evaluation report, the MA in International Conflict and Security is designed to provide the knowledge, as well as analytical and practical skills to understand the dynamic and complex factors of modern conflict and to issue effective and legitimate responses to the main contemporary security issues. The programme aims a.o. to (i) attract those seeking to prepare for careers in fields concerned with international conflicts and those with a general intellectual interest in contemporary security issues; (ii) provide students with a research-active teaching environment which gives them a good grounding in the study of international conflict and war, cooperation, security and peace; (iii) examine how state, non-state and supra-national actors behave and interact in conflict situations; (iv) ensure that students acquire a solid knowledge of theories of the causes and dynamics of different kinds of contemporary conflict and security threats and the means to manage them. The committee acknowledges with sympathy the particular profile and objectives of the programme. Reviewing the intended learning outcomes, the committee noticed that the programme objectives are incorporated adequately in the learning outcomes.

The programme of the MA in International Conflict and Security is structured in a similar way to the programme in International Conflict Analysis offered by the School of Politics and

International relations at UoK, but with a specific focus on security to reflect the interests of the specialists in Brussels. The interdisciplinary nature of BSIS moreover enables students to study aspects of international law or economics to enrich their understanding of such problems. The location in Brussels enables students to observe and learn first-hand from the working of international organisations, which gives the programme a much more practical dimension in comparison with programmes offered elsewhere. Furthermore the international composition of the student body with some 40-50 different countries represented enables the study of international issues in a highly internationalised environment. Throughout the site visit, the committee has come to understand and appreciate the added value of offering this programme in an interdisciplinary environment with exposure to the professional world and in a multinational classroom.

The committee moreover subscribes to the position of the programme that career opportunities related to international peace and conflict work have increased substantially in recent years. There is a significant demand for professionals working in countries experiencing conflict, as well as for professionals needed to manage, mitigate, or resolve conflicts such as negotiating peace agreements, preventing deadly conflict, building positive relations among adversaries, and developing secure and stable societies. In sum, this programme according to the committee is addressing a specific niche in international relations studies through a master's degree of academic orientation that targets a group of highly motivated students.

#### *Findings MA in International Relations*

According to the self-evaluation report, the MA in International Relations is designed to provide students with advanced training in the general methods, scope, theories, and findings in the field of International Relations. The programme is designed a.o. to: (i) provide students with a research-active teaching environment; (ii) acquire a good understanding of the methodologies for the study of international processes; (iii) obtain solid knowledge of theories of international relations, the heritage and development of the discipline, its major debates and its inherent nature as an interdisciplinary study. The committee acknowledges with sympathy the particular profile and objectives of the programme. Reviewing the intended learning outcomes, the committee noticed that the programme objectives are incorporated adequately in the learning outcomes.

This programme is structured in a similar way to the programme with the same title offered by the School of Politics and International relations at UoK, as well as at the Flemish universities of Leuven and Antwerp. In line with the findings on the MA programme in International Conflict and Society, the International Relations programme in Brussels has some special features: interdisciplinarity, contacts with the professional world, multinational student body. Moreover, the programme at BSIS offers advanced learning in International Relations in combination with a high degree of choice to compose one's own tailor-made programme. The committee recognises that this programme indeed sets itself apart by offering a broad spectrum of choices in an interdisciplinary environment.

The committee moreover subscribes to the position of the programme that there is a significant and growing demand for professionals with an understanding of International Relations and an adequate training in the relevant theory and methods. Such professionals are needed both in the service of individual states, in international organisations and in research. According to the committee, the programme will also address the increasing need expressed by a wide range of NGOs, voluntary organisations and the private sector. Those practising international relations need not just the theoretical understanding of the development of the

discipline but also knowledge of methods and the relationship with other disciplines to be able to take a sufficiently balanced view of the world. In sum, this programme according to the committee is offering master students the opportunity to compose their own specific niche programme in international relations studies. The combination of content choice and academic rigour will allow students to use this programme as a stepping stone to a professional or academic career in their area of preference.

#### *Findings MA in International Political Economy*

According to the self-evaluation report, the MA in International Political Economy equips students to address the global geopolitical and social transformation fostered by intensified trans-national economic integration in the early 21st century. The programme aims a.o. to: (i) offer a critical perspective of the interplay between structures and actors in the global economy, political systems and processes, individuals and the institutions of civil society; (ii) acquire a solid understanding of methodologies for the study of Social Science in general, and in the application of those understandings to the study of International Political Economy in particular; (iii) acquire the necessary skills for advanced assessment of contemporary problems in International Political Economy and their solutions. The committee acknowledges with sympathy and interest the particular profile and objectives of the programme. Reviewing the intended learning outcomes, the committee noticed that the programme objectives are incorporated adequately in the learning outcomes.

This programme is currently not taught at UoK, but broadly similar programmes exist in a number of other UK universities. The International Political Economy programme at BSIS shares the same features with the other MA programmes in Brussels: interdisciplinarity, contacts with the professional world, and the multinational student body. Throughout the site visit, the committee has come to understand and appreciate the added value of offering this programme in an interdisciplinary environment, with exposure to the professional world and in a multinational classroom.

The committee, moreover, shares the viewpoint of the programme that there is a significant and growing demand for professionals with an understanding of International Political Economy and an adequate training in the application of multi-disciplinary analysis to policy and business practices. Such professionals are needed both in the private and the public sector, in the service of national governments, businesses, international organisations, and NGOs. In sum, this programme according to the committee is offering students with a well-defined area of interest the opportunity to focus on a very specific area in international studies at academic master level.

#### *Findings LLM in International Law with International Relations*

According to the self-evaluation report, international law and international relations have traditionally been taught as discrete subjects, in spite of their close relationship. The LLM in International Law with International Relations aims to provide a level of integration that will allow each discipline to be informed by the other. The programme aims a.o. to provide: (i) a postgraduate qualification of value for students intending to play a leading role in any field of public international law; (ii) a sound knowledge and systematic understanding of the institutional structures, key legal principles and particular contexts of international law and international relations (iii) a degree of specialisation in areas of public international law of individual interest; (iv) a sense of critical awareness of the operation of public international law. The committee acknowledges with sympathy and interest the particular profile and objectives of the programme. Reviewing the intended learning outcomes, the committee noticed that all programme objectives are incorporated adequately in the learning outcomes.



This programme is structured in a similar way to the programme with the same title offered at UoK. The programme in Brussels has some special features, however. First, the interdisciplinary nature of the BSIS enables students to combine easily optional modules in aspects of international politics, conflict and security or economics to enrich their understanding of such problems. Secondly, the location in Brussels enables students to observe and learn first-hand from the working of international organisations through study visits, through the provision of guest lectures by diplomats and others working in such organisations, and through the possibility of internships in such organisations. Furthermore the international composition of the student body enables the study of international issues in a highly internationalised environment. Throughout the site visit, the committee has come to understand and appreciate the added value of offering this programme in an interdisciplinary environment, with exposure to the professional world and in a multinational classroom.

The committee, moreover, subscribes to the position of the programme that its interdisciplinary approach will be particularly appropriate to the needs of those involved with, or hoping to work for international non-government agencies, foreign affairs departments and international law firms. The increasing juridification of international life is leading to a great demand for professionals with a legal qualification, especially outside of the traditional 'legal' professions. In sum, this programme according to the committee is offering master students the opportunity to combine two important subject areas in an interdisciplinary way at academic level, which in turn should offer them a competitive advantage on the international labour market.

#### *Findings LLM in International Economic Law*

According to the self-evaluation report, the process of economic globalisation is placing demands on scholars, lawyers and regulators that traditional legal education is increasingly unable to meet. The LLM in International Economic Law is founded on the belief that the distinctions that largely inform and underlie academic disciplines and carve up the study of law into discrete subjects cloud analytical judgment and limit the range of possibilities of normative renewal in the realm of global economic governance. The programme thus draws both on the 'law-in-context' tradition in Kent Law School and on the 'world society' approach informing much work in International Relations at Kent and at BSIS to offer a highly integrated interdisciplinary perspective on the global economy. The programme aims a.o. to provide: (i) a postgraduate qualification for those intending to pursue a career in the field of international trade, business or regulatory affairs; (ii) sound knowledge and systematic understanding of the legal structures, institutions and principles underpinning efforts to regulate the international flow of goods, services, and capital; (iii) the methodological skills and conceptual tools necessary to understand and evaluate the interplay of law and social, political and economic factors in the structure of the global economy; (iv) a sense of critical awareness of the operation of international economic law in different contexts, especially as regards issues of distributive justice. The committee acknowledges with interest the very particular profile and objectives of the programme. Reviewing the intended learning outcomes, the committee noticed that the programme objectives are incorporated adequately in the learning outcomes.

This programme is structured in a broadly similar way to programmes with the same title offered at Warwick or SOAS London, but it differs significantly from more common LLM courses in International Business Law or Commercial Law which tend to focus on transactions, not regulation. The programme in Brussels, moreover, shares the same features with the other MA and LLM programmes: interdisciplinarity, contacts with the professional

world, and the multinational student body. Throughout the site visit, the committee has come to understand and appreciate the added value of offering this programme in an interdisciplinary environment, with exposure to the professional world and in a multinational classroom.

The committee, moreover, subscribes to the position of the programme that it provides the knowledge, conceptual tools and analytical skills appropriate for the development of careers in international organisations, international law firms, governmental and non-governmental organisations in the fields of trade and finance, and international business. In sum, this programme according to the committee is offering master students the opportunity to combine two important subject areas in an interdisciplinary way at academic level, which in turn should offer them a competitive advantage on the international labour market.

### **Considerations**

The committee considers that each programme has a distinctive profile that is fit for purpose. Each programme is positioned adequately and with respect for its individual specificity within its respective domain. According to the committee, the programme objectives are clear and sufficiently specific.

In the absence of domain-specific reference frameworks for the programmes under review in either the UK or Flanders, the committee formally established that the domain specific learning outcomes of the Master in International Conflict and Security, the Master in International Relations, the Master in International Economic Law, the Master in International Political Economy and the Master in International Law with International Relations are formulated adequately for their purpose as master's programmes of academic orientation in the respective fields.

The committee confirms that the intended learning outcomes of each of the five programmes are in line with what can be expected of a master's programme of academic orientation in the specific field. The outcomes also cover the Dublin Descriptors for programmes at master's level. The committee considers that the learning outcomes set out in the five self-evaluation reports reflect the requirements of the discipline in an international perspective.

The committee subscribes to the position of BSIS that the five programmes share a few common features that – taken as a combination - set them apart from other more traditional master programmes with the same or similar names. There are more programmes featuring interdisciplinarity, or contacts with the professional world, or a multinational student body, but at BSIS programmes make optimum use of the combination of these strengths, according to the committee.

According to the committee, BSIS pays proper attention to the professional orientation of its programmes. Moreover, the professional opportunities the different programmes are likely to offer to their graduates are realistic. The committee therefore considers that each of the five programmes is addressing a specific (multi)disciplinary niche that should attract students with a clear academic profile and explicit ambitions for the period beyond graduation.

The considerations of the committee and its positive assessment of standard 1 for each of the five programmes are entirely based on the description of the intended profile, objective and learning outcomes. The question whether the intentions are adequately translated into the curriculum and can eventually be reached at graduation will be addressed in the next sections of this report.

## **Conclusion**

The committee considers the intended exit level to be satisfactory for all five master programmes under review.

Master's programme *MA International Conflict and Security*: the committee assesses Standard 1 as **satisfactory**.

Master's programme *MA in International Relations*: the committee assesses Standard 1 as **satisfactory**.

Master's programme *MA in International Political Economy*: the committee assesses Standard 1 as **satisfactory**.

Master's programme *LLM in International Law with International Relations*: the committee assesses Standard 1 as **satisfactory**.

Master's programme *LLM in International Economic Law*: the committee assesses Standard 1 as **satisfactory**.

## Standard 2: Teaching and learning process

The teaching and learning process makes it possible for the students to realise the intended learning outcomes.

### Criteria:

The content and the design of the programme, including the programme-specific teaching and learning methods, enable the admitted students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The quality and quantity of the staff and the quality of the programme-specific facilities are essential for this. Curriculum, staff and facilities form a cohesive teaching-learning environment for the students. The transfer rate for incoming students serves as an indicator in this respect. The measures for improvement ensuing from the quality assurance at the programme level are taken into consideration, as is the follow-up to the previous assessment.

## Findings

This section on the teaching and learning process reports on the committee's findings regarding the curriculum structure, staff, facilities, study load, tutoring, intake and internationalisation. The first half of this section deals with elements that equally apply to all five programmes. The second half of the section is dedicated to the contents and coherence of each individual programme and reports to what extent the modules on offer enable the admitted students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

### *General findings*

Each programme consists of 180 credits (the extended version has 240 credits) and each credit reflects ten hours of study. According to the self-evaluation reports, the UK system of conversion to ECTS counts one credit as 0.5 ECTS, hence the programmes equate to the standard British Master's degree of 90 ECTS. The committee, however, remarks that in Flanders and the Netherlands, the study load is calculated as 28 hours of study per European Credit (EC), as a 'studiepunten' is referred to in NVAO reports in English. One year of full-time study in Flanders and the Netherlands amounts to a total load of about 1680 hours, i.e. 42 weeks of 40 hours for a total of 60 EC. Calculating the total number of study hours (1800) of the UoK-BSIS programmes according to the NVAO system, the five master programmes under review amount to about 65 EC and their extended variants to about 86 EC. The committee therefore acknowledges that according to the study load calculations applicable in Flanders and the Netherlands, both variants comply with the minimum length of a master's programme. However, in case future graduates would like to get waivers for individual UoK BSIS modules in Flemish or Dutch institutions, these modules may not necessarily count for 10 EC each. In a reaction to the draft version of this report, UoK commented that they are not aware that students seeking equivalent credits for individual modules have had these downgraded; on the contrary, students from BSIS programmes proceeded directly to PhD degrees in Flemish universities without any question of the credit value of their degrees.

All five programmes under review have the same curriculum structure: they consist of six modules of 20 credits each and one dissertation of 60 credits that can be completed by full-time students in one calendar year, divided in three terms of 42 weeks in total. Students taking the extended programme follow an additional three modules in one term or spend one semester at a partner university. Modules are offered once per year and do not build upon each other, allowing students to enrol either in September or January. An overview of the curricula is provided in Appendix 4 to this report. During the discussions on site, the committee obtained adequate information on how the different programme variants (full-time or part-time study, regular or extended programme, start in Autumn or Spring term) are organised across the three terms per year.

Each programme features a compulsory element, a set of optional modules and the dissertation. Students with a limited background in law or economics and taking compulsory or elective modules on these topics in their curriculum, can attend introductory classes in law and/or economics in the week before the term starts. The committee was told that these introductions are two-hour crash courses on the main principles of law or economics. According to the committee, such courses may be useful to refresh one's knowledge on a topic, but cannot make up for courses or subjects students never had before. The dissertation is an important component of each programme under review. It accounts for one third of the regular curriculum load and consists of preparatory lectures, workshops and seminars during the first two terms before the actual drafting of the dissertation takes place in the extended term three. The committee's findings on the dissertation are addressed in the next section on the exit level.

Currently, most programmes offer a wide variety of elective modules. On the basis of the curriculum structures in the self-evaluation reports, the committee produced the table below. It demonstrates that there are many module overlaps across the five programmes: this does not only apply to elective courses, but also to compulsory modules which may be offered as optional courses in other programmes. According to several interlocutors at BSIS, the overlaps are a sign of close integration of the various programmes. The committee, however, has some concerns that the broad range of optional courses and the use of core courses as both compulsory and optional modules will eventually blur the lines between programmes. Moreover, the range of options may jeopardise the internal coherence of the programme at the level of individual students' curricula.

	Term	MA International Conflict and Security	MA International Relations	LLM International Law with International Relations	MA International Political Economy	LLM International Economic Law
<b>Research Modules</b>						
Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (30 hours)	1	Compulsory*	Compulsory*	Compulsory*	Compulsory*	Compulsory*
Dissertation proposal (20 hours)	2	Compulsory*	Compulsory*	Compulsory*	Compulsory*	Compulsory*
Dissertation (550 hours)	3	Compulsory*	Compulsory*	Compulsory*	Compulsory*	Compulsory*
<b>Core Modules (200 hours)</b>						
International Economic Regulation	1				Elective	Compulsory
Legal Aspects of Contemporary International Problems	1		Elective	Comp./Elect.	Elective	Elective
Public International Law	1		Elective	Comp./Elect.	Elective	Elective
State, Market and Society	1		Elective		Compulsory	Elective
Theories of Conflict and Violence	1	Compulsory	Elective	Elective		
International Relations Theory	1	Elective	Compulsory		Elective	
International Relations Theory for Lawyers	1			Elective		
International Economic Law	2			Elective	Elective	Compulsory
Corporate Governance	2				Elective	Compulsory
International Human Rights Law	2		Elective	Compulsory		
International Political Economy	2		Elective		Compulsory	Elective
Conflict and Security	2	Compulsory		Elective		
<b>Elective Modules (200 hours)</b>						
Law and Development	1				Elective	Elective
International Law of the Sea	1			Elective		Elective
Politics of International Development	1		Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective
International Economics	1		Elective		Elective	Elective
European Migration Law	1			Elective		
Migration, Conflict, the State and Human Rights	1	Elective	Elective	Elective		

Law of Armed Conflict	1	Elective		Elective		
EU Constitutional and Institutional Law	1			Elective		
European Foreign and Security Policy	1	Elective		Elective	Elective	
Global Governance and International Organisations	1		Elective		Elective	
EU Politics and Governance	1		Elective		Elective	
Negotiation and Mediation	1	Elective	Elective			
Humanitarian Issues in Forced Migration	1	Elective				
Political Communication	1		Elective			
China Foreign Policy	1		Elective			
Public Policy Analysis	1		Elective			
Development Economics	2				Elective	Elective
International Migration Law	2			Elective	Elective	Elective
Europe and Global Change	2		Elective		Elective	
Foreign Policy Analysis	2	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective	
Security and Liberties	2	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective	
Transnational Justice and the Rule of Law	2	Elective		Elective		
International Criminal Law	2	Elective		Elective		
Identity, the State and Belonging	2	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective	
Gender and Conflicts	2	Elective			Elective	
International Diplomatic Law	2		Elective	Elective		
Theories of Migration, Integration and Citizenship	2		Elective			
Political Strategy	2		Elective			
Politics of Globalisation	2		Elective			
Development Theory and Practice	2				Elective	
Histories of International Conflict	2	Elective	Elective		Elective	
Contemporary Energy Security	2	Elective	Elective		Elective	

\* The contents of these modules may differ per programme

BSIS management and staff explained during the site visit that across all programmes under review, a revision of the curriculum structure is being considered in order to create a greater visibility of the areas students specialise in. This revision would entail the streaming of different electives in specialised clusters. In practice students often develop an area of specialisation in their choice of elective modules reflecting BSIS' other programmes and focus areas. The proposed changes would not change the substance of the programme, but present a clearer profile of the programme, both to prospective students and to potential employers. In view of its above-mentioned findings regarding the overlap of programme curricula, the committee would certainly support a streamlining of the curriculum structures.

The study load of each module is set at 20 credits with a formal contact time of 24 hours over a 12-week teaching period. The committee learned during the discussion that on average, these modules are calculated to contain 100 hours of preparation for class and 75 hours of assignment work. The committee understands that depending on the nature of the module and the number of students enrolled for this course, the contact time can be structured as a formal lecture to all students on the module followed by a small group seminar for larger classes or a two-hour interactive session. The committee notices the considerable amount of time dedicated to reading and preparing for class, as well as the relatively limited number of contact hours. Staff indicated that students are expected to prepare for each class and should inform the lecturer if they did not manage to read the assigned materials for a given class. Students from their side indicated that on average they dedicate somewhat more time to modules than 200 hours. In fact, contacts with staff are not limited to class as lecturers offer – and students often accept – advice or feedback on the preparation / evaluation of assignments during dedicated office hours. Some students mentioned that more contact hours to elaborate on the course materials and enhance their understanding of the course contents would be beneficial. According to the committee, the balance between contact hours

and class preparation could be adapted including for instance per module one more contact hour per week. Nevertheless, the current programmes are certainly feasible and there is no particular module that systematically blocks considerable numbers of students to advance in their study.

Across the five programmes, teaching is provided by a core group of permanent staff based in Brussels, supplemented by staff from UoK and locally recruited specialist teachers. In addition specialists may give guest lectures on modules. Taking together all modules currently on offer, the committee counted eight permanent staff (including the Dean), three UoK staff and nine local specialists. All staff have PhDs and are research-active members of their respective Schools. They are engaged in research in areas directly related to the programme and publish regularly on these topics. Staff combining education and research facilitate the engagement of students in ongoing research and has led to several former students entering to the PhD programme upon graduation. In addition to their teaching responsibilities, Brussels staff provides guidance to students and supervise dissertations as well as maintaining a full research profile. The committee spoke to all Brussels-based staff, the co-called programme convenors, who combine teaching with dissertation supervision and academic tutoring. Staff indicated that the autumn and spring terms are mainly dedicated to education and tutoring, while they can concentrate on their own research and thesis supervision between April and August. PhD students are called upon to support dissertation workshops and seminars. Some students praised the availability and support of PhD students, who often seem to be the first – informal - contact point for students. According to the committee, the lecturers invariably have the adequate research and didactical backgrounds to deliver their modules. Moreover, the committee noticed the enthusiasm of the Brussels staff to teach and supervise the BSIS students. Similarly, students were very positive about the expertise and availability of staff, which seem to really make a difference for individual students deciding on their future careers. The committee also noticed the commitment and availability of the administrative staff, which have their specific position within BSIS. Several students indicated they appreciate the professional and personal qualities of the administrative staff. The number of permanent staff is limited, according to the committee, but sufficient for the delivery of the programmes in their current form. The involvement of PhD students lessens somewhat the burden of the permanent staff. The committee trusts that in line with the statements by staff and management, PhD students are properly prepared for, and monitored during, their teaching in seminars and workshops.

UoK operates a standard policy towards study leave for academic staff. Leave is not an automatic entitlement but depends on a clear plan for the leave period and agreement by the School as part of an overall plan for leave. In the case of BSIS this is agreed by the Dean and the Head of the relevant Academic School. The small number of core staff in Brussels, however, poses challenges in organising cover for sabbatical leave. Staff indicated to the committee that until now all staff who wanted study leave eventually managed to have it organised and approved. A few BSIS staff who had been on sabbatical reported positively on their experience as it had expanded their network, increased their academic know-how and provided interesting didactical approaches to be tested on return at BSIS. The committee was impressed by this study leave arrangement and the good use staff is making of this opportunity.

Since 2006, UoK-BSIS is located on the third floor of a building owned by VUB that also houses VUB's International Relations and Mobility Office, the Institute for European Studies and Vesalius College. The BSIS premises consist of a flexible teaching space which can be configured to reflect the actual needs for lecture/seminar/meeting rooms. There is an

academic area with dedicated desks for full-time teaching staff and space for research students. There is a common room for master's students with workspace and computer stations and an administrative office. The computer network is served by a dedicated link to UoK's main network, thus providing for fast intranet access to all electronic publications in UoK's Templeman Library, as well as to the virtual learning network, Moodle, and the Student Data System. Since 2008, UoK-BSIS has a Memorandum of Understanding with VUB detailing cooperation: UoK students for instance have access to the VUB library and other facilities for which BSIS pays a fee per semester per student. The committee was shown around the premises and noticed that the current in-house facilities are sufficient but not excellent. The open landscape format of the academic area is not conducive for individual research, or for feedback sessions or confidential meetings with students. The intranet link with UoK seems to function well, but the lecture/seminar rooms do not have smartboards or other state-of-the-art equipment. Finally, the committee suggests BSIS to check whether the current premises fulfil the legal requirements accommodating students with functional limitations, notably students in wheelchairs.

Currently, about 200 students are enrolled at one of the BSIS programmes representing 40-50 different nationalities: 40% come from Europe, 30% from North America and another 30% from the rest of the world. The precise intake for each of the five programmes is detailed in Appendix 5 to this report. The committee learned during the site visit that the overall number of students does not change drastically over the years, but their enrolment for one or the other programme may differ somewhat across the cohorts. The committee noticed for instance that among the five programmes under review, the MA in International Conflict and Security attracts most students this year, whereas last year most students enrolled on the MA in International Relations. Apart from programme contents, several students indicated they preferred an English master programme of one year rather than American master degrees that require two years of study. Other students were attracted by the city of Brussels and its opportunities for internships and employment. Still other students and alumni opted for an English-language programme in a French-speaking environment. The BSIS management indicated that after a period of rapid growth, student numbers had slightly dropped over the past few years but are now again on the rise. Nevertheless, a slightly larger number of students would certainly be more cost-effective if one wants to maintain the range of elective modules currently on offer. The committee subscribes to this viewpoint while at the same time expressing its concern about the viability of programmes with a constant intake of less than ten students. Such low numbers may not affect the delivery of individual modules but do impact on the relevance and sustainability of the programme as a separate component within the broader BSIS offer. The expansion of core staff also depends on additional student recruitment. A dedicated Brussels-based recruitment and admissions officer handles all cases from initial enquiry, through application, offer and eventual admission. Careful attention is paid to the needs of students seeking scholarships from their home country to ensure that BSIS meets the requirements of scholarship bodies. BSIS interlocutors, however, indicated that there are only very limited possibilities for students to acquire scholarships at home or through UoK. Based on very detailed information on student records provided by the BSIS administration, the committee found out that all programmes have a very high success rate: over 90% eventually complete the programme. The success rate is further discussed in the next section on student performance.

UoK places great emphasis on internationalisation in terms of welcoming students from all over the world, ensuring that its curriculum is internationalised and in the development of global partnerships. BSIS fully subscribes to this policy and contributes to its achievement. The committee noticed that both staff and students at BSIS come from different countries



with different cultures. According to the committee, this multi-national and multi-cultural composition of the student and staff body is a strong advantage for an institution offering a range of programmes in international studies. The committee learned that students on all five programmes have the opportunity to apply for a period of study, usually of one semester, at a partner university on an exchange basis. Currently this does not count towards credit for the programme but enables the students to gain wider experience. One exchange arrangement is currently in place with the China Foreign Affairs University in Beijing, but negotiations are ongoing with partners in the US, Colombia and Japan. The management indicated that in future, the emphasis will very much be on collaboration through partnership with institutions worldwide.

#### *Findings MA in International Conflict and Security*

The curriculum of the MA programme in International Conflict and Security consists of three components: a dissertation on a topic related to international conflict and security; two compulsory modules on theories of conflict and violence and on conflict and security; and four elective modules students can choose out of twelve options. The programme specification states that the minimum entry requirements are a British Honours degree, or equivalent, in Politics, Government, Law, International Relations, International Studies or European Studies. However, students from other disciplines will also be considered.

According to the committee, this curriculum allows students to gain an in-depth understanding of the core concepts of conflict, violence and security while broadening their understanding of cognate areas. Students indicated they decide on the elective courses in view of their own academic - and sometimes professional - background or because they want to add a secondary area of interest to their curriculum. The committee was informed during the discussions that there is a growing interest among students to add a considerable component on migration or gender to the core theme of conflict and security. The committee also spoke to the external specialist lecturing on negotiation and mediation, who explained that his module starts from professional practice and gradually adds academic research perspectives. Students indicated to the committee they were particularly satisfied with this approach and that they are acquiring a very particular type of understanding and skills in this module.

The committee understands that for this programme, students from a wide variety of academic backgrounds can apply. The committee noticed with sympathy that two students representing the programme during the site visit had considerable professional experience. This particular study seemed a logical stepping stone in the development of their career, both academically and professionally. In sum, the committee considers that this curriculum is both attractive for a specific group of students and commensurate with the intended learning outcomes and objectives of the programme.

#### *Findings MA in International Relations*

The curriculum of the MA programme in International Relations consists of three components: a dissertation on an international relations topic; one compulsory module on international relations theory; and five elective modules students can choose out of twenty options. Two of these electives have to be taken from a limited range of cognate subjects. Entry requirements are roughly the same as for the above MA in International Conflict and Security, although specific additional provision is made for students with a background in social sciences or humanities.

According to the committee, this curriculum allows students to gain an in-depth understanding of the core concepts of international relations while offering a high degree of

choice for students to compose their own tailor-made programme. The committee acknowledges that this programme particularly caters for students who have graduated in other fields and wish to transfer to international relations. During the discussions, the committee received sufficient indications that the curriculum is coherent notwithstanding the many options: it is strongly informed by theory, the dissertation process is guarded carefully and the programme convenor provides personalised advice to students when deciding on their elective modules. The committee also supports the convenor's approach to test students' understanding of the issues addressed in the compulsory module. Students were particularly satisfied with the support from both the convenor and the PhD students and emphasised the importance of putting together a coherent curriculum that is tailored to one's own interests. Notwithstanding the roughly similar entry requirements, the committee noticed the different student profiles enrolling on the respective programmes. In sum, the committee considers that this curriculum is both attractive for a broad group of students and commensurate with the intended learning outcomes and objectives of the programme.

#### *Findings MA in International Political Economy*

The curriculum of the MA programme in International Political Economy consists of three components: a dissertation on an international political economy topic; two compulsory modules on international political economy and on state, market and society; and four elective modules, of which two have to be taken from a very limited range of topics relevant to the core theme of the programme. Entry requirements are roughly similar to the International Relations programme: students with a Honours degree from a broad range of disciplines can apply.

The committee understands from the materials and the discussions that the programme is marked by its interdisciplinarity and its close relation to policy practice. The programme is coordinated in close cooperation with the LLM programme in International Economic Law, and its curriculum is composed of politics, economics, law and sociology modules. Moreover, Brussels-based policy practitioners are involved as teachers, tutors and guest-lecturers. Students were particularly satisfied with the support from both the convenor and the PhD students.

Students who had no particular background in economics, politics or law indicated that the modules were feasible because of the extensive yet informative reading list. However, they did have to spend considerably more time on understanding the materials. The convenor informed the committee that she organises a test at some point during the term to check whether students have understood and are able to reproduce the key concepts addressed in class and presented in the reading list. The committee subscribes to the idea of testing the understanding of students, certainly in the framework of the compulsory modules. While acknowledging that the entry requirements respect the existing provisions in England, the committee nevertheless suggests the programme and BSIS to consider sharpening the entry requirements admitting students with a background in primarily economics or politics. When reading the self-evaluation report prior to the site visit, the committee already pointed to the possibility that the limited familiarity of certain students with the core disciplines may affect the extent to which they fulfil one of the Dublin Descriptors. The first Dublin Descriptor states that 'qualifications that signify completion of the second cycle are awarded to students who have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends that typically associated with the first cycle'. The discussions on site regarding this programme have not taken away the committee's concern that the diverse background of the students and their sometimes limited familiarity with some of the core disciplines may jeopardise the opportunities for the programme to offer knowledge and understanding that is founded upon

and extending beyond what has been learned during first cycle studies. This suggestion and consideration, however, do not affect the overall positive appreciation of the committee regarding the quality of the individual modules or their alignment with the intended learning outcomes.

*Findings LLM in International Law with International Relations*

The curriculum of the LLM programme in International Law with International Relations consists of three components: a dissertation featuring a methodology module that includes legal writing skills; two compulsory modules on international human rights law and either a practical module on legal aspects of contemporary international problems or a sources and rules based module on public international law; and four elective modules, two to be chosen among nine modules in politics and two in law from a range of eleven modules.

According to the programme specification, students should have a Honours degree in law or an equivalent qualification. However, special consideration is given to applicants who have employment or practical experience which may compensate for a lack of traditional academic qualifications. Moreover, every effort is made to allow the widest possible participation within the constraint that applicants can provide evidence of their potential to complete the programme successfully.

Reviewing the curriculum, the committee noticed the considerable overlap with the MA programme in International Relations. Looking in detail into the module requirements, the committee managed to tailor almost the same curriculum of taught modules by following the indications set by the respective programmes. The status of individual modules as compulsory or elective courses may differ, as the table below indicates, but five out of six courses are identical. The main difference lays in the topic and approach of the dissertation, which is informed by law rather than politics in the case of the LLM programme.

<b>Curriculum overlap MA IR and LLM IL-IR</b>			
	<b>MA International Relations</b>		<b>LLM International Law with IR</b>
C	IR Theory	E	IR theory for lawyers
E	Legal aspects	C	Legal aspects
E	Public International Law	E	Public international law
E	International HR law	C	International HR law
E	Diplomatic law	E	Diplomatic law
E	Security & Liberties	E	Security & liberties

The committee is concerned about the degree that is eventually awarded on completion of the programme. In Flanders and the Netherlands, LLM programmes are usually only open to students who already have a LLB or can demonstrate that law subjects have taken up an important part of their bachelor curriculum. Whilst acknowledging the quality of this master programme as such and its obviously legal core components, the committee thinks it is important to take into account the situation in Flanders with regard to awarding LLM degrees to students with no or hardly any prior background in law. The committee therefore invites BSIS to consider awarding MA degrees in International Law with International Relations to those students who successfully complete the programme yet have no first cycle degree featuring a considerable legal component.

In view of the envisaged ‘streaming’ of programmes, the committee suggests BSIS and the programme convenors to reflect on moulding the existing programmes into an LLM with

primarily international law modules (for students with a legal background) and an MA with mainly international relations modules (admitting students with a broad spectre of first cycle degrees). As secondary area of specialisation, students may want to add a package of elective modules in resp. international law or international relations.

The committee is aware that the entry requirements and the title to be conferred are to some extent formalistic issues that indicate the variety of realities that nowadays still exist in higher education across Europe. With regard to the curriculum of the LLM in International Law with International Relations, the committee has no reservations on the quality of the individual modules or on the alignment of their learning goals with the overall programme objectives and learning outcomes. On the contrary, the discussions with staff and students indicated that the programme addresses an interesting niche in the field of international studies, as well as a specific need of students who choose this programme out of academic interest, potential professional career opportunities, or a combination of both.

#### *Findings LLM in International Economic Law*

The curriculum of the LLM programme in International Economic Law consists of three components: a dissertation on international economic law; three compulsory modules on international economic regulation, international economic law and corporate governance; and three elective modules, one in law, and two to be chosen among six modules in law, economics and politics. In keeping with the aims and objectives of the programme, the LLM is designed so that students develop knowledge in the theoretical and philosophical debates in the discipline, have access to their application in specialised modules, and develop a capacity to utilise these in the dissertation. The entry requirements are similar to those of the LLM in International Law with International Relations.

Reviewing the curriculum, the committee noticed a considerable overlap with the MA programme in International Political Economy. Looking in detail into the module requirements, the committee managed to tailor the same curriculum of taught modules by following the indications set by the respective programmes. The status of individual modules as compulsory or elective courses may differ, as the table below indicates, but the courses are identical. The main difference lays in the topic and approach of the dissertation, which is informed by law rather than political economy in the case of the LLM programme.

<b>Curriculum overlap MA IPE and LLM IEL</b>			
	<b>MA International Political Economy</b>		<b>LLM International Economic Law</b>
C	State, market & society	E	state, market & society
C	International political economy	E	international political economy
E	international economic regulation	C	international economic regulation
E	international economic law	C	international economic law
E	corporate governance	C	corporate governance
E	public international law	E	public international law

The committee has three concerns with regard to this programme. First of all, and in line with the comment on the LLM in International Law with International Relations, the committee raises the issue of the LLM degree to be eventually awarded to students with no or hardly any background in law during their bachelor degree. In Flanders and the Netherlands, LLM programmes are usually only open to students who already have a LLB or can demonstrate that law subjects have taken up an important part of their bachelor curriculum. The committee therefore invites BSIS to consider awarding MA degrees in International

Economic Law to students who successfully complete the programme yet have no first cycle degree featuring a considerable legal component. The committee is aware that the entry requirements and the title to be conferred to some extent merely indicate the variety of approaches that nowadays still exist in higher education across Europe. However, the UoK is aiming at obtaining accreditation from the NVAO in Flanders and the Netherlands, so it follows that the standards set in these jurisdictions should be complied with.

A second issue is that, in the case of this LLM programme in International Economic Law, the committee has also a concern with regard to the contents of the curriculum. Looking at the (titles of the) courses on offer in this programme the committee wondered to what extent the curriculum contains sufficient legal components for a programme in international economic law. According to the programme specifications, four modules should be in the field of law in order to qualify the programme as an LLM. Whilst recognising that the programme formally fulfils this requirement of UoK, the committee considers, after reviewing the contents of the core modules, that the legal component of this programme is under-emphasised. According to the committee, the modules pay too little attention to the various specialisms that constitute international economic law. Asked why a general course on international economic law focuses almost solely on trade law, and does not elaborate on finance or investment law, the programme indicated that this is a deliberate choice. In its reaction to the draft report, UoK indicated that various elements of finance and investment law are taught in context in the programme rather than as identifiably separate elements. Although this approach is to some extent understandable, the committee thinks that a programme should above all offer students the necessary building blocks to get a comprehensive overview of a particular field of study. In the case of the LLM IEL curriculum, the committee is not convinced that through these modules students are offered sufficient knowledge and understanding on the various components of international economic law. Acknowledging that it is not up to the committee to prescribe how a curriculum should look like, the committee would have expected this one-year programme to offer more law courses, and pay more specific attention to issues such as dispute settlement in international economic law, or to investment law and finance law. For the committee, whose task is to assess whether the programme complies with the quality standards set by the Flemish and Dutch education authorities, the presence of legal course components in the curriculum is particularly important for students entering the programme with no or hardly any background in law. In Flanders and the Netherlands, students are awarded an LLM degree after a three-year LLB or a first cycle degree with a considerable law component and another year of law courses at master's level. In this programme students can be awarded an LLM degree in a specific domain of law by producing a dissertation in the legal field and following four law modules, which according to the committee (based on the information received) do not cover the breadth of international economic law.

A third concern follows from the previous point and relates to the students this programme is attracting. The committee had difficulties in matching the information provided on the LLM IEL students in the self-evaluation report, in the discussion with students, with alumni and with staff. The self-evaluation report and programme specification mention that the programme is open to people with a first degree in law but that candidates with good potential but a different background are also allowed; the discussion with staff learned that this programme was not meant for students with a law background or the ambition to enter into legal practice later on. In fact, a background in law was considered a disadvantage for a student to start this programme. Many LLM IEL students, so the committee was told during the visit, have a background in politics, international relations or economics. The discussions with the current students and alumni, however, taught the committee that the programme

generally does seem to attract students with an undergraduate background in law (at least to some extent), who told the committee that they had selected Brussels as their preferred place of study, among other because of the presence of major law firms. Furthermore, students who graduate from the programme actively wish to and also do pursue a career in legal practice. In addition, students indicated that colleagues with no particular background in law managed to process the information but required considerably more time to do so, thereby slowing down the learning process of their fellow students who already possessed such knowledge from their undergraduate studies. When reading the self-evaluation report prior to the site visit, the committee identified as an issue of priority attention for the site visit discussions that the limited familiarity of certain students with the core disciplines may impact their capacity to demonstrate knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends beyond what is learned and taught in the first cycle. In the case of the LLM IEL programme, this concern was not entirely removed during the visit. According to the committee, the programme should check whether the curriculum contents are feasible to the students it envisages and attractive to those that effectively enrol. As already mentioned under the general findings above, the introductory classes in law and/or economics before the start of the term starts may be useful to refresh one's knowledge on a topic, but cannot make up for courses or subjects students never had before.

In view of the envisaged 'streaming' of programmes and adding to what has been mentioned on the previous LLM programme, the committee suggests BSIS to consider offering the current compulsory modules as a package of elective courses. This package would constitute a secondary area of specialisation on international economic law, forming one stream or track within the overall LLM programme in International Law.

### **Considerations**

The five programmes under consideration have the same curriculum structure featuring six compulsory or elective modules and one dissertation. A total of eight permanent Brussels-based staff offer - in cooperation with visiting staff from UoK and local experts - a broad variety of modules that students can take as a compulsory or elective part of their respective programmes. BSIS management and lecturers consider this approach a sign of close integration and cooperation among programmes and staff and the multidisciplinary it entails is seen as a particular strength of the programmes in Brussels. The committee agrees to some extent to this viewpoint, but also has some concerns about maintaining the individual profiles of the programmes and ensuring the internal coherence at the level of individual students' curricula. The committee therefore supports the envisaged streamlining of the current curricula in order to create a greater visibility of the areas in which students are specialising.

The committee confirms that the duration of the master programmes is in line with the requirements set by Flemish education authorities. Nevertheless, the committee wants to draw attention to the fact that the study load is calculated differently in Flanders.

The programmes are feasible, according to the committee. The study load is considerable but not exaggerated, there are no 'stumbling blocks' in the curricula, and students can rely on extensive support from their academic tutor. Students are aware that they should take their education in their own hands, but also know that BSIS can provide support in case they require special attention. The committee wants to emphasise the very positive feedback it received on guidance by all students who praise the availability and commitment of the convenors, thesis supervisors, PhD students and the members of the administrative staff at BSIS.

The committee has met with the Brussels staff, both teaching and non-teaching, and noted their enthusiasm and commitment to the institution and the students. According to the committee, lecturers have the adequate research and didactical expertise to deliver their modules. The number of permanent staff is limited, but sufficient for the delivery of the programmes in their current form. Moreover, the committee was impressed by the policy of UoK (and thus BSIS) towards study leave for academic staff.

After a period of rapid growth, the number of students had slightly dropped and is now on the rise again. The committee considers that a higher intake would be more cost-effective in terms of staff equivalents and number of elective courses. Moreover, the committee is concerned about the viability of the LLM programme in International Economic Law given that student numbers have been constantly low. However, the number of students completing their studies across all programmes is very high. The committee has calculated that taking into account the different programme variants students are following, about 95% of students eventually graduate.

The committee noticed that both staff and students come from different countries and considers this multi-national and multi-cultural environment a strong advantage for an institution offering a range of programmes in international studies. With such an international student body, there is no need for a comprehensive study exchange scheme. However, BSIS is offering students the opportunity for a study period abroad in China, outside the regular curriculum, and is working on other arrangements in the US, Colombia and Japan.

During three days, the committee was present on the BSIS premises and considers the facilities to be sufficient but not exceptional. The intranet link with UoK is strong and provides students with good access to the library and the virtual learning network. The academic area, however, is not conducive for individual research and the lecture/seminar rooms lack state-of-the art equipment, such as smartboards.

Studying the curriculum contents for each of the five programmes, the committee considers that in four cases (MA ICS, MA IR, MA IPE, and LLM IL-IR) the learning goals of the modules are in line with the intended learning outcomes at programme level. Talking to students and staff, the committee realised that each of these programmes is indeed targeting students with (slightly) different profiles. The committee also noticed that each of these programmes is making a difference in the academic and professional career perspectives of the individual student.

In two cases (MA IPE and LLM IEL), the committee has found that students with no/hardly any previous background in the subject experienced considerably more difficulties than their colleagues in understanding all materials. Looking at the entry requirements, the committee therefore suggests BSIS to consider sharpening the entry requirements admitting students with a background in primarily economics, politics or law.

Regarding the two law programmes (LLM IL-IR and LLM IEL), the committee thinks it is important to take into account that in Flanders, LLM degrees are usually not awarded to students with no or hardly any background in law. The committee therefore invites BSIS to consider awarding such students an MA rather than an LLM degree.

In case of the LLM IEL programme, however, the committee has an additional and serious concern regarding the contents of the curriculum. Whilst this programme fulfils the formal requirements for an LLM degree according to the programme specifications, the committee

considers that in general the programme's legal component is under-emphasised and that the modules pay too little attention to the various specialisms that constitute international economic law. The committee thinks this situation is particularly problematic with regard to students entering the programme with no or hardly any background in law but can be awarded an LLM degree in a specific domain of law by producing a dissertation in the legal field and by following four law modules, which according to the committee do not cover the breadth of international economic law.

Furthermore, and in line with the previous consideration, the committee noticed that the LLM IEL programme aims to attract mainly students with a non-law background, who reportedly require more time to process all materials. However, the committee also spoke with students and alumni who do possess an undergraduate background in law and selected Brussels as their preferred place of study, among other because of the presence of major law firms. In order to counter this apparent inconsistency, the programme may want to check whether the curriculum contents are feasible to the students it envisages and attractive to those that effectively enrol.

### **Conclusion**

The committee considers the teaching and learning process to be satisfactory for four programmes. In case of the LLM in International Economic Law, the committee acknowledges that the programme's staff and facilities are adequate and sufficient, but considers that the current curriculum on international economic law does not contain sufficient subject-specific clout for a one-year LLM programme.

Master's programme *MA International Conflict and Security*: the committee assesses Standard 2 as **satisfactory**.

Master's programme *MA in International Relations*: the committee assesses Standard 2 as **satisfactory**.

Master's programme *MA in International Political Economy*: the committee assesses Standard 2 as **satisfactory**.

Master's programme *LLM in International Law with International Relations*: the committee assesses Standard 2 as **satisfactory**.

Master's programme *LLM in International Economic Law*: the committee assesses Standard 2 as **unsatisfactory**.



### **Standard 3: Exit level achieved**

The programme has a sufficient system of evaluation, testing and examination and shows that the intended learning outcomes are being achieved.

#### **Criteria**

The level realised is apparent from the validity, reliability and transparency of the assessment, the evaluation and the examination of the students, the degree of openings for the graduates on the labour market or the transfer to a further education programme and from the number of degrees earned by each incoming cohort.

### **Findings**

The assessment system at BSIS applies to all programmes at UoK, including the five master programmes under review, and follows the provisions established at University of Kent. The programme specification indicates how the assessment contributes to achieving the learning outcomes at programme level. The assessment modes have been determined as part of the module approval procedure and are detailed in each module specification. Their revision requires the approval of the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee at UoK. The committee studied the assessment information by reviewing the programme specifications in the respective self-evaluation reports and the individual module specifications. During the visit, the committee looked at the coursework by students - as well as feedback and assessment by lecturers - for six selected modules. The committee noticed that the assessments are in line with the provisions announced in the module / programme specifications and that lecturers provide adequate written feedback to individual coursework. Lecturers from all five programmes emphasised that students have the opportunity to discuss this feedback extensively during dedicated consultation hours. Students indicated that they are making good use of this opportunity and emphasised that they are very satisfied with the availability of staff to guide and discuss their individual coursework.

In most modules an essay of 4-5000 words constitutes the main assessment product. In certain modules, participation and/or presentations at seminar sessions account for up to 20% of the mark. Two convenors indicated that they check in an additional test whether students grasp the contents of the literature and/or the lectures. According to both lecturers and management, it is the explicit policy of UoK (and thus of BSIS) to use written assignments as main mode of assessment, rather than unseen examinations or open-book exams. The committee understands that essays are an important means to establish whether students at master's level have achieved the envisaged learning goals per module. However, the committee invites the programmes to consider including – at least for the compulsory modules - an additional test to verify whether students properly grasped the contents of the module and the literature. Given that most marks are given almost entirely on the basis of written assignments, the committee also suggests investigating the opportunities for and relevance of including some oral tests throughout the curriculum to complement the existing assessment modes. This suggestion also applies to the feasibility of organising an oral defence of the dissertation, thereby dedicating a small part of the overall score to this additional assessment moment.

The role of the Board of Examiners is described in UoK's Code of Practice for Quality Assurance. At BSIS the Board of Examiners is chaired by the Dean and attended by all programme convenors and the external examiners for each programme. The Board of Examiners reviews the grades for each module, considers the grade profile of each student, and confirms the final grades. According to the Board members most of this work is rather mechanical; the importance of the Board of Examiners lies in applying consistency in decisions over issues in the so-called 'grey zone'. Four external examiners, one of whom is

always a lawyer, are appointed by UoK on the recommendation of BSIS. In addition to reviewing students' work, external examiners assure the standards of programmes and write an annual report to whom BSIS is expected to reply. Discussing with a delegation of the Board of Examiners, reviewing the CV's and the latest reports of the external examiners, the committee notices that the composition and tasks of the Board of Examiners are in line with the requirements in the UK, but differ considerably from what is customary in the Netherlands or Flanders. Three issues stand out in this respect: the role of the Concessions Committee, the involvement of external examiners in the Board of Examiners and the position of the Dean as chair of the Board.

The Concessions Committee is composed of members who also sit on the Board of Examiners. Students whose performance at any stage is impaired by illness or other unforeseen events can apply for postponing the delivery date (a so-called 'concession') with the Concessions Committee, not with individual lecturers. Students indicated to the committee that they are aware of the concessions system. One student, who had to go through the procedure, informed the committee s/he has had good support from the academic tutor in preparing his/her case for the Concessions Committee. The committee has the impression that this system is functioning well; it certainly creates a level playing ground among lecturers and requires the student to take in hand his/her own study pace. Secondly, the committee believes that the presence of external examiners increases both the capacity and the neutrality of the Board of Examiners. The external examiners reports moreover provide a good overview of the key challenges of the system and oblige the programmes not only to consider issues for improvement but also act upon these. In view of the potential diversification of assessment types, the committee suggests the programmes to consider videotaping presentations or other forms of oral testing to ensure that external examiners can also review these assessment products. Thirdly, the Dean emphasised that according to the British system, he is entitled to chair the Board of Examiners. Moreover, he does not see any cause for (alleged) conflicts of interest: there is no link between admission policy and the examination board, the convenors report to their respective Schools at UoK and the external examiners have temporary assignments and also report to UoK. According to the committee, the position of the Dean as chair of the Board of Examiners is not an optimum situation, but it does not jeopardise the neutrality of the assessment system given its above-mentioned features. Furthermore, the committee is convinced that the individual members of the Board of Examiners have the knowledge and skills to implement their tasks adequately.

All work which counts towards final assessment is graded according to a common University approved grading system: distinction (70+), merit (60-69), pass (40-59) and fail (<40). Further to the strong recommendation by NVAO and its initial accreditation committee to change the minimum pass mark to 50, the University's Learning and Teaching Board has approved this recommendation, which will be implemented as of 2014-2015. The committee thinks positively about this change and acknowledges the efforts of the BSIS team to get this recommendation adopted by UoK. All assessment work that counts for more than 20% of the student's overall grade is moderated by an independent marker. Dissertations are all double marked. The committee noticed during the review of course materials and dissertations that marks are given using specific evaluation sheets. Students mentioned to the committee that they are aware of the indicators used to assess their coursework and dissertation. All written work is submitted electronically through the virtual learning environment Moodle and assessed for plagiarism by Turnitin software. Students indicated that the school's policy on plagiarism is clear. According to the committee, the provisions in place to detect and address plagiarism are adequate.

In each programme under review, the dissertation accounts for one third of the credits (or one quarter in case students follow the extended programme variant) and its score is weighted accordingly in the calculation of the final grade. The master thesis is part of the Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (FDR) component of the curriculum, which starts with lectures, seminars and interactive workshops before the student drafts the dissertation proposal and eventually produces the dissertation. FDR is offered to all master students at BSIS, although certain seminars and workshops cater for the specific needs of students enrolled in law or social sciences programmes. Students indicated that in principle they can choose a dissertation topic, which may however be fine-tuned to reflect the expertise of the supervisor, who is allocated to each student after the draft dissertation proposal. Students and alumni indicated they are/were very satisfied with the support and availability of the supervisors.

For each programme, the committee studied a sample of ten dissertations looking at problem definition, literature use, research execution, source verification, as well as structure and readability of the dissertation. The 50 dissertations are listed per programme and student record number in Appendix 8 to this report. According to the committee, the dissertation topics are very much in line with the focus of the respective programmes. The research approach, moreover, reflects the programmes' core discipline: law (LLM) or social sciences (MA). In their thesis assessment forms, the committee members indicated that each dissertation fulfils the minimum criteria one would expect of a dissertation at master's level and of academic orientation. After an internal discussion of their respective assessments, the committee members agreed unanimously that for each of the five programmes under review, the dissertations are of sufficient academic quality. In the previous section, the committee had indicated in the case of two programmes (MA IPE and LLM IEL) that students with no previous exposure to law or economics often had to spend considerably more time on the taught modules. The committee did not find any particular evidence for this lack of disciplinary know-how in the dissertations it reviewed for the master programmes in International Political Economy and International Economic Law.

On the basis of the information provided in the different self-evaluation reports, the committee produced the table below, which indicates that overall dissertations tend to get high grades. The committee reviewed a representative sample of all dissertations, including those with low and high marks. In most cases the committee members agreed to the scores of the examiners. The cases, in which the committee member would have given a higher or lower score, are not linked to any programme in particular but concern all five programmes. On the basis of the sample it reviewed, the committee does not think the high grades are the result of systematic grade inflation.

<b>UoK-BSIS dissertations cohorts 2010-2013</b>				
<b>Programmes</b>	<b>number of dissertations</b>	<b>of whom</b>		
		<b>distinction</b>	<b>merit</b>	<b>pass</b>
MA ICS	44	16	19	9
MA IR	49	6	34	9
LLM IL-IR	37	8	18	11
MA IPE	28	9	15	4
LLM IEL	9	3	5	1
Total #	167	42	91	34
%	100	25	54	20

Notwithstanding this positive appreciation on the overall quality of the dissertations, the committee noticed a wide variety in the structure and approach of the theses it reviewed. According to the lecturers, all dissertations should fulfil some basic formal and technical requirements. Their adherence to these rules, however, is not checked until the final product has been submitted for assessment. Moreover, the specific requirements in terms of the length for instance vary per discipline (law, international relations). Furthermore, it is the explicit policy of BSIS to favour consistency within a dissertation, but not across all dissertations: BSIS thus allows students, some of whom have extensive experience using one particular citation method, to adopt the citation approach of their choice provided they adopt it throughout the dissertation. Moreover, in a few cases the committee noticed that the research question was formulated in a descriptive rather than an analytical way. This is all the more remarkable given that students are trained during FDR seminars how to construct a proposal and how to draft an entire dissertation in an academic way. Both staff and students mentioned that most of the support / counselling go into the preparatory stages of the dissertation, including an extensive review of the dissertation proposal. However, while supervisors are available for ad hoc counselling, they do not review draft versions of the dissertation nor do they perform a quality check before the thesis is formally submitted. Taking into account these clarifications, the committee understands why certain dissertations are not structured in the same 'final' way as this is the case in thesis products in the Netherlands and Flanders. The committee nevertheless suggests the lecturers involved in the FDR module to pay particular attention to (training students in) elaborating the research question of the dissertation.

An overview of the number of students enrolled and graduating per programme is provided in Appendix 5 to this report. After the site visit BSIS provided more detailed information on the students that had not (yet) completed the programme, as well as the final grades obtained by the successful graduates. The committee processed this information in the table below, which demonstrates that the success rate is high for all five programmes. Almost all students who enrol on the programme, complete it eventually. Those students who did not yet graduate in most cases follow one of the programme variants: they study part-time, follow the extended programme, or started in the Spring term. Moreover, in line with their score on the dissertation, students tend to get relatively high overall grades.

UoK - BSIS student cohorts 2010-2013							
Programmes	Total intake	of whom			Completion rate at the time of the visit (%)	Distinction %	Merit %
		completed	ongoing	withdrawn			
MA ICS	57	46	9	2	81	27	36
MA IR	63	51	11	1	81	7	68
LLM IL-IR	49	38	11	0	78	21	42
MA IPE	35	29	5	1	83	28	47
LLM IEL	13	9	3	1	69	26	39
total #	217	173	39	5	78	22	46
%	100	80	18	2			

Another way of demonstrating the level of the programmes under review is to look at the performance of graduates, i.e. how graduates are using their study programme and degree afterwards, in post-graduate studies, PhD projects or on the labour market. The alumni at the site visit had moved on after their studies at BSIS in different ways: some are preparing

PhD's, others are employed in the private sector, while still others work in international / European public or non-profit organisations. Two alumni used their study period at BSIS as part of a career move and are currently looking for a job in a new professional environment. The current economic crisis, however, seems to prevent some BSIS graduates to find paid employment right away. In order to complement the profiles of the alumni present on site, the committee asked for – and obtained - an overview of the jobs/employers BSIS graduates have moved into after their studies. This incomplete but representative list indicates that in addition to the above-mentioned professional perspectives, some alumni have returned to their home country to take up employment in an international environment and at graduate level.

### **Considerations**

The committee's considerations on this standard apply to all five programmes under review. The assessment system follows the provisions established at UoK and is implemented adequately at BSIS. The committee thinks highly of the information that is provided to students in the programme and module specifications, as well as of the feedback lecturers provide to students' individual coursework. Students, moreover, know what type of assessment is forthcoming and which criteria will be used to assess their coursework. On the basis of the sample it reviewed, the committee considers the assessments to be valid, reliable and transparent.

Whilst acknowledging that the Board of Examiners functions according to British regulations, the committee did notice a number of differences in its composition and tasks compared to the Dutch and Flemish system. The committee considers that from a conflict of interest point of view, having the Dean chairing the Board of Examiners is not an optimum situation. However the specific tasks of the Board and the presence of external examiners ensure the neutrality of the system. Moreover, the committee thinks highly of the capacity of the Board members who have the proper knowledge and skills to implement their tasks in a professional way.

For each programme, committee members reviewed ten dissertations and consider that each of the fifty individual dissertations is of sufficient academic quality. The dissertation topics are very much in line with the focus of the respective programmes and the research approaches reflect the programmes' core disciplines: law (LLM) or social sciences (MA). Any possible weaknesses in disciplinary know-how at the start of the programmes seem to have been repaired by the time students deliver the dissertation. As a particular feature of the dissertation process, the committee noticed that the bulk of supervision happens at the outset of the pathway. In this phase supervisors provide extensive and good quality support, according to the committee.

The committee considers that the success rate (studierendement) for each programme is very high. Moreover, the committee appreciates the efforts of the BSIS administrators to follow-up on each and every student, which in turn reduces the number of potential drop-outs. The committee understands from the discussion with alumni from recent cohorts that the economic crisis prevents some BSIS graduates from finding paid employment. On the whole, however, many graduates continue to find suitable employment in line with the level and orientation of their studies.

In sum, the committee considers that the five programmes are structured in such a way that the intended learning outcomes are achieved and the exit level realised by students who successfully pass the modules and produce a dissertation. The committee therefore assesses

this standard positively. Such appreciation nevertheless leaves room for some adjustment or improvement: the committee invites the programmes first of all to consider diversifying their assessment modes in individual modules, including provisions for knowledge tests and oral examination / dissertation defence. Secondly, lecturers in the FDR module and dissertation supervisors are invited to pay (even) more attention to supporting students in the elaboration of the research question / dissertation proposal.

### **Conclusion**

The committee considers the exit level achieved to be satisfactory for all five master programmes under review.

Master's programme *MA International Conflict and Security*: the committee assesses Standard 3 as **satisfactory**.

Master's programme *MA in International Relations*: the committee assesses Standard 3 as **satisfactory**.

Master's programme *MA in International Political Economy*: the committee assesses Standard 3 as **satisfactory**.

Master's programme *LLM in International Law with International Relations*: the committee assesses Standard 3 as **satisfactory**.

Master's programme *LLM in International Economic Law*: the committee assesses Standard 3 as **satisfactory**.

## **Standard 4: Set-up and organisation of the internal quality assurance**

The set-up and organisation of the internal quality assurance is aimed at systematically improving the programme with the involvement of the relevant stakeholders.

### **Criteria**

The programme is periodically evaluated, based in part on testable objectives. The outcomes of this evaluation form the basis for verifiable measures for improvement that contribute to the realisation of the objectives. Employees, students, alumni and the relevant (professional) field of the programme are actively involved in the internal quality assurance.

### **Findings**

The internal quality assurance system at BSIS applies to all programmes at UoK, including the five master programmes under review, and follows the provisions established in UoK's primary quality assurance document, the Code of Practice for Quality Assurance. It sets out the principles, structures and procedures through which UoK (and thus also BSIS) monitors academic standards and improves the quality of its programmes. The committee has looked into this document, which was annexed to the self-evaluation reports, and noticed that it covers adequately the various elements one would expect of a quality assurance system in higher education.

The responsibility for the delivery of master programmes in Brussels, on behalf of the academic schools at UoK and in accordance with the Code of Practice, falls upon the Brussels Graduate Board of Studies. This Board is chaired by the Director of Graduate Studies and composed of the convenors of all programmes offered in Brussels, as well as at least two students representing the master and PhD programmes, respectively. The Board of Studies recommends modules and programmes for approval, conducts annual monitoring of modules and programmes, and responds to feedback from External Examiners and students. The Board representatives clarified to the committee that they perform a number of tasks independently (such as monitoring modules and programmes), but depend on the approval of a 'higher' body, the respective Graduate Studies Committees of the 'parent' academic schools at UoK, to validate for instance the organisation of new modules or the adjustment of existing courses. The committee notices that this is a complicated and time-consuming approach, but also acknowledges that not all issues can be addressed, handled and approved by BSIS without proper validation by UoK. Moreover, the committee gathers from the discussion on site that the various components are in place and that the system is functioning adequately.

When reviewing on site the minutes of the Board of Studies meetings, the committee realised that student representatives were invited systematically to the Board meetings. The committee considers that this is an important feature of the quality assurance system and suggests BSIS to make the involvement of students more visible. On the basis of the self-evaluation reports, the committee had not understood that students were structurally involved in the Board of Studies. BSIS may also want to invite student representatives of the Board of Studies to discussion rounds with accreditation committees, which is common practice in both the Netherlands and Flanders. The committee also learned from the Board of Studies minutes that there are only two meetings per year, one in autumn and one in spring leaving often a big gap between the spring and autumn meeting. The Board of Studies is currently considering the possibility of an additional meeting, an option the committee certainly supports.

BSIS also features a Joint Council, which functions as a staff-student liaison committee covering all non-academic aspects of the school. It is attended by all academic and

administrative staff as well as by student representatives from all programmes. The committee reviewed the minutes of Joint Council meetings and spoke with individual students and staff who are member of the Joint Council. Although the committee noticed that many issues can be – and effectively are – addressed in an informal way among students, administrators and lecturers, the Joint Council provides an opportunity for formalising certain issues (such as the opening hours of the secretariat) and explicating the responsibilities of the various stakeholders in for instance social gatherings or career events.

Programmes are monitored in three ways, through periodic programme reviews, monitoring of modules and programmes, and external examiners' reports. The latter document has already been addressed in the previous section on assessment. Periodic programme reviews look at the quality of all programmes within a UoK school. The committee read the most recent reviews of the Kent Law School (2009) and the School of Politics and International Relations (2011). Both documents cover also the respective master programmes at BSIS and emphasise very similar elements when it comes to the specific campus and programmes in Brussels: first of all, the opportunities for internships, placements and professional careers are mentioned as a strong feature and added value of the Brussels campus; secondly, both reports encourage stronger links and better communication between staff and students at Canterbury and Brussels; thirdly, the library provision for students at BSIS should be reviewed and strengthened. The committee understands from the discussions on site that in the meantime the links with Canterbury colleagues have intensified and that the students now dispose of full access to the online catalogue of UoK's Templeman library.

Each programme at BSIS is evaluated every year along with each of its modules. The Director of Graduate Studies/Chair of the Board of Studies prepares a report for the relevant Heads of School and the Dean of Social Sciences at UoK. The committee looked into the results of the individual module evaluations and found the materials to be comprehensive. Students and staff indicated that the module evaluations constitute a useful complement to more informal expressions of appreciation. Students have the feeling their concerns are taken seriously and issues arising from the module evaluations are addressed satisfactorily. Changes, however, do not only come about via module evaluations. Very often, students address their concern directly to the member of staff or do so via the Brussels Graduate Student Union, the student body representing all master students at BSIS. Moreover, students indicated they tend to have good and trustful relations with their academic tutor and/or with members of the administrative staff with whom they feel confident discussing most of their concerns. Based on documents and discussions, the committee noticed that there is a positive and constructive atmosphere within BSIS in general, and between students and lecturers in particular.

This positive atmosphere creates a sense of involvement, of belonging and commitment among students, administrators and lecturers. The committee members who had also been involved in the initial accreditation procedure in 2011 moreover noticed that the academic and professional network of the lecturers had grown considerably over the past three years, which in turn creates more opportunities for academic and professional cooperation, including the involvement of external colleagues from academia or practice in delivering modules and the opportunities for students to undertake placement. From the discussions with alumni, the committee gathered that there is a close but informal connection between recent graduates and current students. This link is often maintained through individuals who have studied at BSIS and became PhD students at the Brussels centre. In terms of alumni policy, committee members noticed that not much had changed in structural terms compared to the situation in 2011: BSIS is still starting to develop its own alumni activities in addition to the central UoK policy. Further to comments and suggestions from the alumni, the



committee recommends BSIS to activate its own alumni policy and involve former students more structurally in the development and quality assurance work of BSIS. In this respect, the committee welcomes the plans of BSIS to dedicate administrative staff time to alumni activities and to hold alumni events in the framework of UoK's 50th anniversary in 2015.

Whilst noticing on the one hand the very strong involvement of all interlocutors during the various discussions on site, the committee had the impression that on the other hand the self-evaluation reports had been drafted by the BSIS administrators with only limited input from most convenors. This is all the more striking, given that the committee performing the initial accreditation exercise made a similar comment in its reports. The bigger part of the five self-evaluation reports contained descriptions emphasising common issues across programmes rather than specific features or individual developments at programme level. Usually, however, self-evaluation reports constitute an opportunity for self-reflection, benchmarking and priority setting. The committee understands that BSIS was under considerable time pressure when producing the reports, but nevertheless thinks that it missed a good opportunity to reflect on the individual programmes, indicate envisaged and realised changes, and elaborate a SWOT-analysis of both BSIS and the five individual programmes under review. The committee strongly encourages all BSIS stakeholders to undertake such activities when preparing future accreditation exercises.

### **Considerations**

The committee's considerations on this standard apply to all five programmes under review. Internal quality assurance follows the provisions established at UoK and is implemented adequately at BSIS, according to the committee. The committee acknowledges that the composition and tasks of the Board of Studies differ somewhat from 'Opleidingscommissies' at Flemish and Dutch universities, but its members are competent and negotiate the BSIS programme issues in the respective Graduate Studies committees at UoK.

Reviewing the documents that monitor the quality of programmes, the committee noticed that some recommendations from the periodic programme reviews with regard to UoK-UoK contacts and library provisions have been addressed by BSIS in the meantime. Moreover, the committee considers that individual module evaluations are comprehensive and constitute a useful complement to more informal evaluations. The committee furthermore appreciates that student concerns are taken seriously and that issues arising from either formal module evaluations or informal discussions are addressed adequately.

Throughout the site visit, the committee noticed a positive atmosphere within BSIS, as well as involvement and commitment from the different stakeholders. Compared to a few years ago, the network of individual lecturers has expanded, which in turn creates more opportunities for academic and professional cooperation, as well as for student placement opportunities.

In sum, the committee considers that internal quality assurance at BSIS is organised adequately for each of the five programmes under review and therefore assesses this standard positively. The committee nevertheless sees some room for improvement with regard to the involvement of students and alumni: BSIS could give student representatives a more prominent and visible role in the Board of Studies and may want to involve former graduates more actively and structurally in the development and monitoring of its master programmes.

### **Conclusion**

The committee assesses the set-up and organisation of internal quality assurance to be satisfactory for all five master programmes under review.

Master's programme *MA International Conflict and Security*: the committee assesses Standard 4 as **satisfactory**.

Master's programme *MA in International Relations*: the committee assesses Standard 4 as **satisfactory**.

Master's programme *MA in International Political Economy*: the committee assesses Standard 4 as **satisfactory**.

Master's programme *LLM in International Law with International Relations*: the committee assesses Standard 4 as **satisfactory**.

Master's programme *LLM in International Economic Law*: the committee assesses Standard 4 as **satisfactory**.

## **General conclusion**

The committee assesses the master's programme *MA International Conflict and Security* as **satisfactory**.

The committee assesses the master's programme *MA in International Relations* as **satisfactory**.

The committee assesses the master's programme *MA in International Political Economy* as **satisfactory**.

The committee assesses the master's programme *LLM in International Law with International Relations* as **satisfactory**.

The committee assesses the master's programme *LLM in International Economic Law* as **satisfactory for a limited period**.

## Appendices



## **Appendix 1: Curricula vitae of the members of the assessment committee**

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**Chair : Pierre Vercauteren** is Vice-Dean of the faculty of economic, social, political and communication sciences of the Catholic University of Louvain (UCL) in Mons. He holds degrees in International Relations, Public Administration and European Studies from UCL, as well as a PhD in Political Sciences from the French-speaking Free University of Brussels (ULB). He is secretary-general of the international research network REGIMEN on globalisation and international governance. In addition to his duties at UCL, Professor Vercauteren has taught the course 'Global Governance' at ULB and is member of the research unit LARGOTEC at the University of Paris Est. Pierre Vercauteren is well-known in the French-speaking part of Belgium for his interventions on TV and in newspapers at the elections and in times of government building. Professor Vercauteren has been member of the VLIR visitation committee reviewing programmes in political sciences in Flanders (2007) and chaired the NVAO committee performing the initial accreditation assessment of the five programmes at UoK-BSIS in 2011.

**Member : Arild Saether** is emeritus professor at the University of Agder – Kristiansand in Norway, where he was the chair of the School of Management at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences. He holds degrees in economics from the universities of Oslo (NO), Minnesota (USA) and Cornell University (USA). He has published extensively on European economic integration, European higher education reforms, and the history of economic thought. Professor Saether has taught at different institutions, including the European Institute of Public Administration in Maastricht and the EuroFaculty at the University of Latvia, which he also directed for three years. Arild Saether has served on several assessment committees for academic programmes, including on behalf of the NVAO at the University of Leiden in 2012.

**Member : Ron Ton** is director of the Clingendael Academy, which is part of the Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael' in The Hague. Ron Ton has an extensive experience in working with the governments, NGO's, private sector and universities in the Netherlands and abroad, notably in Central and Eastern Europe, Northern Africa and the Middle East. Drs. Ton is a graduate of the Utrecht University in Contemporary History and also obtained his teaching qualifications at the university's Pedagogical and Didactical Institute. He is an expert in curriculum development, train-the-trainer programmes and the development of interactive education, assisting and advising international academic and diplomatic training institutions. Ron Ton was member of the NVAO committee performing the initial accreditation assessment of the five programmes at UoK-BSIS in 2011.

**Member : Freya Baetens** is Director of Studies at Leiden University College (LUC), head of the LUC Research Centre and Assistant Professor at the Europe Institute of the Leiden Law School. She holds Law degrees from Ghent University and the Columbia University School of Law, as well as a PhD. in Law from the University of Cambridge. Dr. Baetens teaches master's courses in Public International Law and International Economic Law and Sustainable Development. She has published on a wide range of topics, including treaty interpretation, state responsibility, equality, international trade and investment disputes, EU external relations, discrimination in international migration law, sustainable development, and interaction between legal regimes. In addition to her academic pursuits, Freya Baetens has assisted international arbitration committees and is registered at the Bar in Brussels.

**Student-member: Tessa Baeck** has degrees in Political Sciences, Comparative and International Politics and EU studies from the universities of Leuven and Ghent (BE). After

her graduation in 2013, she joined the UNESCO Liaison Office in Brussels for a six-month internship. Ms. Baeck has considerable experience abroad as Erasmus student in Potsdam (DE), summer school student in Prague (CZ) and Sichuan (PRC), as researcher for her master's thesis in India and as junior expert at the Belgian Embassy in Brasil. During her studies, Tessa Baeck was staff member of the Student Council of the Higher Education Association Leuven.

## Appendix 2: Domain-specific framework of reference

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The five programmes submitted for assessment are all master's programmes of academic orientation in a specialist field. According to the Brussels School of International Studies, there are no reference frameworks established in the UK which cover the specific domains under review. The British Quality Assurance Agency has reportedly established general frameworks for the domains Law, Politics or Economics, but these do not apply to the specific areas on offer at BSIS: international economic law, international relations, international economic policy, conflict and security or international law with international relations. In Flanders, such frameworks are called domain specific learning outcomes (domeinspecifieke leerresultaten), which are set in common by all higher education institutions offering a specific programme. The frameworks that have been validated until now are available on the NVAO website but do not include the domains under review in this assessment exercise.

According to the VLUHR manual, the committee should establish its own reference framework explicating domain-specific learning outcomes in case such framework does not exist. Given the fact that the committee was tasked to assess five different programmes which are all running for some years now and successfully passed NVAO's initial accreditation assessment, the committee did not establish entirely new frameworks. The committee decided, however, to start from the existing intended learning outcomes for each of the five programmes and checked whether these learning outcomes are in line with what can reasonably be expected of a master's programme of academic orientation in this particular field.

Each committee member was tasked to take the lead in this review exercise for one or more programmes and report back to the entire committee. During an internal review meeting, the committee members presented their considerations which were discussed and eventually accepted as opinion of the entire committee. The committee findings and considerations on the individual programmes are presented in the core section of the report.

The committee formally established that the domain specific learning outcomes of the Master in International Conflict and Security, the Master in International Relations, the Master in International Economic Law, the Master in International Economic Policy and the Master in International Law with International Relations are formulated adequately for their purpose as master's programmes of academic orientation in the respective fields.





## Appendix 3: Intended learning outcomes

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### Master's programme MA International Conflict and Security

On completion of the MA in International Conflict and Security students will be expected to have developed and demonstrated knowledge and understanding in the following areas:

- key historical and theoretical issues in international conflict and the study of war and peace, together with familiarity with appropriate bibliographical sources;
- how to apply general theoretical and conceptual frameworks to the analysis of specific conflicts and security issues;
- the nature and distribution of power in the international systems;
- problems of political order; the social, economic, historical and cultural context within which actors operate;
- the different kinds of actors on the international scene, their respective interests and influence in conflict and security related issues;
- key theoretical problems of war, peace and security;
- current political challenges to international peace and security and possible strategies to address them;
- the changing role of the state in the context of globalisation and regional integration and the implications for international peace and security;
- how to design and conduct a research project demonstrating awareness of epistemological and methodological principles;
- how to carry out an independent research project and write in a scholarly manner demonstrating familiarity with academic conventions.

In addition they will be expected to have achieved the following Skills and Other Attributes.

#### Intellectual skills:

- general research skills, especially bibliographic and computing skills;
- gather, organize and deploy evidence, data and information from a variety of secondary and some primary sources;
- identify, investigate, analyse, formulate and advocate solutions to problems;
- develop reasoned arguments, synthesise relevant information and exercise critical judgement;
- reflect on, and manage, their own learning and seek to make use of constructive feedback from peers and staff to enhance their performance and personal skills,
- manage their own learning self-critically.

#### Subject-specific skills:

- advanced understanding the nature and significance of conflict as a human condition;
- ability to critically apply concepts, theories and methods used in the study of conflict and security to the analysis of political events, ideas, institutions and practices;
- ability to critically evaluate different interpretations of political issues and events;
- ability to collect, analyse and present information about conflict and political events;
- awareness of the epistemological issues relevant to research in the social sciences, including the major theoretical and epistemological debates in the social sciences, as they bear on international conflict and security analysis.

### Transferable skills:

- Communication: communicate effectively and fluently in speech and writing (including, where appropriate, the use of IT); organise information clearly and coherently; use communication and information technology for the retrieval and presentation of information, including, where appropriate, statistical or numerical information;
- Information technology: produce written documents; undertake online research; communicate using e-mail; process information using databases;
- Working with others: define and review the work of others; work co-operatively on group tasks; understand how groups function; collaborate with others and contribute effectively to the achievement of common goals;
- Improving own learning: explore personal strengths and weaknesses; time management; review working environment (especially student-staff relationship); develop autonomy in learning; work independently, demonstrating initiative and self-organisation. Important research management skills include the setting of appropriate timescales for different stages of the research with clear starting and finishing dates (through a dissertation); presentation of a clear statement of the purposes and expected results of the research; and developing appropriate means of estimating and monitoring resources and use of time;
- Problem solving: identify and define problems; explore alternative solutions and discriminate between them;
- Personal career development: students are encouraged to manage their own career progression and development proactively and are supported in developing skills in researching and retrieving information on opportunities for employment and continuing personal and career development.

### **Master's programme MA in International Relations**

On completion of the MA in International Relations students will be expected to have developed and demonstrated knowledge and understanding in the following areas:

- historical and theoretical issues at the forefront of the discipline of international relations, together with familiarity with appropriate bibliographical sources;
- the epistemological and methodological principles in their application to the study of international relations;
- key ontological, theoretical, and methodological problems of international relations;
- current challenges to international order, cooperation, identity, social formations, and global issues, and possible strategies to address them;
- the changing role of the state in the context of globalisation and regional integration and the implications for international peace and security;
- how to carry out an independent research project and write in a scholarly manner demonstrating familiarity with academic conventions deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly.

In addition they will be expected to have achieved the following Skills and Other Attributes:

### Intellectual skills:

- general research skills, especially bibliographic and computing skills;
- gather, organize and deploy evidence, data and information from a variety of secondary and some primary sources;
- identify, investigate, analyse, formulate and advocate solutions to problems;

- develop reasoned arguments, synthesise relevant information and exercise critical judgement;
- reflect on, and manage, their own learning and seek to make use of constructive feedback from peers and staff to enhance their performance and personal skills,
- manage their own learning self-critically.

Subject-specific skills:

- applying concepts, theories and methods used in the study of international relations, the analysis of political events, ideas, institutions and practices;
- evaluating different interpretations of political issues and events;
- describing, evaluating and applying different approaches to collecting, analysing and presenting political information;
- developing a good understanding of the main epistemological issues relative to research in the social sciences, including some major theoretical and epistemological debates in the social sciences, such as explanation of and understanding the differences between positivist, realist and other accounts of social science and the practical implications of the major alternative philosophical positions in the social sciences for research.

Transferable skills:

- Communication: communicate effectively and fluently in speech and writing (including, where appropriate, the use of IT); organise information clearly and coherently; use communication and information technology for the retrieval and presentation of information, including, where appropriate, statistical or numerical information;
- Information technology: produce written documents; undertake online research; communicate using e-mail; process information using databases;
- Working with others: define and review the work of others; work co-operatively on group tasks; understand how groups function; collaborate with others and contribute effectively to the achievement of common goals;
- Improving own learning: explore personal strengths and weaknesses; time management; review working environment (especially student-staff relationship); develop autonomy in learning; work independently, demonstrating initiative and self-organisation. Important research management skills include the setting of appropriate timescales for different stages of the research with clear starting and finishing dates (through a dissertation); presentation of a clear statement of the purposes and expected results of the research; and developing appropriate means of estimating and monitoring resources and use of time;
- Problem solving: identify and define problems; explore alternative solutions and discriminate between them;
- Personal career development: students are encouraged to manage their own career progression and development proactively and are supported in developing skills in researching and retrieving information on opportunities for employment and continuing personal and career development.

**Master's programme MA in International Political Economy**

On completion of the MA in International Political Economy students will be expected to have developed and demonstrated knowledge and understanding in the following areas:

- key historical and philosophical issues in the development of the global economy, together with familiarity with appropriate bibliographical sources;
- how to apply general theoretical and conceptual frameworks to the analysis of specific issues and problems in domestic, regional, and international settings;

- how to utilise qualitative and quantitative research methods and evaluate critically their application in the scholarly literature and in policy papers;
- how to design and conduct a research project demonstrating awareness of epistemological and methodological principles appropriate to the subject of that research project;
- the nature of political, economic, social and technological problems, their emergence and dynamics;
- the effect of global economic, political and social processes on development, both in national and international perspective;
- how to design and write a substantial scholarly paper demonstrating familiarity with academic and professional conventions.

In addition they will be expected to have achieved the following Skills and Other Attributes

Intellectual skills:

- general research skills, especially bibliographic and computing skills;
- gather, organize and deploy evidence, data and information from a variety of secondary and some primary sources;
- identify, investigate, analyse, formulate and advocate solutions to problems;
- develop reasoned arguments, synthesise relevant information and exercise critical judgement;
- reflect on, and manage, their own learning and seek to make use of constructive feedback from peers and staff to enhance their performance and personal skills.

Subject-specific skills:

- understand the different uses for theory in International Political Economy and develop an individual stance on the appropriate application of theory;
- apply concepts, theories and methods used in International Political Economy to contemporary issues and problems;
- evaluate the interrelationships between the literatures and methodologies of International Political Economy and related disciplines, such as law, political theory, economics, sociology and history;
- describe, evaluate and apply different approaches to collecting, analysing and presenting social and technical information.

Transferable skills:

- **Communication:** communicate effectively and fluently in speech and writing (including, where appropriate, the use of IT); organise information clearly and coherently; use communication and information technology for the retrieval and presentation of information, including, where appropriate, statistical or numerical information;
- **Information technology:** produce written documents; undertake online research; communicate using e-mail; process information using databases;
- **Working with others:** define and review the work of others; work co-operatively on group tasks; understand how groups function; collaborate with others and contribute effectively to the achievement of common goals;
- **Improving own learning:** explore personal strengths and weaknesses; time management; review working environment (especially student-staff relationship); develop autonomy in learning; work independently, demonstrating initiative and self-organisation. Important research management skills include the setting of appropriate timescales for different stages of the research with clear starting and finishing dates (through a dissertation);

presentation of a clear statement of the purposes and expected results of the research; and developing appropriate means of estimating and monitoring resources and use of time;

- Problem solving: identify and define problems; explore alternative solutions and discriminate between them;
- Personal career development: students are encouraged to manage their own career progression and development proactively and are supported in developing skills in researching and retrieving information on opportunities for employment and continuing personal and career development.

### **Master's programme LLM in International Law with International Relations**

On completion of the LLM in International Law with International Relations students will be expected to have developed and demonstrated knowledge and understanding in the following areas:

- the institutions and structures of public international law, and the interrelationships between these;
- the key concepts, policy issues, principles, and relevant sources of public international law and relevant international relations;
- the substantive law relevant to a range of key areas of public international law;
- the theoretical perspectives and academic debates which underlie the substantive areas of public international law;
- the practical contexts in which the law operates;
- the importance of evaluating public international law alongside its theoretical and practical contexts; and
- the relationship and interrelationship between public international law theory and practice, and international relations theory and practice.
- how to carry out an independent research project and write in a scholarly manner demonstrating familiarity with academic conventions deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly.

In addition they will be expected to have achieved the following Skills and Other Attributes

#### Intellectual skills:

- effectively apply the knowledge of public international law and international relations theory to a wide range of situations where relevant practical or theoretical issues are under consideration;
- evaluate issues according to their context, relevance and importance;
- gather relevant information and access key sources by electronic or other means;
- formulate arguments on central issues and areas of controversy, and be able to present a reasoned opinion based upon relevant materials;
- recognise potential alternative arguments, and contrary evidence, to a student's own opinion and present a reasoned justification for preference;
- demonstrate an independence of mind and ability to offer critical challenge to received understanding on particular issues; reflect constructively on their learning progression.

#### Subject-specific skills:

- identify and characterise issues of public international law which arise in practical situations;
- research and access the main sources of law and policy which are relevant;

- appreciate and evaluate the main theoretical and political perspectives that underlie the legal provisions and the perspectives of international relations;
- provide a reasoned and justified opinion as to possible legal consequences in particular circumstances;
- be aware of the limitations of present knowledge and matters needing to be resolved by further research;
- utilise research skills to commence further research into unresolved issues.

Transferable skills:

- identify relevant issues from potentially complex factual situations;
- undertake research from a diverse range of sources;
- summarise detailed and complex bodies of information concisely and accurately;
- formulate arguments in verbal presentations and defend these against opposing views;
- present information and arguments in written form, in accordance with academic conventions, and appropriately to the intended readership;
- evaluate personal performance.

**Master's programme LLM in International Economic Law**

On completion of the LLM in International Economic Law students will be expected to have developed and demonstrated knowledge and understanding in the following areas:

- the institutions and structures of international economic law, and the interrelationships between these;
- the key concepts, policy issues, principles and relevant sources of international economic law and governance and international political economy;
- the substantive law relevant to a range of key areas of international economic law;
- the theoretical perspectives and academic debates which underlie the substantive areas of international economic law;
- the practical contexts in which the law operates;
- the importance of evaluating international economic law alongside its theoretical and practical contexts;
- the relationship and interrelationship between international economic law theory and practice, and international political economy theory and practice;
- how to carry out an independent research project and write in a scholarly manner demonstrating familiarity with academic conventions deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly.

In addition they will be expected to have achieved the following Skills and Other Attributes:

Intellectual skills:

- effectively apply the knowledge of international economic law to a wide range of situations where relevant practical or theoretical issues are under consideration;
- evaluate issues according to their context, relevance and importance;
- gather relevant information and access key sources by electronic or other means;
- formulate arguments on central issues and areas of controversy, and be able to present a reasoned opinion based upon relevant materials;

- recognise potential alternative arguments, and contrary evidence, to a student's own opinion and present a reasoned justification for preference;
- demonstrate an independence of mind and ability to offer critical challenge to received understanding on particular issues;
- reflect constructively on their learning progression.

Subject-specific skills:

- identify and characterise issues of public international law which arise in practical situations;
- research and access the main sources of law and policy which are relevant;
- appreciate and evaluate the main theoretical and political perspectives that underlie the legal provisions and the perspectives of international relations;
- provide a reasoned and justified opinion as to possible legal consequences in particular circumstances;
- be aware of the limitations of present knowledge and matters needing to be resolved by further research;
- utilise research skills to commence further research into unresolved issues.

Transferable skills:

- identify relevant issues from potentially complex factual situations;
- undertake research from a diverse range of sources;
- summarise detailed and complex bodies of information concisely and accurately;
- formulate arguments in verbal presentations and defend these against opposing views;
- present information and arguments in written form, in accordance with academic conventions, and appropriately to the intended readership;
- evaluate personal performance.





## Appendix 4: Overview of the curricula

### Master's programme MA International Conflict and Security

Period	Modules	Study
Week 0	Orientation sessions (introductory sessions in law and economics)	
Term 1 (12 weeks)	Theories of Conflict and Violence	200 hours
	Choice of 2 elective modules from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Relations Theory</li> <li>• Negotiation and Mediation</li> <li>• Law of Armed Conflict</li> <li>• Migration: Conflict, the State and Human Rights</li> <li>• Humanitarian Issues in Forced Migration</li> <li>• European Foreign and Security Policy</li> </ul>	400 hours
	Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (Lectures, seminars and workshops)	30 hours
Term 2 (12 weeks)	Conflict and Security	200 hours
	Choice of 2 elective modules from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transitional Justice and the Rule of Law</li> <li>• International Criminal Law</li> <li>• Security and Liberties</li> <li>• Gender and Conflicts</li> <li>• Foreign Policy Analysis</li> <li>• Identity, the State and Belonging</li> </ul>	400 hours
	Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (seminars and dissertation proposal)	20 hours
Term 3 (18 weeks)	Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (Dissertation writing)	550 hours

The programme also features an extended version enabling students to take an extra 600 hours: in this case, term 3 (12 weeks) consists of either 3 elective modules at BSIS or one semester at a partner institution, while term 4 (18 weeks) is dedicated to dissertation writing.

## Master's programme MA in International Relations

Period	Modules	Study
Week 0	Orientation sessions (introductory sessions in law and economics)	
Term 1 (12 weeks)	International Relations Theory	200 hours
	Choice of 2 elective modules from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Economics</li> <li>• Public International Law</li> <li>• Legal Aspects of Contemporary International Problems</li> <li>• European Foreign and Security Policy</li> <li>• Negotiation and Mediation</li> <li>• Political Communication</li> <li>• State, Market and Society</li> <li>• Politics of International Development</li> <li>• EU Politics and Governance</li> <li>• Theories of Conflict and Violence</li> <li>• Global Governance and International Organisations</li> <li>• Migration: Conflict, the State and Human Rights</li> </ul>	400 hours
	• Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (lectures, seminars and workshops)	30 hours
Term 2 (12 weeks)	3 elective modules from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Human Rights Law</li> <li>• Diplomatic Law</li> <li>• Europe and Global Change</li> <li>• International Political Economy</li> <li>• Political Strategy</li> <li>• Foreign Policy Analysis</li> <li>• Security and Liberties</li> <li>• Identity, the State and Belonging</li> </ul>	600 hours
	Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (seminars and dissertation proposal)	20 hours
Term 3 (18 weeks)	Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (Dissertation writing)	550 hours

The programme also features an extended version enabling students to take an extra 600 hours: in this case, term 3 (12 weeks) consists of either 3 elective modules at BSIS or one semester at a partner institution, while term 4 (18 weeks) is dedicated to dissertation writing.

## Master's programme MA in International Political Economy

Period	Modules	Study
Week 0	Orientation sessions (introductory sessions in law and economics)	
Term 1 (12 weeks)	State, Market and Society	200 hours
	One elective module from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Economic Regulation</li> <li>• International Economics</li> <li>• Politics of International Development</li> </ul>	200 hours
	One elective module from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Economic Regulation</li> <li>• International Economics</li> <li>• Politics of International Development</li> <li>• Global Governance and International Organisation</li> <li>• International Relations Theory</li> <li>• EU Politics and Governance</li> <li>• Legal Aspects of Contemporary International Problems</li> <li>• Law and Development</li> <li>• Migration, Conflict, the State and Human Rights</li> <li>• Public International Law</li> <li>• China Foreign Policy</li> </ul>	200 hours
	Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (Lectures, seminars and workshops)	30 hours
Term 2 (12 weeks)	International Political Economy	200 hours
	One elective module from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Economic Law</li> <li>• Development Economics</li> </ul>	200 hours
	One elective module from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Economic Law</li> <li>• Development Economics</li> <li>• Corporate Governance</li> <li>• Foreign Policy Analysis</li> <li>• Contemporary Energy Security</li> <li>• International Migration Law</li> <li>• Development Theory and Practice</li> <li>• Theories of Migration, Integration and Citizenship</li> <li>• Histories of International Conflict</li> <li>• Gender and Conflict</li> <li>• Security and Liberties</li> <li>• Identity, State and Belonging</li> </ul>	200 hours
	Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (seminars and dissertation proposal)	20 hours
Term 3 (18 weeks)	Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (Dissertation writing)	550 hours

The programme also features an extended version enabling students to take an extra 600 hours: in this case, term 3 (12 weeks) consists of either 3 elective modules at BSIS or one semester at a partner institution, while term 4 (18 weeks) is dedicated to dissertation writing.

### Master's programme LLM in International Law with International Relations

Period	Modules	Study
Week 0	Orientation sessions (introductory sessions in law and economics)	
Term 1 (12 weeks)	Legal Aspects of Contemporary International Problems or Public International Law	200 hours
	One elective Law module: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal Aspects of Contemporary International Problems</li> <li>• Public International Law</li> <li>• Law of Armed Conflict</li> <li>• International Law of the Sea</li> <li>• EU Constitutional and Institutional Law</li> <li>• European Migration Law</li> </ul>	200 hours
	One elective Politics module: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theories of Conflict and Violence</li> <li>• International Relations Theory for Lawyers</li> <li>• Politics of International Development</li> <li>• Migration: Conflict, the State and Human Rights</li> <li>• European Foreign and Security Policy</li> </ul>	200 hours
	Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (Lectures, seminars and workshops)	30 hours
Term 2 (12 weeks)	International Human Rights Law	200 hours
	One elective Law module: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Migration Law</li> <li>• Transitional Justice and the Rule of Law</li> <li>• International Criminal Law</li> <li>• International Economic Law</li> <li>• Diplomatic Law</li> </ul>	200 hours
	One elective Politics module: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict and Security</li> <li>• Security and Liberties</li> <li>• Identity, the State and Belonging</li> <li>• Foreign Policy Analysis</li> </ul>	200 hours
	Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (seminars and dissertation proposal)	20 hours
Term 3 (18 weeks)	Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (Dissertation writing)	550 hours

The programme also features an extended version enabling students to take an extra 600 hours: in this case, term 3 (12 weeks) consists of either 3 elective modules at BSIS or one semester at a partner institution, while term 4 (18 weeks) is dedicated to dissertation writing.

## Master's programme LLM in International Economic Law

Period	Modules	Study
Week 0	Orientation sessions (introductory sessions in law and economics)	
Term 1 (12 weeks)	International Economic Regulation	200 hours
	One elective Law module: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal Aspects of Contemporary International Problems</li> <li>• Public International Law</li> <li>• Law and Development</li> <li>• International Law of the Sea</li> </ul>	200 hours
	One elective module: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State, markets and Society</li> <li>• Politics of International Development</li> <li>• International Economics</li> </ul>	200 hours
	Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (Lectures, seminars and workshops)	30 hours
Term 2 (12 weeks)	International Economic Law	200 hours
	Corporate Governance	200 hours
	One elective module: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development Economics</li> <li>• International Migration Law</li> <li>• International Political Economy</li> </ul>	200 hours
	Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (seminars and dissertation proposal)	20 hours
Term 3 (18 weeks)	Fundamentals Dissertation and Research (Dissertation writing)	550 hours

The programme also features an extended version enabling students to take an extra 600 hours: in this case, term 3 (12 weeks) consists of either 3 elective modules at BSIS or one semester at a partner institution, while term 4 (18 weeks) is dedicated to dissertation writing.



## Appendix 5: Quantitative data regarding the programmes

### Data on intake, transfers and graduates

#### *MA International Conflict and Security*

Cohort	Total intake	of whom			
		completed	full-time	part-time	240 EC
2010-2011	22	20	21	1	0
2011-2012	17	17	15	2	0
2012-2013	18	9	14	4	0
2013-2014	21	N.A.	17	4	0

#### *MA International Relations*

Cohort	Total intake	of whom			
		completed	full-time	part-time	240 EC
2010-2011	26	25	23	1	2
2011-2012	15	14	10	3	2
2012-2013	24	12	19	4	1
2013-2014	15	N.A.	14	0	1

#### *LLM in International Law with International Relations*

Cohort	Total intake	of whom			
		completed	full-time	part-time	240 EC
2010-2011	17	17	16	1	0
2011-2012	14	12	12	2	0
2012-2013	18	9	14	4	0
2013-2014	17	N.A.	14	2	1

#### *MA International Political Economy*

Cohort	Total intake	of whom			
		completed	full-time	part-time	240 EC
2010-2011	10	9	7	3	0
2011-2012	10	10	7	3	0
2012-2013	15	12	14	1	0
2013-2014	10	N.A.	10	0	0

#### *LLM in International Economic Law*

Cohort	Total intake	of whom			
		completed	full-time	part-time	240 EC
2010-2011	4	3	3	1	0
2011-2012	3	2	2	1	0
2012-2013	6	4	5	0	1
2013-2014	3	N.A.	2	1	0

## Teacher-student ratio achieved

	MA ICS	MA IR	LLM IL-IR	MA IPE	LLM IEL
2010-2011	6,74	5,80	3,75	2,21	1,40
2011-2012	5,17	3,41	3,07	2,21	1,05
2012-2013	4,86	5,00	3,64	3,77	2,10
2013-2014	6,11	3,41	3,64	2,47	1,05

The student-staff ratio is calculated by UoK-BSIS as follows.

The total number of FTE students on the programme divided by the FTE of teaching staff dedicated to the programme, assuming that part-time students count as 0,5 FTE and full-time (BSIS) staff spend 0,55 FTE on delivering the programme, whereas individual lecturers and UoK staff spend 0,11 FTE per module. The calculation does not take into account the work performed by the administrative staff.

Based on the above assumptions and taking into account the considerable overlap in staff time and modules across the five programmes, the committee calculated one student-staff ratio for all five programmes together. In the academic year 2013-2014, a total of 63 FTE students were involved in the five programmes, featuring 5,83 FTE of staff (8 full-time staff and 12 part-time staff for a total of 13 modules). The student-teaching staff ratio in this case amounts to 10,81. Taking on board the administrative staff, the student-all staff ratio is 5,56.

## Staff

The UoK-BSIS programmes features eight teaching staff based permanently in Brussels, three teaching staff based in Canterbury and nine visiting lecturers. The Brussels based staff is hired on a full-time basis and also assume other functions as programme convenors, academic tutors, dean or director of graduate studies. Most of the other teaching staff is lecturing one compulsory or elective module in the programmes under review.

UoK also has six administrative staff (5,5 FTE), dedicated entirely to BSIS.

## Average amount of face-to-face instruction per stage of the study programme

All programmes consist of six modules and the dissertation. Each module consists of 12 hours of lectures and 12 hours of seminars. Before writing the dissertation, students follow a series of lectures, seminars and workshops for a total of 16 hours. All in all, this amounts to 160 hours of face-to-face instruction.

Students following the extended programme through additional modules at UoK, have another 72 hours (three modules @ 24 hours) of face-to-face instruction.

These figures do not include the individual supervision time during the preparation of the dissertation, nor the opportunities students have for input/feedback on course assignments.



## **Appendix 6: Internationalisation Activities**

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The University of Kent presents itself as the UK's European university. The UoK-BSIS follows the Internationalisation Strategy 2010-2015 of the University of Kent, whose stated mission is to build vigorously on its close ties within Europe and beyond and to pursue internationalisation across core arenas of activity. The Brussels School of International Studies is one of four centres across Europe – others are located in Paris, Rome and Athens – offering a British degree in an international/European environment to students from all over the world. According to the UoK-BSIS Graduate Study brochure, BSIS students come from 65 countries around the world. The permanent teaching and administrative staff in Brussels is also highly international.

The five programmes under consideration are one-year programmes whose modules are international in terms of outlook and contents. The programme itself does not foresee a compulsory study period abroad. Students who enrol for the extended programme can spend up to one semester at a partner university. Currently there are agreements with higher education institutions in Washington DC, Beijing, Tokyo and Bogota.

UoK-BSIS is not involved in any EU-funded mobility scheme.



## Appendix 7: Programme of the site visit

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### Monday 2 June 2014

- 13:00 Arrival of review committee  
13:15 Preparatory meeting review committee  
16:00 Session 1 – BSIS Management  
\* Prof. Roger Vickerman (Dean for Europe)  
\* Dr. Amanda Klekowksi von Koppenfels (Director of Graduate Studies)  
\* Mr. Alastair Ross (Head of Administration BSIS)  
17:00 Session 2 – BSIS Administration  
\* Mr. Alastair Ross (Head of Administration BSIS)  
\* Inez Summers (Office manager)  
\* Francesca Maltauro (Student records)  
\* Yingqing Ben (Finance officer)  
18:00 Guided tour of BSIS premises  
18:15 Internal meeting review committee  
18:45 End of day one

### Tuesday 3 June 2014

- 08:45 Arrival of review committee  
09:00 Session 3 – Students MA International Conflict and Security (ICS)  
\* Camilla Callesen  
\* Kendell Tylee  
\* Cristina Goni  
\* Hannah Jordan  
09:30 Session 4 – Staff MA International Conflict and Security (ICS)  
\* Dr. Elise Feron (convenor MA ICS)  
\* Dr. Tugba Basaran  
\* Dr. Juan Diaz  
10:00 Internal meeting review committee  
10:30 Session 5 – Students MA International Relations (IR)  
\* Betty Dodd  
\* Stephanie Kiefer  
11:00 Session 6 – Students LLM International Law with International Relations (IL/IR)  
\* Maggie Tofellmire  
\* Alex Finocchio  
11:30 Session 7 – Staff MA IR and LLM IL/IR  
\* Dr. Tom Casier (convenor MA IR)  
\* Dr. Yutaka Arai (convenor LLM IL/IR)  
\* Prof. Richard Whitman  
12:30 Internal meeting review committee  
13:00 Lunch  
13:30 Open consultation hour and internal meeting review committee  
14:30 Session 8 – Students MA International Political Economy (IPE)  
\* Kirsty Whatmough  
\* Satoshi Okuyama  
\* Haley van Broekhoven  
15:00 Session 9 – Students LLM International Economic Law (IEL)  
\* Kamil Maj  
\* David Vargas

- 15:30 Session 10 – Staff MA IPE and LLM IEL  
 \* Prof. Harm Schepel (convenor LLM IEL)  
 \* Dr. Albenaz Azmanova (convenor MA IPE)
- 16:30 Internal meeting review committee
- 17:00 Session 11 – Alumni  
 \* Sara Anguioni (MA IPE)  
 \* Carmelo Lipari (LLM IEL)  
 \* Olivier Loose (MA ICS)  
 \* Anna Lavizzari (MA ICS)
- 17:30 Session 12 – Alumni  
 \* Rob Zaman (MA IR)  
 \* Els Heyrman (MA IR)  
 \* Carlotta Fagioli (MA IR)  
 \* Aurora Palko (MA IR)
- 18:00 Internal meeting review committee
- 18:45 End of day two

### **Wednesday 4 June 2014**

- 08:30 Arrival review committee
- 09:00 Session 13 – Board of Studies  
 \* Dr. Amanda Klekowski von Koppenfels (chair)  
 \* Dr. Albenaz Azmanova  
 \* Dr. Tom Casier  
 \* Dr. Yutaka Arai
- 10:15 Session 14 – Board of Examiners  
 \* Prof. Roger Vickerman (chair)  
 \* Prof. Harm Schepel  
 \* Dr. Elise Feron  
 \* Dr. Tugba Basaran
- 11:15 Internal meeting review committee
- 12:00 Session 15 – Management review meeting  
 \* Prof. Roger Vickerman  
 \* Dr. Amanda Klekowski von Koppenfels  
 \* Mr. Alastair Ross
- 13:00 Lunch
- 13:30 Internal meeting review committee
- 16:00 Informal feedback session
- 16:30 End of site visit

## Appendix 8: Theses and documents studied by the committee

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Prior to the site visit, the committee studied the theses of the students with the following student numbers:

### *MA International Conflict and Security*

10902322	10901193	10902308	12908475	10903369
10903237	11905209	12906573	11905457	10901956

### *MA International Relations*

10903194	10900932	11903563	11904087	11904045
11905830	11906456	12908497	11904022	12908991

### *MA International Political Economy*

11906147	10901108	11906469	11903443	11904018
10903390	10903175	10901975	10903239	9900456

### LLM International Law with International Relations

10902341	10901067	11906484	11905618	10902547
11906383	11904017	12908602	11904673	10901083

### LLM International Economic Law

12908561	11906267	10900827	12908309	9908432
12908524	12909062	10900901	11906404	9909389

During the site visit, the committee studied, among other things, the following documents (partly as hard copies, partly via the institute's electronic learning environment):

Syllabi, Convenor's notes and coursework of selected modules:

- \* PO933 Theories of Conflict and Violence
- \* PO881 State, Market and Society
- \* PO932 International Relations Theory
- \* LW843 International Human Rights Law
- \* LW859 International Economic Regulation
- \* Fundamentals Dissertation and Research

Module specifications, module descriptions and module evaluations

Minutes of the Board of Examiners

Minutes of the Board of Studies

Minutes of the Joint Council

External Examiner's reports

Periodic Programme Reviews



## Appendix 9: Declarations of independence

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### DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME:

PIERRE VERLAUTEREN

HOME ADDRESS:

AVENUE GRAND AIR, 1

1640 RHODE SAINT GENESE

BELGIUM

HAS BEEN ASKED TO ASSESS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME AS AN EXPERT / SECRETARY:

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

Brussels School of International Studies  
University of Kent

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT MAINTAINING ANY (FAMILY) CONNECTIONS OR TIES OF A PERSONAL NATURE OR AS A RESEARCHER / TEACHER, PROFESSIONAL OR CONSULTANT WITH THE ABOVE INSTITUTION, WHICH COULD AFFECT A FULLY INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT REGARDING THE QUALITY OF THE PROGRAMME IN EITHER A POSITIVE OR A NEGATIVE SENSE;



HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT HAVING MAINTAINED SUCH CONNECTIONS OR TIES WITH THE INSTITUTION DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS;

CERTIFIES TO OBSERVING STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY WITH REGARD TO ALL THAT HAS COME AND WILL COME TO HIS/HER NOTICE IN CONNECTION WITH THE ASSESSMENT, INsofar AS SUCH CONFIDENTIALITY CAN REASONABLY BE CLAIMED BY THE PROGRAMME, THE INSTITUTION OR NVAO;

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO BEING ACQUAINTED WITH THE NVAO CODE OF CONDUCT.

PLACE:

DATE: 28 April 2014

SIGNATURE:



**DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME:

ARILD SÆTHER

HOME ADDRESS:

ELVEGATA 23, N-4614KRISTIANSAND, NORWAYHAS BEEN ASKED TO ASSESS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME AS AN EXPERT /  
SECRETARY:FIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES AT THE  
BRUSSELS SCHOOL FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

BRUSSELS SCHOOL FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
(UNIVERSITY OF KENT)HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT MAINTAINING ANY (FAMILY) CONNECTIONS OR TIES  
OF A PERSONAL NATURE OR AS A RESEARCHER / TEACHER, PROFESSIONAL OR  
CONSULTANT WITH THE ABOVE INSTITUTION, WHICH COULD AFFECT A FULLY  
INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT REGARDING THE QUALITY OF THE PROGRAMME IN  
EITHER A POSITIVE OR A NEGATIVE SENSE;



HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT HAVING MAINTAINED SUCH CONNECTIONS OR TIES WITH THE INSTITUTION DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS;

CERTIFIES TO OBSERVING STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY WITH REGARD TO ALL THAT HAS COME AND WILL COME TO HIS/HER NOTICE IN CONNECTION WITH THE ASSESSMENT, INSOFAR AS SUCH CONFIDENTIALITY CAN REASONABLY BE CLAIMED BY THE PROGRAMME, THE INSTITUTION OR NVAØ;

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO BEING ACQUAINTED WITH THE NVAØ CODE OF CONDUCT.

PLACE:

KRISTIANSAND,  
NORWAY

DATE:

06.04 2014

SIGNATURE:

Hild Sothar



**DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME: Ron Ton

HOME ADDRESS: Hooiersweide 115  
3437 DS Nieuwegein  
the Netherlands

HAS BEEN ASKED TO ASSESS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME AS AN EXPERT / SECRETARY:

SITE VISIT TO THE BRUSSELS SCHOOL  
for International Studies

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT MAINTAINING ANY (FAMILY) CONNECTIONS OR TIES OF A PERSONAL NATURE OR AS A RESEARCHER / TEACHER, PROFESSIONAL OR CONSULTANT WITH THE ABOVE INSTITUTION, WHICH COULD AFFECT A FULLY INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT REGARDING THE QUALITY OF THE PROGRAMME IN EITHER A POSITIVE OR A NEGATIVE SENSE;



HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT HAVING MAINTAINED SUCH CONNECTIONS OR TIES WITH THE INSTITUTION DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS;

CERTIFIES TO OBSERVING STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY WITH REGARD TO ALL THAT HAS COME AND WILL COME TO HIS/HER NOTICE IN CONNECTION WITH THE ASSESSMENT, INSOFAR AS SUCH CONFIDENTIALITY CAN REASONABLY BE CLAIMED BY THE PROGRAMME, THE INSTITUTION OR NVAO;

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO BEING ACQUAINTED WITH THE NVAO CODE OF CONDUCT.

PLACE: Nieuwegein

DATE: 13-04-2014

SIGNATURE:



**DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY**  
TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME:

*Fruya Bantons*

HOME ADDRESS:

*Van der Veldenweg 34*  
*2596 AE Den Haag*  
*Nederland*

HAS BEEN ASKED TO ASSESS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME AS AN EXPERT /  
SECRETARY:

*Brussels School of International*  
*Studies - 5 educational programmes*

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

*BSIS*

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT MAINTAINING ANY (FAMILY) CONNECTIONS OR TIES  
OF A PERSONAL NATURE OR AS A RESEARCHER / TEACHER, PROFESSIONAL OR  
CONSULTANT WITH THE ABOVE INSTITUTION, WHICH COULD AFFECT A FULLY  
INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT REGARDING THE QUALITY OF THE PROGRAMME IN  
EITHER A POSITIVE OR A NEGATIVE SENSE;



HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT HAVING MAINTAINED SUCH CONNECTIONS OR TIES WITH THE INSTITUTION DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS;

CERTIFIES TO OBSERVING STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY WITH REGARD TO ALL THAT HAS COME AND WILL COME TO HIS/HER NOTICE IN CONNECTION WITH THE ASSESSMENT, INsofar AS SUCH CONFIDENTIALITY CAN REASONABLY BE CLAIMED BY THE PROGRAMME, THE INSTITUTION OR NVAO;

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO BEING ACQUAINTED WITH THE NVAO CODE OF CONDUCT.

PLACE: *Den Haag*      DATE: *09/04/2014*

SIGNATURE:



## DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME: TESSA BAECK

HOME ADDRESS:

ROZENHOFLAAN 27

1860 MESE

BELGIUM

HAS BEEN ASKED TO ASSESS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME AS AN EXPERT / SECRETARY:

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES PROGRAMMES

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

UNIVERSITY OF KENT, BRUSSELS

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT MAINTAINING ANY (FAMILY) CONNECTIONS OR TIES OF A PERSONAL NATURE OR AS A RESEARCHER / TEACHER, PROFESSIONAL OR CONSULTANT WITH THE ABOVE INSTITUTION, WHICH COULD AFFECT A FULLY INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT REGARDING THE QUALITY OF THE PROGRAMME IN EITHER A POSITIVE OR A NEGATIVE SENSE;



HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT HAVING MAINTAINED SUCH CONNECTIONS OR TIES WITH THE INSTITUTION DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS;

CERTIFIES TO OBSERVING STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY WITH REGARD TO ALL THAT HAS COME AND WILL COME TO HIS/HER NOTICE IN CONNECTION WITH THE ASSESSMENT, INsofar AS SUCH CONFIDENTIALITY CAN REASONABLY BE CLAIMED BY THE PROGRAMME, THE INSTITUTION OR NVAO;

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO BEING ACQUAINTED WITH THE NVAO CODE OF CONDUCT.

PLACE: 11/7/2014  
MEISE

DATE:

SIGNATURE: Baech.





**DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

TO BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

THE UNDERSIGNED

NAME: MARK BELMARTINO

HOME ADDRESS: DIENVAAN 15, B-2600 ANTWERPEN

HAS BEEN ASKED TO ASSESS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME AS AN EXPERT / SECRETARY:

MA International Conflict and Security, MA International Political Economy,  
MA International Relations, LL.M International Political Economy, LL.M International  
Relations / International Law

APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTION:

University of Kent, Brussels Centre - Brussels School  
of International Studies

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT MAINTAINING ANY (FAMILY) CONNECTIONS OR TIES OF A PERSONAL NATURE OR AS A RESEARCHER / TEACHER, PROFESSIONAL OR CONSULTANT WITH THE ABOVE INSTITUTION, WHICH COULD AFFECT A FULLY INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT REGARDING THE QUALITY OF THE PROGRAMME IN EITHER A POSITIVE OR A NEGATIVE SENSE;



HEREBY CERTIFIES TO NOT HAVING MAINTAINED SUCH CONNECTIONS OR TIES WITH THE INSTITUTION DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS;

CERTIFIES TO OBSERVING STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY WITH REGARD TO ALL THAT HAS COME AND WILL COME TO HIS/HER NOTICE IN CONNECTION WITH THE ASSESSMENT, INSOFAR AS SUCH CONFIDENTIALITY CAN REASONABLY BE CLAIMED BY THE PROGRAMME, THE INSTITUTION OR NVAO;

HEREBY CERTIFIES TO BEING ACQUAINTED WITH THE NVAO CODE OF CONDUCT.

PLACE: ANTWERPEN

DATE: 29.05.2014

SIGNATURE:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.