



EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT **Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies**

An evaluation of the quality of the Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies by Continental Theological Seminary (CTS).

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**EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT
MASTER OF THEOLOGY IN EVANGELICAL AND PENTECOSTAL STUDIES**

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PREFACE BY THE VLUHR QA BOARD

The assessment panel reports its findings on the Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies. This programme is assessed in the fall of 2018 on behalf of the Flemish Higher Education Council (VLUHR).

First of all, this report is intended for the programme involved. This assessment report provides the reader a snapshot of the quality of the programme and is only one phase in the process of the ongoing concern for educational quality. After a short period of time the study programme may already have changed and improved significantly, whether or not as an answer to the recommendations by the assessment panel. Additionally, the report intends to provide objective information to a wide audience about the quality of the evaluated programme. For this reason, the report is published on the VLUHR website.

I would like to thank the chairman and the members of the assessment panel for the time they have invested and for the high levels of expertise and dedication they showed in performing their task. This assessment is made possible thanks to the efforts of all those involved within the institution in the preparation and implementation of the assessment site visit.

I hope the positive comments formulated by the assessment panel and the recommendations for further improvement provide justification for their efforts and encouragement for the further development of the study programme.

Petter Aaslestad
Chair VLUHR QA Board

	Preface by the VLUHR QA Board	3
	SECTION 1 GENERAL SECTION	
Part I	Educational Assessment Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies	9
Part II	Table with scores	13
	SECTION 2 REPORT OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME AND SUMMARY	
	Continental Theological Seminary (CTS) Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies	19
	APPENDICES	
Appendix I	Curriculum vitae of the members of the assessment panel	43
Appendix II	Time schedule of the site visit	45

SECTION 1

General Section

PART I

Educational assessment Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies

1 INTRODUCTION

In this report, the assessment panel CTS announces its findings with regard to the Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies by Continental Theological Seminary (CTS). This study programme was assessed in the autumn of 2018 on behalf of the Flemish Higher Education Council (VLUHR).

This assessment procedure is part of the VLUHR activities in the area of external quality assurance in Flemish higher education which are meant to ensure that the Flemish universities, university colleges and other statutory registered higher education institutions are in compliance with the relevant regulations imposed by law.

2 THE ASSESSED STUDY PROGRAMME

In accordance with its mission, the assessment panel visited

Continental Theological Seminary (CTS)

- Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies, from 18 till 19 October, 2018.

3 THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

3.1 Composition of the assessment panel

The composition of the assessment panel CTS was ratified on 14 November 2017 by the VLUHR Quality Assurance Board. The assessment panel was subsequently installed by the Quality Assurance Board by its decision of December 20, 2017; February 9, 2018 and March 23, 2018.

The assessment panel had the following composition:

- Chairman of the assessment panel:
 - **prof. dr. Wonsuk Ma**, Dean and Distinguished Professor of Global Christianity, Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, U.S.A.

- Panel members:
 - **prof. dr. Wolfgang Vondey**, director, Center for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies and Center for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, University of Birmingham, UK
 - **dr. Jean Daniel Plüss**, director of the European Research Network on Global Pentecostalism
 - **rev. Siobhan Winch**, student Master in Applied Theology, Regents Theological College, Malvern, UK

Patrick Van den Bosch, Policy Advisor, Quality Assurance Unit of the Flemish Higher Education Council, was project manager of this educational assessment and acted as secretary to the assessment panel.

The brief curricula vitae of the members of the assessment panel are listed in Appendix 1.

3.2 Task description

The assessment panel is expected:

- to express substantiated and well-founded opinions on the study programme, using the assessment framework;
- to make recommendations allowing quality improvements to be made where possible;
- to inform society at large of its findings.

3.3 Process

3.3.1 Preparation

The study programme was asked to compile an extensive self-evaluation report in preparation for the educational assessment. An assessment protocol, with a detailed description of the expectations regarding the content of the self-evaluation report, was presented by the Quality Assurance Unit of VLUHR for this purpose. The self-evaluation report reflects the accreditation framework.

The assessment panel received the self-evaluation report a number of months before the on-site assessment visit, which allowed for adequate time to carefully study the document and to thoroughly prepare for the assessment visit. Additionally, the members of the assessment panel were asked to read a selection of recent Master's theses.

The assessment panel held its preparatory meeting on 6 September 2018. At this stage, the panel members were already in possession of the assessment protocol and the self-evaluation report. During the preparatory meeting, the panel members were given further information about the assessment process and they made specific preparations for the forthcoming on-site assessment visit. Special attention was given to the uniformity of the implementation of the accreditation framework and the assessment protocol. Also, the time schedule for the assessment visit was agreed upon (see Appendix 2) and the self-evaluation report was collectively discussed for the first time.

3.3.2 On-site visit

During the on-site visit the panel interviewed all parties directly involved with the study programme. The panel spoke with those responsible for the study programme, students, teaching staff, educational support staff, alumni, and representatives from the professional field. The conversations and interviews with all these stakeholders took place in an open atmosphere and provided the panel with helpful additions to and clarifications of the self-evaluation report.

The panel visited the programme-specific infrastructure facilities, including the library, classrooms, computer facilities, and laboratories. There was also a consultation hour during which the assessment panel could invite people or during which people could come and be heard in confidence.

Furthermore, the institution was asked to prepare a wide variety of documents to be available during the on-site visit for the assessment panel to consult as a tertiary source of information. These documents included minutes of discussions in relevant governing bodies, a selection of study materials (courses, handbooks and syllabuses), indications of staff competences, testing and assessment assignments, etc. An additional selection of recent Master's theses was required to be available for inspection. Sufficient time was scheduled throughout the assessment visit for the panel to study these documents thoroughly. Additional information was requested during the on-site visit when the assessment panel deemed that information necessary to support its findings.

Following internal panel discussions, provisional findings were presented by the chairman of the assessment panel in conclusion of the on-site assessment visit.

3.3.3 Reporting

The last stage of the assessment process was the compilation of the panel's findings, conclusions, and recommendations into the present report. The panel's recommendations are separately summarised at the end of the report. The study programme was given the opportunity to reply to the draft version of this report.

PART II

Table with scores

The following table represents the assessment scores of the assessment panel on the three generic quality standards set out in the assessment framework.

For each generic quality standard (GQS) the panel expresses a considered and substantiated opinion, according to a two-point scale: satisfactory or unsatisfactory. The panel also expresses a final opinion on the quality of the programme as a whole, also according to a two-point scale: satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

In the report of the study programme the assessment panel makes clear how it has reached its opinion. The table and the scores assigned ought to be read and interpreted in connection to the text in the report. Any interpretation based solely on the scores in the table, is unjust towards the study programme and passes over the assignment of this external assessment exercise.

Explanation of the scores of the **generic quality standard**:

Satisfactory (S) the study programme meets the generic quality standard

Unsatisfactory (U) the generic quality standard is unsatisfactory

Rules applicable to the final **opinion**:

Satisfactory (S) The final opinion on a programme is 'satisfactory' if the programme meets all generic quality standards.

Unsatisfactory (U) The final opinion on a programme is 'unsatisfactory' if all generic quality standards are assessed as 'unsatisfactory'.

Satisfactory for a limited period (S') The final opinion on a programme is 'satisfactory for a limited period', i.e. shorter than the accreditation period, if, on a first assessment, one or two generic quality standards are assessed as 'unsatisfactory'.

	GQS 1 Targeted outcome level	GQS 2 Educational learning environment	GQS 3 Outcome level achieved	Final opinion
Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies	S	S	S	S

SECTION 2

Report of
the study programme

CONTINENTAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY (CTS)

Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies

SUMMARY OF THE ASSESSMENT REPORT

Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies Continental Theological Seminary (CTS)

From 18-19 October 2018, the Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies organised by the Continental Theological Seminary (CTS) has been evaluated in the framework of an educational assessment by a peer review panel of independent experts. In this summary which describes a snapshot, the main findings of the panel are listed.

Profile of the programme

The Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies curriculum aims for “promoting academic excellence leading up to an increasing personal academic contribution and to a growing commitment with regard to theology and Christian mission in society”. Academic training intended to prepare men and women to judge and act maturely in matters related to theology and missiology ought not only to pass on the broad lines of the tradition of research in these domains, but also to develop the capacity to analyse closely the context in which theology and missiology are set, and to focus in depth on developments in the various fields of study that contribute to the church and society. It is for this reason that the programme endeavours to make a contribution to the overall formation and development of the students and to prepare them to engage in independent theological reflection on the Protestant

Evangelical-Pentecostal faith tradition. At the same time, the programme also intends to stimulate interest in the mutual relationships between the various Christian churches.

The Biblical Studies pathway is designed to stimulate reflection on the use of the Bible in theology by crossing the conventional disciplinary boundaries between biblical exegesis and biblical theology applied in a contemporary church environment. The Missiological Studies pathway also stimulates reflection on the use of the Bible in theology by crossing the conventional disciplinary boundaries between biblical exegesis and biblical theology. However, it is also designed to stimulate creative reflection on mission theology, history and trends in relation to contemporary cultural changes. Also to equip church leaders and others to develop effective mission strategies through which the church might redefine its purposes in the contemporary secular context.

The intended programme specific learning outcomes are at the master's level and consequently fit the Flemish qualification framework. The programme specific learning outcomes are met and compare favourably with similar institutions in Europe. However, the Pentecostal mission of CTS can be more present in the learning outcomes. On the course level and particularly the course descriptions, the intended learning outcomes are rather generic. The Pentecostal identity of the programme could be made more explicit. The course descriptions can be revised to strengthen its Pentecostal orientation in approach, contents and perspectives. As of 1 February 2018, 30 students are enrolled in this Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies.

Programme

The programme of the Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies is a theological programme of 90 ECTS. Along with the core theology and biblical exegesis courses, it consists of three courses (18 ECTS credits) of the chosen pathway, Biblical Studies or Missiological Studies. In addition, the programme includes Research Methods and a Thesis Writing Seminar (6 ECTS credits) that must reinforce the research dimension of the Master's programme.

The programme is very internationally oriented: both students and teaching staff come from many different countries and continents. There is a remarkable openness between people from different cultural

and theological backgrounds. This is reflected throughout the whole programme, including its learning materials.

The curriculum is aimed for the learning outcomes. The programme's structure is solid and good learning methods are in place. The programme offers a wide variety of learning methods including lectures, seminars, and group discussions. These methods are very interactive which fits well with the small class groups. The learning environment is coherent and structured with the intention to serve the students as good as possible: students learn in a student-centered way. The study load is in balance with the ECTS.

The master's thesis is 30 ECTS credits and involves the completion of a 20,000-word thesis. The thesis should be a scholarly research work that investigates a well-defined question or an issue in historical, theological, exegetical perspective or theoretical body of knowledge and has to be chosen in the area of specialisation. The completed thesis should demonstrate significance beyond the immediate area of research.

Some of the master's theses are very good while other master's theses have a rather low but sufficient level of quality. This is reflected in the marks those theses received. The programme management and the teaching staff are aware that the low quality of some master's theses is a problem. They consider the different backgrounds and low level of English proficiency among some students as the causes of this lower performance. The programme is encouraged to explore ways to improve the level of English proficiency as part of full matriculation.

Evaluation and testing

The CTS programme management has an evaluation policy with clear assessment, testing, and examination processes in place. In most courses, a research paper is the most substantial component, often 95% of the total marking. At the end of each examination period, the teaching staff carries out double marking of a selected number of essay and examination scripts for each course according to the accepted grading criteria. All teachers are required to fill out an evaluation sheet in which they explain the student's overall mark based on specific grading criteria such as structure, understanding, sources and style. Since last year papers (and not only the final mark what was customary) are sent back to the students as feedback. Both staff and students feel a clear sense of transparency with these

comments as well as the given grades being made fully available to the student. A grading template for the essays and the theses is provided and the students are well informed about the assessment criteria.

Services and student guidance

CTS is situated in Sint-Pieters-Leeuw at the former Rattendaal castle. As the home of the institution, the property is completely renovated and additional buildings have been added: a chapel, classrooms, and living spaces. The library houses a large Pentecostal Evangelical collection. Despite the library collection, the programme places a higher emphasis on online resources as opposed to up-to-date physical resources. While this reflects a changing emphasis, CTS is also seeking to strengthen collaborative efforts with neighbouring facilities to create reciprocal agreements. The lecture rooms appear a little outdated, with the need to invest in technology which will advance the student learning experience. For example, rather than small portable televisions, it would be preferable to invest in large screens which enable the use of interactive materials to be used within the context of the classroom.

There is a variety of services available to the students, many of which organised by a dedicated staff and in small groups that allow close support. Feedback from alumni affirms the quality and usefulness of these services. The support system of the programme is well in place. Due to the size of the programme, students are able to directly approach professors and the dean with programme content related questions as well. Visiting teaching staff members are available to the students while residing on campus and via e-mail at other times. The availability of the professors for academic tutoring is recognised and appreciated by the students, and strengthens the learning process. The ombudsperson serves as the mediator between examiners and students. He or she cannot examine the students for whom the ombudsperson acts.

A weakness is the lack of established and formal support for students with disabilities in accessibility of the campus, the reading materials, and audio-visual aids. The campus also does not physically support students with disabilities (e.g., ramps, access doors etc.). While the programme is dedicated to helping each individual, facilities, and services related to disabled students should be strengthened.

Study success and professional opportunities

The increasing presence of Pentecostal churches in Europe, including the rapidly growing ethnic churches that are predominantly Pentecostal and charismatic in nature, offers employment opportunities in Europe. Another opportunity is the interaction between the seminary and Evangelical and Pentecostal churches and denominations as well as organisations such as the Pentecostal European Fellowship and the Belgian Protestant Evangelical Synod. A significant amount of the student population knows already where they will work after their studies. Some of the students are sent by their churches to CTS to prepare on an academic level for their future job.

ASSESSMENT REPORT

Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies Continental Theological Seminary (CTS)

Preface

This report concerns the Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies organised by the Continental Theological Seminary (CTS). This master programme is the only accredited programme of CTS. The master is a 90 ECTS programme taught in English. As of 1 February 2018, 30 students are enrolled in this Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies. The site visit of the panel took place from 18 till 19 October, 2018.

The panel assesses the study programme based on the four standards of the VLUHR programme assessment framework. This framework is designed to fulfil the accreditation requirements, applied by the NVAO. For each standard the panel gives a weighted and motivated judgement on a two-point scale: unsatisfactory or satisfactory. In assessing the generic quality assurance, the concept of 'generic quality' means that the standard is in place and the programme – or a mode of study of the programme – meets the quality standards that can reasonably be expected, from an international perspective, of a Bachelor's or Master's programme in higher education. The score satisfactory points out that the programme meets the generic quality because it demonstrates an acceptable level for the particular standard. The score unsatisfactory indicates that the programme does not attain the generic quality for that particular standard.

The panel's opinions are supported by facts and analyses. The panel makes clear how it has reached its opinion. The panel also expresses a final opinion on the quality of the programme as a whole, also according to the same two-point scale.

The panel assesses the quality of the programme as it has been established at the time of the site visit. The panel has based its judgement on the self-evaluation report and the information that arose from the interviews with the programme management, the CTS Board, teaching staff, students, representatives of the professional field, alumni and personnel responsible at programme level for internal quality assurance, internationalization, study guidance and student tutoring. The panel has examined the course materials, 10 master theses, test and evaluation assignments and relevant reports available. The panel has also visited the educational facilities such

as the library during the site visit at CTS. The panel assesses the quality of the programme including the two pathways. In case findings, judgements or recommendations differ between the pathways, the panel mentions these.

In addition to the judgement, the panel also formulates recommendations with respect to quality improvement. In this manner, the panel wants to contribute to improving the quality of the programme. The recommendations are included in the relevant sections of the respective standard. At the end of the report, there is an overview of improvement suggestions.

Context of the study programme

Since 25 November 2005, CTS, located in Sint-Pieters-Leeuw, Belgium, has been registered as a higher education institution. The Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies received an initial accreditation by the NVAO in the fall of 2007. In 2011 the programme passed an educational assessment by VLIR (Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad) and was granted accreditation by NVAO for an 8-year period according to the legislation.

Continental Theological Seminary offers biblical and theological education supplemented by two pathways (biblical studies and missiological studies) to provide training for a wide range of students with diverse church-related career goals including but not limited to: Protestant teachers of religion, pastors, missionaries, theologians, speakers and writers serving European Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal churches and institutions which are officially recognised in their own country. The study curriculum comprises a double focus: on one hand, the students are given the opportunity to concentrate in one of the two research pathways while, on the other hand, the core curriculum offers a more general academic formation whereby students are enabled to study the Protestant Evangelical-Pentecostal faith tradition as a whole in the context of a multicultural society.

Currently, the master is a 90 ECTS programme. For a long time, there have been plans to expand the programme to a 120 ECTS master programme. Before doing so, CTS wants to establish a 180 ECTS bachelor programme.

The governance of Continental Theological Seminary is carried out by the leadership of the Board of Trustees and the President. The role of the President is to be the principal administrative officer of the institution. CTS has different departments led by separate administrative officers.

Standard 1 - Targeted Outcome Level

The panel evaluates the targeted outcome level as satisfactory.

According to the self-evaluation report (SER), The **Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies** curriculum aims for “promoting academic excellence leading up to an increasing personal academic contribution and to a growing commitment with regard to theology and Christian mission in society. Academic training intended to prepare men and women to judge and act maturely in matters related to theology and missiology ought not only to pass on the broad lines of the tradition of research in these domains, but also to develop the capacity to analyse closely the context in which theology and missiology are set, and to focus in depth on developments in the various fields of study that contribute to the church and society. It is for this reason that the programme endeavours to make a contribution to the overall formation and development of the students and to prepare them to engage in independent theological reflection on the Protestant Evangelical-Pentecostal faith tradition. At the same time, the programme also intends to stimulate interest in the mutual relationships between the various Christian churches”.

According to the SER, “the **Biblical Studies** pathway is designed to stimulate reflection on the use of the Bible in theology by crossing the conventional disciplinary boundaries between biblical exegesis and biblical theology applied in a contemporary church environment. The **Missiological Studies** pathway also stimulates reflection on the use of the Bible in theology by crossing the conventional disciplinary boundaries between biblical exegesis and biblical theology. However, it is also designed to stimulate creative reflection on mission theology, history and trends in relation to contemporary cultural changes and to equip church leaders and others to develop effective mission strategies through which the church might redefine its purposes in the contemporary secular context”.

The **discipline-specific objectives** are linked to each of the two pathways of the study programme. The learning outcomes differ according to the chosen pathway. The panel learned from the students that the aims and objectives of the study programme are known to students through the course documentation and in the academic orientation at the beginning of each academic year.

The **learning outcomes** are appropriate for an academic master’s degree. The overview of how the programme specific learning outcomes harmonise

with the descriptors of the Flemish Qualification Framework (FQF) is clear. The aims for achieving the FQF, by promoting deeper knowledge, understanding and competency in the particular fields, research skills and developing critical thinking are met. The intended learning outcomes compare favourably with similar institutions in Europe.

However, on the course level and particularly the course descriptions, the intended learning outcomes are rather generic. The **Pentecostal identity** of the programme could be made more explicit according to the panel. The course descriptions can be revised to strengthen its Pentecostal orientation in approach, contents, and perspectives.

The **international nature of CTS** necessitates special attention to meeting learning outcomes in a multi-cultural setting. These requirements are met. Nevertheless, an emphasis on the diversity of Evangelical and Pentecostal groups in terms of gender, ethnicity, culture, language or practices should be added to the programme specific learning outcomes.

There exists already for more than eight years a **future plan of CTS** to expand the master programme to a 120 ECTS programme after establishing a bachelor programme. The panel suggests this would be a good opportunity to strengthen and complement the targeted learning outcomes with learning outcomes with a special focus on Pentecostalism. All in all, it is the panel's opinion that the intended programme specific learning outcomes are at the master's level and consequently fit the Flemish qualification framework. The programme specific learning outcomes are met and compare favourably with similar institutions in Europe. The Pentecostal mission of CTS, however, can be more present in the learning outcomes.

Standard 2: Educational Learning Environment

The panel evaluates the Educational Learning Environment as satisfactory.

The **programme** of the Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies is a theological programme of 90 ECTS. Along with the core theology and biblical exegesis courses, it consists of three courses (18 ECTS credits) of the chosen pathway, Biblical Studies or Missiological Studies. In addition, the programme includes Research Methods and a Thesis Writing Seminar (6 ECTS credits) that must reinforce the research dimension of the Master's programme.

The panel appreciates that the programme places **additional emphasis** on the **international character** of theological research and on the global context of religion and theology. The panel was informed by the students that they feel encouraged to familiarise themselves with the diverse cultural backgrounds of their fellow students and thus facilitating and augmenting their theological endeavors.

It is the panel's opinion that the curriculum is consistent with the programme specific learning outcomes. The panel is convinced that the programme offers a **wide variety of learning methods** including lectures, seminars, and group discussions. Students met by the panel mentioned that these methods are very interactive which fits well with the small class groups. The learning environment is coherent and structured with the intention to serve the students as good as possible. Therefore, the panel commends that students learn in a **student-centered** way. Based on the meetings with students and on the study material that was examined by the panel, the study load is in balance with the ECTS.

It is mentioned in standard 1 that the programme-specific learning outcomes do not focus specifically on Pentecostalism. Consequently, there is not a strong visible focus on **Pentecostalism in the study materials**. In the meetings the panel had with teaching staff and the students, they revealed that each course incorporates Pentecostal perspectives and approaches. Moreover, the programme management explained to the panel that over the last four years the Pentecostal aspect is implemented in every course. In many of the courses, students have to write an essay or 'personal reflective paper' on how the course relates to Pentecostalism. While much of this emphasis is implied, the panel recommends **a more explicit emphasis on the Pentecostal perspective** in the course and programme materials.

Subsequently, the panel has two more recommendations with regard to the programme. The panel advises to **amend some course names** in order to reflect the content of the course. For example, the course 'Old and New Testament Exegetical methods' should be referred to as 'hermeneutics'. Secondly, the panel witnessed that the teachers lack **Ethical and Philosophical** expertise. As 'ethics' is at the forefront of modern theology, this is something which should be developed to strengthen the programme in general as well as in its Evangelical and Pentecostal trajectory.

In case the programme grows from a 90 ECTS to a 120 ECTS programme, the panel suggests **reinforcing the programme** with some additional

theological courses addressing foundational areas of theology, including trinitarian theology, Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology, and ethics. This does not detract from the fact that the programme is a solid implementation of the intended learning outcomes.

Intake guidance and academic study orientation are provided to each student at the beginning of the programme. Upon arrival at CTS, students are assigned to tutors who will provide them with guidance and support throughout their programme. Face-to-face meetings with professors are scheduled with on-campus students.

The programme is very **internationally** oriented: both students and teaching staff come from many different countries and continents. The panel witnessed a commendable openness between people from different cultural and theological backgrounds. This is reflected throughout the whole programme, including its learning materials.

The **involvement of visiting staff** creates a diversity that is favorable for the learning environment. The learning curve for the students is expanded by the international nature of the staff and students and as visiting professors can be recruited for discipline-specific teaching courses. However, the **diversity among the teaching staff** can be improved. There is no female residential teacher. The voluntary / missionary nature of the recruitment limits the institution's ability to proactively recruit desired teaching staff member(s). In the panel's discussion with the board members, the board wholeheartedly affirmed its desire to have, for example, a disabled person as a teacher. The question remains how proactively such a person can be recruited in the existing missionary structure. Teaching staff is assigned by churches from over the whole world to come and teach at CTS. In that way CTS is dependent upon the churches / organisations.

CTS currently has five residential full-time **staff members** and eight visiting professors who contribute to teaching in the study programme. This number is sufficient to fulfil the requirements. The staff number seems sufficient, considering the student-staff ratio, yet it is questionable if current staff members can support an increase from 90 to 120 ECTS.

The panel recommends that teachers should spend more time on academic research in order to integrate research and teaching. This has to be supported by the programme management and must not be reliant upon the decisions of their financial supporters back in their sending

country. Currently, CTS encourages its teachers to attend seminars and colloquiums, and to read and publish papers. This means that the teaching staff is not working in an environment of “publish or perish,” but the need for research on the part of the teaching staff is recognised. CTS does not have a standing sabbatical policy, although the programme assessment expressed its openness, if the supporting church would approve a research release and funding. Based on the list of publications that was sent to the panel, the **research output** shows room for improvement. The panel recommends that CTS encourages and supports research activities of the masters’ programme teaching staff. The panel realizes that in order to meet these expectations, current teaching staff needs more time for their research activities. Consequently at least one additional full-time staff member is needed.

Although research requires more attention, the panel believes that the **staff is the strongest asset** of the programme. The teaching staff members are also involved in various international networks of expertise. The students unanimously voiced their appreciation for the teaching staff. Students are very positive about the staff. At the same time, the panel witnessed that support staff and teaching staff clearly show a passion for the programme and the students. The academic backgrounds of the teaching staff correspond to the required qualifications needed for professors in the CTS Master of Theology programme. They have studied or taught Protestant-Evangelical and Pentecostal theology, biblical exegesis, and missiological studies.

CTS is situated in **Sint-Pieters-Leeuw** at the former Rattendaal castle. As the home of the institution, the property is completely renovated and additional buildings have been added: a chapel, classrooms, and living spaces. The panel learned that CTS has enhanced the functionality of the campus. CTS provides residential facilities for students desiring to stay on campus. All facilities (classrooms, library, music department, research center, study areas) are on campus and easily accessible.

The **library** houses a large Pentecostal Evangelical collection. The collection focuses on biblical studies and languages, theology, philosophy, ecclesiastical history, missiological studies, Christian education, and liturgical studies. The collection is primarily in English and French, but also has a significant number of Dutch and German volumes. The panel learned that the libraries’ financial resources are small and depend on established links with other area libraries. The panel is convinced that

the current collection is satisfactory for the programme's needs, although some areas of the collection are not up-to-date. It is a point of attention for students to consciously deal with literature that may contain partly non-contemporary insights.

Despite the library collection, the programme places a higher emphasis on **online resources** as opposed to up-to-date physical resources. While this reflects a changing emphasis, CTS is also seeking to strengthen collaborative efforts with neighboring facilities to create reciprocal agreements. This will not only support CTS students but enables the seminary to focus their investments in specifically Pentecostal resources. This is vital to maintain a uniquely Pentecostal perspective. The seminary also arranges and provides transportation for students to visit the theological library at the KU Leuven on a weekly basis.

The **Dimitrov Research Center** (DRC), located on the CTS campus, provides research materials in a theological and academic variety of areas, but especially regarding Pentecostalism in the European context. The DRC provides online and electronic resources for students.

The panel finds that the **lecture rooms** appear a little outdated, with the need to invest in technology which will advance the student learning experience. For example, rather than small portable televisions, it would be preferable to invest in large screens which enable the use of interactive materials to be used within the context of the classroom.

There is a **variety of services** available to the students, many of which organized by a dedicated staff and in small groups that allow close support. Feedback from alumni affirms the quality and usefulness of these services. The support system of the programme is well in place. Due to the size of the programme, students are able to directly approach professors and the dean with programme content related questions as well. Visiting teaching staff members are available to the students while residing on campus and via e-mail at other times. The availability of the professors for academic tutoring is recognised and appreciated by the students, and strengthens the learning process. The ombudsperson serves as the mediator between examiners and students. He or she cannot examine the students for whom the ombudsperson acts.

A weakness detected by the panel is the **lack of established and formal support for students with disabilities** in accessibility of the campus,

the reading materials, and audiovisual aids. The campus also does not physically support students with disabilities (e.g., ramps, access doors etc.). While the programme is dedicated to helping each individual, facilities, and services related to disabled students should be strengthened.

The panel concludes that the educational learning environment complies with the required generic quality. The curriculum is aimed for the learning outcomes. The programme's structure is solid and good learning methods are in place. The programme is highly international. The number of staff members can be increased and teaching staff has to be involved in research to a greater extent. The programme is supported by sufficient and adequate facilities and student guidance services.

Standard 3 - Outcome Level Achieved

The panel evaluates the outcome level achieved as satisfactory.

The CTS programme management has an evaluation policy with clear assessment, testing, and examination processes in place. This is evident from assessment process documents and was confirmed by the staff and students that the panel met. In most courses, a research paper is the most substantial component, often 95% of the total marking.

Before the beginning of every semester, an examination board meeting is scheduled for approval of the assigned course materials and examination questions. This is where the assessment methods and their quantity and quality are evaluated and corrected, if needed, in the light of the learning outcomes for each course. After internal approval of examination questions, they are sent to an External Examiner for assessment.

At the end of each examination period, the teaching staff carries out double marking of a selected number of essay and examination scripts for each course according to the accepted grading criteria. The first marker, who is the lecturer and examiner for that course, and the second marker teach courses from the same pathway. In the event of a wide margin of disagreement between the marks given by the first and second markers, the work in question is sent to an External Examiner for review. The same procedure is followed if a student challenges the mark given by the internal markers and agreement cannot be reached. This process of double marking also serves the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The process from first marking to second marking seems reliable to the panel, although the

programme and course descriptions do not detail the process and the original self-study report uses both second marking and moderating in its language. Although the second-marking for the essays with borderline grades and distinctions is in place, the second-readers told the panel that they read all the essays due to a small number in a class. So far, they have experienced no case with a wide gap between the initial grades and their second-reading grades. The ombudsperson also affirmed that she had had no case to mediate.

The panel learned that all teachers are required to fill out an evaluation sheet in which they explain the student's overall mark based on specific grading criteria such as structure, understanding, sources and style. The panel supports this method as this gives transparency regarding the given marks to students. The teaching staff met by the panel is fully aware of evaluation procedures as well as evaluation criteria. The panel learned that since last year papers (and not only the final mark what was customary) are sent back to the students as feedback. Both staff and students feel a clear sense of transparency with these comments as well as the given grades being made fully available to the student. A grading template for the essays and the theses is provided and the students are well informed about the assessment criteria.

The introduction of essays or 'personal reflective papers' which comprise 5% of the student course grade has created an opportunity for students to truly evaluate their own learning. However, with the subjective nature of personal reflections, maybe this is not the most reliable assessment of student learning according to the panel. A problem posed is that essays are not blind marked, with student names present on the paper during the marking process. In order to achieve better objectivity, a revised system should be considered for the essays.

The panel learned from the meetings that a great deal of importance is attached to the master's thesis in light of the fact that it constitutes an essential component. The master's thesis is a showcase for the study programme indicating how the objectives of the whole programme have been achieved. The master's thesis should provide evidence of a strong critical ability and an excellent theological-scientific background. Thorough familiarity with the international literature is essential. A high degree of importance is also attached to the originality and creativity of the master's thesis. The author's analytic capacities and his ability to present a scientific argument in a formally correct manner is crucial too.

Students are required to show that they have the capacity to analyse a theological issue and are able to tackle it from a variety of perspectives in order to solve theological problem.

The master's thesis is 30 ECTS credits and involves the completion of a 20,000-word thesis. In the thesis students prove their research skills. It is prepared under guidance of a supervisor who is a member of the teaching staff. The thesis should be a scholarly research work that investigates a well-defined question or an issue in historical, theological, exegetical perspective or theoretical body of knowledge and has to be chosen in the area of specialisation. The completed thesis should demonstrate significance beyond the immediate area of research. The writing of the thesis provides the student the opportunity to show that he has developed the skills of independent thought and critical analysis with the ability to select a well-defined topic, to assemble and appropriate relevant scholarly literature, and to deliver of coherent description of the chosen research project.

Following the completion of the thesis, it will be assessed by the evaluation committee, which consists of the supervisor, one internal examiner, and an external examiner. The final thesis grade is attributed at the deliberation by the Examination Board.

Before the site visit, the panel read more than 10 master' theses. The panel commends the design and structure of the master's thesis. It was clear to the panel that some of the master's theses are very good while other master's theses have a rather low but sufficient level of quality. This is reflected in the marks those theses received. The programme management and the teaching staff are aware that the low quality of some master's theses is a problem. They consider the different backgrounds and low level of English proficiency among some students as the causes of this lower performance. The programme is encouraged to explore ways to improve the level of English proficiency as part of full matriculation.

The increasing presence of Pentecostal churches in Europe, including the rapidly growing ethnic churches that are predominantly Pentecostal and charismatic in nature, offers employment opportunities in Europe. Another opportunity is the interaction between the seminary and Evangelical and Pentecostal churches and denominations as well as organisations such as the Pentecostal European Fellowship and the Belgian Protestant Evangelical Synod.

A significant amount of the student population knows already where they will work after their studies. Some of the students are sent by their churches to CTS to prepare on an academic level for their future job.

The graduates did not report any systematic follow-up on the graduates, but the programme or its teaching staff initiate regular contacts with the graduates due to their relatively small number. However, as the number of the graduates would increase, there could be a missed opportunity to foster a healthy relationship between the graduates and the institution. This opinion was established during the conversations with the alumni. Unless an intentional programme is established with the graduates, their employability within the labour market may not be effectively monitored. However, there is a positive feedback from the alumni met by the panel about the employability of the existing graduates. Finally, all students passed in the last years, except only one student who dropped out after a case of plagiarism was revealed.

The panel concludes that the programme has a valid, reliable, and transparent method of testing and assessing. The grading of the theses by a second readers demonstrates internal control. The improved feedback system allows students to interact with teaching staff with regard to grading and clarification of assessment. The final level, expressed by the master's theses, is sufficient complying with the intended learning outcomes.

Standard 4 - Internal Quality Assurance System

The assessment panel evaluates the Structure and Organisation of Internal Quality Assurance as satisfactory.

The panel observed that the programme has multiple tools to measure its quality. One of them is the teacher evaluation. All students receive an evaluation questionnaire for each course, which is completed anonymously. Students evaluate the goals and content of the courses, the guidance they have received from the teacher, the evaluation expectations and evaluation process, the activities, timing, and quality of the courses as well as how effectively the individual course met the objectives of the programme. The strengths and weaknesses of each course are discussed between the teaching staff and the dean as well as during the annual faculty meeting.

Every student graduating from the programme meets with the programme management to discuss his experiences during the study programme. Similar interviews are held with students who drop out. The panel learned from its meetings with the programme management that such interviews have been helpful in identifying programme strengths and weaknesses and to implement changes.

Periodic meetings between the dean and students, individual meetings between dean and professors, feedback from alumni and the annual update of course descriptors and the review of assessment questions and methods (see standard 3) are in place.

Due to the small size of the institution, there is a fair amount of exchange between staff, students and alumni fostering internal quality review. Regular contacts with related churches provide additional feedback. However, alumni do not appear to be involved as stakeholders in the programme in a systematic way. The alumni met by the panel seemed to be unaware whether there was any process of keeping them involved. The panel recommends alumni feedback could be very helpful in considering any revision of the overall curriculum programme when needed.

Although all panel meetings proved that many tools for quality assurance are in place, the panel notes that this is not very well reported. The panel commends that the assessment regime on the micro-level is meticulous. However, on the macro level, the programme lacks a systematic review structure. The absence of a systematic quality assurance policy on the macro level is evident given a number of recommendations which the previous assessment panel made have not yet been completed. Therefore, it is advisable to introduce a more consistent follow-up policy.

The panel concludes that the structure and the organisation of internal quality assurance is aimed for the systematic improvement of the programme. The programme periodically assesses the education's quality. All stakeholders are involved in this quality assurance, but the involvement is rather informal and more could be done to involve alumni. The follow-up appears to be in need of systematisation.

Final judgement of the assessment panel

As **Standard 1** is evaluated as satisfactory, **Standard 2** is evaluated as satisfactory, **Standard 3** is evaluated as satisfactory and **Standard 4** is evaluated as satisfactory, the final judgement of the assessment panel about the Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies is satisfactory too, according to the decision rules.

Summary of the recommendations for further improvement of the study programme

Standard 1 – Targeted Outcome Level

- Stress the Pentecostal identity in the intended learning outcomes
- Add emphasis on the diversity of Evangelical and Pentecostal groups in terms of gender, ethnicity, culture, language or practices

Standard 2 – Educational Learning Environment

- Amend some course names in order to reflect the content of the course
- Develop a focus on 'Ethics' and 'Philosophy' in the curriculum
- Encourage and support research by the teaching staff
- Invest in technology to advance the student learning experience
- Make the campus more accessible for disabled students

Standard 3 – Outcome Level Achieved

- Explore ways to improve the level of English proficiency as part of full matriculation
- Blind mark the essays
- Establish a programme for systematic follow-up of alumni

Standard 4 – Internal Quality Assurance System

- Involve alumni in the quality assurance process
- Introduce a more consistent follow-up of improvements measures

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Curricula vitae of the members of the assessment panel

Wonsuk Ma (Ph.D., Fuller) serves as Dean and Distinguished Professor of Global Christianity, College of Theology and Ministry, Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, Oklahoma, United States of America. A Korean Pentecostal scholar in Old Testament studies by training, he has researched in studies of Pentecostalism, Mission, and Global Christianity. During his service as a missionary to the Philippines (1979-2006), he founded Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies and Journal of Asian Mission. He then served as Executive Director of Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, Oxford, United Kingdom. His publication includes *Until the Spirit Comes: The Spirit of God in the Book of Isaiah* (1999) and (with Julie C. Ma) *Mission in the Spirit: Towards a Pentecostal/Charismatic Missiology* (2010), as well as participating in the publication of the 35-volume Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series.

Wolfgang Vondey (PhD Marquette University), originally from Germany, is Professor of Christian Theology and Pentecostal Studies at the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom, where he also directs the Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies. He has taught for twenty years in America, most recently at Regent University, where he founded and directed the Center for Renewal Studies. His research focuses on systematic theological themes through the lens of Pentecostalism, including interests in religion, pneumatology, ecclesiology, and the intersection of theology and the sciences. He is co-editor of the series, *Christianity and Renewal-Interdisciplinary Studies*, and of *Systematic Pentecostal and Charismatic Theology*. His most recent books include *Pentecostal Theology: Living*

the Full Gospel (2017), Pentecostalism: A Guide for the Perplexed (2013), 2 volumes of Pentecostalism and Christian Unity (2013 and 2010), and Beyond Pentecostalism: The Crisis of Global Christianity and the Renewal of the Theological Agenda (2010).

Jean-Daniel Plüss holds a PhD in Religious Studies from the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven that focused on the interpretation of narrative elements in worship. He chairs the European Pentecostal Charismatic Research Association and is president of the “Fondation du Forum Chrétien Mondial”. Since 1996 he is involved in international ecumenical dialogues involving Pentecostals with historical churches. He is teaching in theological seminaries and ecumenical institutes in Asia and Europe, has written numerous articles on Pentecostalism in journals as well as edited volumes and he has published a book on the history of Swiss Pentecostalism. He is on the editorial board of the Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association.

Siobhan Winch is currently writing her Masters Thesis at Regents Theological College, with a focus on the ethics of IVF and current medical practice. She also studied for her Bachelors degree at Regents, receiving a 2:1 with honours from Chester University. After graduating in 2013, Siobhan relocated to Salisbury where she ministered as the Assistant Pastor for 4 years, before ordination within the Elim Pentecostal Churches in 2017. Now active in her local Elim church in Worcester, Siobhan is regularly involved in teaching, preaching, and family outreach.

APPENDIX II

Time schedule of the site visit

18 October 2018

09:00–11:30	internal consultation
11:30–12:30	programme management
12:30–13:30	lunch
13:30–14:30	students
14:30–15:00	internal consultation
15:00–16:00	teaching staff
16:00–16:45	internal consultation
16:45–17:30	institutional board
17:30–17:45	internal consultation
17:45–18:45	graduates and professional field
18:45	diner panel

19 October 2018

09:00–10:00	programme-specific infrastructure
10:00–11:00	supporting staff
11:00–12:00	consultation hour
12:00–13:00	lunch
13:00–13:30	programme management
13:30–15:30	final consideration
15:30	oral report

**Verslag aanvullende beoordeling gerealiseerd eindniveau van de opleiding
Master of Theology in Evangelical and Pentecostal Studies – Continental
Theological Seminary (CTS) – 8568**

Secretaris: Dagmar Provijn (beleidsmedewerker NVAO)

Oorsprong aanvullende beoordeling:

Volgende elementen liggen aan de oorsprong van een aanvullende beoordeling van het gerealiseerd eindniveau:

- Hoewel de opleiding een betrekkelijk brede insteek kent inzake Bijbelstudie en theologisch onderricht – de commissie geeft zelfs aan dat het *pentecostal* verhaal in de opleiding sterker kan en mag beklemtoond worden –, blijkt de beoordelingscommissie éézijdig samengesteld waardoor het programma mogelijk vanuit een onvoldoende breed perspectief werd beoordeeld. NVAO gaf hierover negatief advies, VLUHR KZ ging hier niet op in.
- Tot op heden studeerden alle studenten af (52 afgestudeerden), met uitzondering van één plagiaatgeval.
- Met een 30 EC masterproef en 6 EC besteed aan *Research Methods* en een *Thesis Writing Seminar* kent het eindwerk een belangrijk aandeel in de beoordeling van het gerealiseerd eindniveau.
- De onderzoeksomkadering van en voor onderwijzend personeel is volgens de oorspronkelijke visitatiecommissie voor verbetering vatbaar.

De NVAO verzocht twee onafhankelijke experten om in een aanvullende beoordeling na te gaan of het gerealiseerd niveau van de eindwerken ook onderaan het beoordelingsspectrum standhoudt in een breder beoordelingsperspectief, met andere woorden, of ook hier eenduidig het masterniveau wordt behaald indien gesitueerd in een breder expertisegebied.

De experten zijn:

- Prof. dr. René Erwich; Principal of Whitley College, Professor of Practical Theology, University of Divinity, Melbourne, Australia (lid TNO-commissie NVAO Bachelor of Evangelical and Pentecostal Applied Theology – CTS – 2008);
- Prof. dr. Robertus Faesen; Professor at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, KU Leuven, Belgium.

Beoordeling door de experten (verslag vastgesteld op 21 april 2020):

De NVAO ontving van CTS de eindwerken die door de oorspronkelijke visitatiecommissie werden beoordeeld. De experten beoordeelden elk twee van de door CTS (en door de oorspronkelijke visitatiecommissie bevestigde) minder goed beoordeelde eindwerken en elk één van de excellente eindwerken. Classificeren we als NVAO de eindwerken volgens het oude ECTS classificatiesysteem op basis van de punten zoals toegekend door CTS, dan vallen twee eindwerken onder de categorie A, twee onderaan de categorie D en twee in de categorie E¹. De experten werden niet geïnformeerd over eerder toegekende scores.

¹ As a second step in the implementation of the ECTS grading scale, the statistical distribution curve for each reference group was split into five segments (Top 10%, next 25%, next 30%, next 25%, lowest 10%) also called A, B, C, D, E, which could become a device for the direct translation of grades from a degree programme in a given country/institution into a similar one in another country/institution. ECTS Users' Guide – 2009 – pp.41-42.

Bij de beoordeling hadden de experts oog voor de volgende aspecten:

- Centrale onderzoeksvragen en gebruikte methodologie;
- Logische opbouw, argumentatie en coherentie;
- Bibliografische verwijzingen en het gebruik van relevante literatuur;
- Relevantie voor het publieke domein en de theologische studie;
- Mate van beheersing van geldende theologische discours.

Uit de aanvullende beoordeling van de experts blijkt het volgende:

- De twee eindwerken in de categorie A vertonen overduidelijk het masterniveau. De enige bemerking die hier kan worden opgetekend voor één van de eindwerken is de relevantie van de centrale onderzoeksvraag binnen de huidige discussies in het vakgebied. Evenwel zou dit onderzoek een plaats kunnen krijgen in een breder doctoraatsonderzoek.
- De twee eindwerken onderaan de categorie D voldoen aan het masterniveau, maar slechts minimaal. De onderzoeksvragen vallen duidelijk binnen het onderzoeksgebied *pentecostalism*. Compositie en taalregister voldoen aan geldende eisen. Bibliografische verwijzingen en voetnoten vertonen slordigheden. Er wordt net voldoende informatie gedistilleerd uit de relevante literatuur, deze wordt wel correct geïnterpreteerd. Het aangewende bronnenmateriaal volstaat, maar laat geen situering in een bredere context toe.
- De twee eindwerken in categorie E zijn op meerdere punten problematisch en vertonen daardoor niet het verwachte masterniveau. Hoewel de onderwerpen interessant en relevant zijn, blijken de geformuleerde onderzoeksvragen en gebruikte methodologieën problematisch. In tegenstelling tot de onderwerpen, missen de resultaten door een gebrek aan of een eenzijdige reflectie relevantie voor het publieke domein en de theologische studie.

In het ene geval mist de methodologiekeuze verantwoording en is het onduidelijk hoe de (impliciete) en soms inconsistente toegepaste methodes aan elkaar gerelateerd zijn. Daarnaast wordt de centrale onderzoeksvraag niet duidelijk beantwoord, missen voorbeelden concrete aanknopingspunten met de argumentatieopbouw, is het niveau van tekstinterpretatie niet altijd op masterniveau, vertoont het geheel een gebrek aan reflectie op de contextualisering van de onderzoeksproblematiek en wordt het geheel ontsierd door vele onnodige stijl- en grammaticafouten.

In het andere geval wordt de onderzoeksvraag volledig gesitueerd binnen een pneumatologisch, ecclesiologisch en theologisch perspectief wat resulteert in een problematische dualistische analyse van de onderzoeksproblematiek. De mogelijke antwoorden zijn daardoor van meet af aan weinig relevant voor de werkelijke problematiek. Aangezien de problematiek van praktisch-theologische aard is, mag worden verwacht dat dit ook een plaats krijgt in de onderzoeksvraag en dat (minstens ook gedeeltelijk) wordt gekozen voor een praktisch-theologische methodologie waarin de bestaande relevante literatuur een plaats krijgt.

Besluit NVAO:

Uit de aanvullende beoordeling blijkt dat een duidelijke afbakening van het masterniveau voor de eindwerken niet is gegarandeerd. Aangezien de eindwerken een belangrijk aandeel vormen in de vaststelling van het gerealiseerd eindniveau van de masteropleiding, moet CTS actie ondernemen om het masterniveau van de afgestudeerden te verzekeren. Eindwerken die niet aan de maat zijn, moeten ook zo worden beoordeeld. In functie van het verhogen van de slaagkansen voor het eindwerk, zal de door CTS onderschreven aanbeveling van de oorspronkelijke visitatiecommissie om te werken aan het niveau van Engelse taalbeheersing niet volstaan. Het valt sterk aan te raden om hierbij ook aandacht te hebben voor de problemen die door de experts zijn aangestipt.