EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT
Institute of Tropical Medicine

An evaluation of the quality of the Master of Science in Public Health and
the Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health, Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp

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EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT
INSTITUTE OF TROPICAL MEDICINE

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PREFACE BY THE CHAIR OF THE VLUHR QA BOARD

In this report, the assessment panel Institute of Tropical Medicine announces its findings with regard to the Master of Science in Public Health and the Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health at the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp. These study programmes were assessed in the autumn of 2015 on behalf of the Flemish Higher Education Council (VLUHR). The assessment procedure is part of the VLUHR activities in the area of external quality assurance in Flemish higher education.

The assessment report is first of all intended for the study programmes involved and primarily aimed at quality maintenance and improvement. In addition, the report intends to provide objective information to the outside world about the quality of the evaluated study programme. For this reason, the report is posted on the VLUHR website.

This assessment report provides a snapshot of the study programmes and is only one phase in the process of ongoing concern for educational quality. After a short period of time the study programmes may already have changed and improved significantly, partly in response to the results of internal educational evaluations by the institution itself, or in response to recommendations by the assessment panel.

I would like to sincerely thank the chairman and the members of the assessment panel for the time they have invested and for the high level of expertise and dedication with which they have performed their task. This assessment has only been 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 programmes.

Nik Heerens
Chair VLUHR QA Board

PREFACE BY THE CHAIR OF THE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

In November 2015 the international peer review panel assessed two masterprogrammes, the Master of Science in Public Health and the Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health at the Institute of Tropical Medicin (ITM) in Antwerp.

These Master programmes are special as they are particularly aimed at students from or with relevant professional experience in low and middle income countries and the ultimate goal is to strengthen health care in developing countries.

The panel likes to thank Govert Van Heusden and colleagues for the interactions and information provided in the report and during the visit. The interviews and discussions were held in an open atmosphere and really led to a valuable exchange of ideas contributed to a better impression of the strong quality elements of the programme. We conclude that the programme management teams may be proud of what has been accomplished and still will be accomplished with the renewal of the Masters in Tropical Animal Health.

As chairman I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the assessment committee for their constructive and professional way of operating by which the assessment became a good team effort and an agreeable experience. The assessment committee is very grateful to Maarten Deboosere. He has been a great support to the assessment committee. His commitment facilitated the achievement of our assessment tasks. For the final steps in the completion of the report we like to thank Marleen Bronders.

Prof Gerda Croiset
Chairman of the assessment committee for
the master in Public Health and Tropical Animal Health at ITM.

KEY FIGURES[1]

Chapter I	Time schedule of the site visit
Chapter II	List of programme-specific learning outcomes related to the validated discipline-specific learning outcomes drafted according to the VLUHR-manual
Chapter III	Schematic overview of the curriculum, stating the number of credits available for each part of the study programme
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1 See www.vluhr.be/kwaliteitszorg

SECTION 1
General Section

CHAPTER I
Educational assessment Institute of Tropical Medicine

1 INTRODUCTION

In this report, the assessment panel Institute of Tropical Medicine announces its findings with regard to the master of Science in Public Health and the Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health at the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp. These study programmes were assessed in the autumn of 2015 on behalf of the Flemish Higher Education Council (VLUHR).

This assessment procedure is part of the VLUHR activities in the domain of external quality assurance in Flemish higher education, which is designed to ensure that Flemish universities, university colleges and other statutory registered higher education institutions are in compliance with the relevant regulatory framework.

2 THE ASSESSED STUDY PROGRAMMES

In accordance with its mission, the assessment panel visited:

– Institute of Tropical Medicine from November 17th to 19th, 2015
  - Master of Science in Public Health
  - Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health

3 THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

3.1 Composition of the assessment panel

The composition of the assessment panel Institute of Tropical Medicine was ratified on May 2nd, July 4th and October 12th, 2014 by the VLUHR Quality Assurance Board. The NVAO sanctioned the panel composition on November 17th, 2014.

The assessment panel was composed in the following way:

– Chairman of the assessment panel:
  - **Prof. dr. Gerda Croiset**, Professor of Medical Education and director of VUmc School of Medical Sciences Center Amsterdam, The Nederlands

– Other panel members:
  - **Prof. dr. Flavie Goutard**, Researcher Epidemiologist from CIRAD hosted as an Adjunct professor at Kasetsart University, Thailand (domain expert)
  - **Prof. dr. Kabir Sheikh**, Senior Research Scientist and Adjunct Associate Professor, Public Health Foundation India (domain expert)
  - **Prof. dr. John Owusu Gyapong**, Director of the Research and Development Division of the Ghana Health Service (domain expert)
  - **Miss Shanna Boodhoo**, Advanced Master in Development Evaluation and Management, University of Antwerp, Belgium (student member)

Due to unforeseen circumstances prof. dr. John Owusu Gyapong could not participate in the visit.

Mr. Joeri Deryckere, staff member of the Quality Assurance Unit of the Flemish Higher Education Council (until June 30th, 2015) and **Mr. Maarten Deboosere**, staff member of the Quality Assurance Unit of the Flemish Higher Education Council (until December 31st, 2015) were project managers of this educational assessment and acted as secretary to the assessment panel. As of January 2016, **Mrs. Marleen Bronders**, coordinator Quality Assurance Unit of the Flemish Higher Education Council took over this assignment.

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 Assessment Process

3.3.1 Preparation

The study programmes were 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 reports some 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. The members of the assessment panel were also asked to read a set of recent Master's theses for the study programmes before the site visit took place.

The assessment panel held its preparatory meeting on November 16th , 2015. During this 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. The self-evaluation reports were collectively discussed and the interviews were prepared.

3.3.2 On-site visit

During the on-site visit the panel interviewed all parties directly involved with the study programmes. The panel spoke with those responsible for the study programmes, 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 reports.

The panel visited the programme-specific infrastructure facilities, including the library, classrooms, and computer facilities. 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. Sufficient time was scheduled throughout the assessment visit for the panel to study these documents thoroughly. Additional information could be requested during the on-site visit if 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 programmes were given the opportunity to reply to the draft version of this report. The assessment panel considered this response and included elements of it into the final version when deemed appropriate.

CHAPTER II
Table with scores

The following table represents the assessment scores of the assessment panel on the four 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 four-point scale: satisfactory, good, excellent or unsatisfactory. The panel also expresses a final opinion on the quality of the programme as a whole, also according to a four-point scale: satisfactory, good, excellent or unsatisfactory.

In the report of the study programmes 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 standards
Good (G)	The study programme systematically exceeds the generic quality standards
Excellent (E)	The study programme achieves well above the generic quality standards and serves as an (inter) national example
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.
Good (G)	The final opinion on a programme is 'good' if at least two generic quality standards are additionally assessed as 'good', including in every case the third one: final outcomes achieved.
Excellent (E)	The final opinion on a programme is 'excellent' if at least two generic quality standards are additionally assessed as 'excellent', including in every case the third one: final outcomes achieved.
Unsatisfactory (U)	The final opinion on a programme – or a mode of study – is 'unsatisfactory' if all generic quality standards are assessed as 'unsatisfactory'.
Satisfactory for a limited period (S*)	The final opinion on a programme – or a mode of study – 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 - Learning Process	GQS 3 - Outcome Level Achieved	GQS 4 Structure and Organisation of Internal Quality Assurance	Final Opinion
Institute of Tropical Medicine Antwerp					
Master of Science in Public Health	E	E	E	E	E
Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health	G	S	G	G	G

SECTION 2

Assessment Report and Summary

INSTITUTE OF TROPICAL MEDICINE ANTWERP

Master of Science in Public Health
Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health

SUMMARY OF THE ASSESSMENT REPORT
Institute of Tropical Medicine

From 17 to 19 November 2015, the study programmes the Master of Science in Public Health (MPH) and the Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health (MSTAH) organised by the Institute of Tropical Medicine (Antwerp), a statutory registered non-university institution for higher education in Flanders, were assessed by a panel of independent, external experts. In this summary, the main findings of the panel are listed.

Profile of the programme

The Master of Science in Public Health (MPH) is a one-year master's programme, aimed specifically at students with relevant professional experience in low and middle income countries (LMIC) and settings. It is a subsequent master (master after master) comprising 60 ECTS, that targets experienced health professionals and researchers. The programme has three orientations: Disease Control (DC), Health Systems Management and Policy (HSMP) and International Health (IH) and is offered in both French and English (the language changes yearly). The programme is organised by the ITM Department of Public Health (DPH). During the academic year 2013–2014, 45 students were enrolled in the MPH.

The Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health (MSTAH) is a one-year master's programme, aimed specifically at students from low and

middle income countries (LMIC). The programme is organised by the ITM Department of Biomedical Sciences (DBS). The MSTAH master is in transition: from January 2016 on, a new "blended programme" with web-based and on-campus components is offered in close collaboration with the University of Pretoria (UP) in South-Africa. Depending on the subject of the thesis, students have their primary registration in one institution. During the academic year 2013–2014, 22 students were enrolled in the MSTAH.

Most students from developing countries study at ITM with a full scholarship covering both tuition and living expenses. The Belgian Directorate-General for Development (DGD) is the main sponsor.

Programme

The MPH programme is coherent, with clearly defined pathways. The programme covers the most important aspects of public health and offers electives and a thesis. It is a rich and – from the perspective of the students – quite demanding programme. Students largely experience a good balance between the fixed programme and choices available to them. There is a rich variety of teaching methods, depending on the aim of the topic. The course material is very good and up to date. Because of the small sizes of the group there is a lot of interaction with the students.

The old MSTAH-programme was well designed, but a little out of date. The new blended programme fixes some issues of the old one: the new programme focusses on the skills that are expected from modern international tropical animal health specialists (such as lab management and field work), course material is updated, there are different types of activities that are adequate and diverse.

The teaching staff and support staff form a cohesive team, providing a good learning environment with a shared vision. The staff is very transparent and open towards students. In general students are satisfied with the teaching quality of the staff. Lecturers are also researchers and have lots of experience in LMIC, which makes their perspective very relevant and interesting to the students. The staff which is predominantly Belgian, jointly accumulates an extensive and varied international professional experience. The ground experience in LMIC of all staff creates an international organization which welcomes people from all over the world.

Evaluation and testing

Both programmes uses assessment and evaluation methods that are varied and on the right level. For the new MSTAH programme assessment methods have been specifically chosen for assessing web-based modules.

The theses of the MPH are thoroughly assessed by an independent jury, the entire thesis process is transparent and the theses are of high quality and accurately rated. The theses of the MSTAH are judged by an external jury and with a grid of criteria to be taken into consideration. The theses are generally of good quality.

Services and student guidance

The facilities are excellent. ITM has modern classrooms and labs, its own student housing and student restaurant, all at a very convenient location in Antwerp. The library and online access to relevant information enables students to do more research than in their home country.

In the MPH attention for the individual background of the student starts at the point of selection and is well maintained throughout the programme. The institute provides additional exercises and support or coaching classes for students to eventually be on the same level with each other. The old MSTAH programme applied a very good system to follow the progression level of the students during their time at ITM, helping weaker students from the very beginning with personal coaching. The panel notes that this needs to be maintained in the new programme, where specific attention should be given to the follow-up of the students during the web-learning time.

Students do not only get help from teachers and supporting staff. Within their own small community, they help each other. Some students indicated that “they learn as much at the coffee machine as in class”.

Study success and professional opportunities

Alumni from both programmes report that they benefit from their education at ITM in tangible and intangible ways. They make clear steps forward in their careers resulting from obtaining their diploma. They also form a strong professional network and contribute to other influential networks for advocacy, capacity building and policy change. Alumni are extremely happy and satisfied with having attended ITM. They either progressed to a PhD or were promoted upon return to their home country.

ASSESSMENT REPORT
Master of Science in Public Health
Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health
Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp

Preface

This report concerns the Master of Science in Public Health (MPH) and the Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health (MSTAH) organised by the Institute of Tropical Medicine (shortened to ITM; the official Dutch name is "Instituut voor Tropische Geneeskunde") in Antwerp, Belgium. The assessment panel visited the study programmes during its visit at the ITM, from November 17th to November 19th 2015.

ITM is a statutory registered non-university institution for higher education in Flanders. The Institute therefore is not subject to an institutional review. The panel assesses the study programmes on the basis of the four generic quality standards (GQS's) of the VLUHR programme assessment framework. This framework is designed to fulfil the accreditation requirements, applied by the NVAO. For each generic quality standard the panel gives a weighted and motivated judgement on a four point scale: **unsatisfactory, satisfactory, good or excellent**. In assessing the generic quality assurance, the concept of '*generic quality*' indicates that the GQS is in place and that the programme – or a specific orientation of the programme – meets the quality level that can reasonably be expected, from an international perspective, of a 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 GQS. If the study programme scores **good** than the programme systematically exceeds the generic quality for that standard. When the programme scores **excellent**, it achieves well above the generic quality for the particular GQS and serves as an (inter)national example. The score **unsatisfactory** indicates that the programme does not attain the generic quality for that particular GQS.

The panel's opinions are supported by facts and analyses. The panel clarifies 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 four-point scale. Judgements and recommendations made relate to the programme with all subordinate orientations or majors, unless stated differently.

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, with lecturers, students, alumni and personnel responsible at programme level for internal quality assurance, internationalisation, study guidance and student tutoring. The panel has also examined the course materials, master's theses, test- and evaluation assignments and standard answering formats, and numerous relevant reports available. For the student success rate, the panel called on the data provided by the study programme. The panel has also visited the educational specific facilities such as classrooms, labs and library during the site visit at the institute.

For the Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health, the panel has also taken into consideration the new "blended programme" with web-based and on-campus course components that will start in January 2016 in cooperation with the University of Pretoria. In order to do this, the panel has looked into all available documents concerning vision, learning outcomes, curriculum, assessment, etcetera. In the text, a distinction will be made between the old programme and the new when necessary.

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 generic quality standards. At the end of the report an overview is made of improvement suggestions.

Context of the study programmes

The Master of Science in Public Health (MPH) is a one-year master's programme, aimed specifically at students with a relevant professional experience in low and middle income countries (LMIC) or settings. It is a subsequent master (master after master) that targets experienced health professionals and researchers. The programme has three orientations: Disease Control (DC), Health Systems Management and Policy (HSMP) and International Health (IH) and is offered in both French and English (the language changes yearly). The programme is organised by the ITM Department of Public Health (DPH). It is managed by a steering group, consisting of the course director, the director-elect, all file holders of course components, all lecturers with a teaching load of more than 30 contact

hours, the departmental education coordinator and the coordinators of the three MPH orientations. A smaller coordination team, consisting of course directors and coordinators, is in charge of the daily management. The flexible IH orientation has a separate coordination team, given the specificities of the orientation. It includes a representative of each of the three departments, as the individual student trajectories draw on course components from all respective academic domains. Major changes also need endorsement of the Academic Council (AC), and the Board of Governors of ITM has to approve the programme yearly.

Over the last 10 years the flexibility in the MPH has progressively increased. Within the orientations HSMP and DC, students can now choose between two optional course components: the options "Strategic Management of Health Systems" (SCMAN) and "Health Policy" (SCPOL) in the MPH-HSMP (10 ECTS); and the options "Tropical Disease Control" (SCTD) and "Reproductive Health" (SCRH) in the MPH-DC (15 ECTS). In 2012 the even more flexible orientation International Health (IH) – mainly for junior European health professionals – was created in collaboration with the tropEd network. MPH students can now, after the 20 credits common core, also choose for a part-time tailor-made IH study-path, and build their portfolio with credits obtained at ITM, at NVAO-accredited institutions or in tropEd member institutions. Additionally, students who successfully followed the 20 credits Postgraduate course Introduction to International Health (PG-IIH) can get an exemption for the MPH 20 credit core course and enrol for the remaining 40 advanced credits of the HSMP, DC or IH orientation. At present the orientations HSMP and DC each enrol between 20 to 25 students yearly (selected from more than 150 eligible applicants every year for either course). Since August 2012 the orientation IH enrolled its first six students. As of yet, the interest for the IH, measured by the yearly number of applicants, is still limited albeit slowly increasing.

The Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health (MSTAH) is a one-year master's programme, aimed specifically at students from LMIC. The programme is organised by the ITM Department of Biomedical Sciences (DBS). The programme management is taken up by a steering committee consisting of the course director, the course coordinator and all appointed module coordinators. The steering committee reports to the departmental council. Major changes also need endorsement of the Academic Council (AC) before decisions are taken by ITM Management Committee or Board of Governors".

The MSTAH is in transition. The programme presented in the self-assessment report is not taught anymore. In January 2016, a new "blended programme" with web-based and on-campus course components is offered. It is a programme offered in close collaboration with the University of Pretoria (UP) in South-Africa. This programme is the result of a longstanding relationship between staff of ITM and UP. Since 2008 web based modules were jointly developed. Depending on the subject of the thesis, students will have their primary registration in one institution. The University of Pretoria has a longstanding reputation in veterinary education and the 'one health' concept. Staff of the DPH will be involved in a module on public health.

Most students from developing countries study at ITM with a full scholarship covering both tuition and living expenses. The Belgian Directorate-General for Development (DGD) is the main sponsor.

During the academic year 2013–2014, 45 students were enrolled in the MPH. The curriculum consists of 60 ECTS credits, offered in one year.

During the academic year 2013–2014, 22 students were enrolled in the MSTAH. The curriculum consists of 60 ECTS credits, offered in one year.

Generic quality standard 1 - Targeted Outcome Level

The assessment panel evaluates the targeted outcome level for the Master of Science in Public Health as EXCELLENT and for the Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health as GOOD.

According to the Flemish Act on the qualifications structure of April 30th 2009, issued by the Flemish Parliament, the programmes have drafted **discipline-specific learning outcomes (DSLO)**. These DSLO have been recognised by the Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation (NVAO) on March 9th 2015.

The programmes have also formulated their own **Programme Learning Outcomes (PLO)**. Both MPH and the old MSTAH used seven common learning outcomes, to be attained by all orientations/majors, combined with a few specific learning outcomes for each orientation/major. The new MSTAH will use one set of PLO for all students. The panel saw that all PLO were clearly linked with the DSLO and even surpass them. They are

definitely on the right level and aim rather high for a one-year programme. In the MPH and also in the new MSTAH (at least in the courses the panel saw during the visit), the PLO were linked with learning goals for each course component and specific criteria for evaluation, making sure that all teaching staff know what topics they are supposed to discuss with the students. This is particularly important because there is a range of external lecturers. Overlap is prevented as much as possible. Also, the students know beforehand what to expect and how they will be assessed. The panel was impressed by the logical flow between the vision of the programmes and the execution. In the old MSTAH, this logical flow and explicit integration of PLO into the programme was missing.

The **MPH-PLO** also include effective teamwork and a grounding in values and equity in the common LO, multi-level health systems assessment (local / national / international) in the HSMP LO and implementation planning based on a health policy and systems research perspective in the DC LO. These are advanced learning outcomes in relation to other comparable international programmes.

The **old MSTAH-PLO** were well-specified but they were a bit old fashioned and were not completely corresponding with the skills that are expected from tropical animal health specialists (such as lab management and field work). Most learning outcomes were targeting 'understanding' and 'applying'. The common PLO on multidisciplinary teams was not so visible in the courses, with no clear one health perspective and no clear collaboration with the DPH.

This was improved in the **new MSTAH-PLO**. They are corresponding better to the skills of modern international tropical animal health specialists. The documents that the panel saw during the site visit clearly showed that each course will be linked to specific PLO, in the same way MPH does already. This is a good development. However, the panel could not assess the way PLO3 (on the economic importance of animal health) will be targeted in the courses, because these modules are still being developed. The panel thinks that if the programme wants to focus more on one health approaches in LMIC, maybe a PLO on indigenous knowledge, community approaches to health, qualitative and participatory approaches should be added. The panel also suggests an overall document be made together with UP, standardising all the PLO and how they are distributed between the different modules of the programme. This will ensure all teachers know what is done in the different modules (as they will not see each

other as often as now, given the online nature of important parts of the new programme). Also, this will avoid overlap and missing competences.

Concluding, the MPH has PLO that surpass the DSLO and the international standards. They are well integrated into the programme and the assessment criteria. Therefore, the panel evaluates the targeted outcome level for the MPH as 'excellent'. The MSTAH also have PLO that surpass the DSLO. The PLO of the new programme are better than those of the old one. It also seems like they will be integrated better into the programme. They however miss one LO to be excellent, and also they need to be fully implemented in the new programme and the assessment criteria. Therefore, the panel evaluates the targeted outcome level for the MSTAH as 'good'.

Generic quality standard 2: Learning Process

The assessment panel evaluates the learning process for the Master of Science in Public Health as EXCELLENT and for the Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health as SATISFACTORY

The **MPH programme** is coherent and there are clearly defined pathways to demonstrate how it addresses the stated learning outcomes. The programme covers the most important aspects of public health and offers electives and a thesis. It is a rich programme, but it is quite demanding from the perspective of the students. The programme consists of a rich variety of teaching methods, depending on the aim of the topic. Because of the small sizes of the group there is a lot of interaction with the students.

Attention for the **individual background of the student** starts at the point of selection and is well maintained throughout the programme. Because of the diverse educational and professional background of students (which ITM encourages), the institute also provides additional exercises and support or coaching for students to eventually be on the same level with each other. The track and the topic of the thesis are discussed as early as possible. Students largely experience a good balance between the fixed programme and choices available to them. They sometimes would like to have some time to go in-depth into certain subjects. The panel thinks the programme could experiment with offering more choice to the students. The IH orientation is a good development, but it is aimed at, at intake, less experienced students. So the other orientations could still profit from a bit more choice.

The old **MSTAH** programme applied a very good system to follow the progression level of the students during their time at ITM, helping weaker students from the very beginning with personal coaching. This will need to be maintained in the new programme. Specific attention should be given to the follow-up of the students during the web-learning time, in order to quickly identify any students that would need more help or support and to avoid drop-outs. The panel also saw some modules of the new MSTAH. The different types of activities proposed appeared adequate and diverse in order for the students to achieve the learning outcomes.

The panel looked at a lot of **course material** for both programmes. This was very good and up to date. In the old MSTAH, some of the reading materials seemed a bit out of date, but it seems like this will be updated in the new programme. The examples in the MSTAH course material were mostly about (southern) African countries. It would be good to focus on countries and diseases outside Southern part of Africa as well, in order to really achieve an international coverage of tropical animal health and to train international specialists.

The students are in general satisfied with the teaching quality of the **staff**. Although there is no formal training programme for teachers, there is some training for the teachers on didactics and on the validity, reliability and transparency of the assessments. MSTAH staff also received training on web-based learning from experts at UP. This training programme could be more structured, according to the panel. Students liked that lecturers were also researchers and had lots of experience in LMIC. This made their perspective very relevant and interesting to the students. Students expressed that they were told the learning objectives, how the courses will be taught and how they will be assessed. This shows that the staff is very transparent and open towards students. The MSTAH lacks specialised staff in some areas. This is not optimal for thesis supervision, as some topics are not within the scope of the staff. This is the result of a reduction of staff, but the problem will be resolved in the new programme, since UP has complementary specialisations.

The teaching staff and support staff are collectively observed to be a cohesive team, providing a good learning environment with a shared vision. The panel was pleasantly surprised that all staff (even supporting staff) at ITM have on the ground experience in LMIC. This creates an international organization which welcomes people from all over the world. The senior management of the DPH demonstrated a belief that education is one of the important

core tasks. Staff corroborated that they feel valued by their department management for teaching, and this is supported by strong contributions of many senior and mid-level staff to the teaching programme.

The time spent on teaching should however be protected institutionally. To attain this, innovative ways have to be found to demonstrate the (added) value of the teaching programme. The 'ITM 2020' vision aims to strengthen the scientific approach of the institute. The panel hopes this will be synergistic with the emphasis on the teaching and capacity building programme. There is a policy allowing a limited number of staff to have/develop a profile on capacity building, education or research. However the three profiles are always related to each other, and ultimately need each other. This needs to be emphasized, and care should be taken that one aspect does not crowd out the other. Excellence in relevance is what the staff strives for, and the panel support this wholeheartedly. Therefore the panel hopes that possibilities remain to get on the ground experience for young staff members. Lastly, the time spent on web-learning should be valued the same way in-class teaching is.

The staff jointly accumulates an extensive and varied international professional experience, yet is predominantly Belgian. Students have not expressed concern over the latter, but the impact of diversity in teaching staff ranges from benefits to fellow teachers to other students. It creates a rich learning environment with differing life experiences, cognitive reasoning and teaching styles.

Students do not only get help from teachers and supporting staff. Within their own small **community**, they really help each other. Some students indicated they learn as much at the coffee machine as in class. The programme knows this, and tries to include as many discussions as possible, to encourage sharing information and points of view. This 'community feeling' is really important, and the new MSTAH will have to find an online equivalent to this.

It was acknowledged that students and professionals alike are expected to perform in the world with English as the "official" language. Yet there does not seem to be a major focus on the **level of English** theses are written in. The panel suggests having the first report students write during the semester be checked with an official language institute and feedback given early on. Including one class on academic writing at the beginning of the semester would also be beneficial to students.

The **facilities** are excellent. Students housing in Antwerp tends to be expensive and of low quality, so ITM built their own student housing and student restaurant. This accommodates for all student needs, at a very convenient location. The panel also visited some modern classrooms and labs. Students expressed how having library and online access to relevant information enabled them to do more research than in their home country. The technical and supporting staff does not only help students, it also tries to empower them. Students should be able to end up doing everything themselves. The panel appreciates this approach.

The scope of the institute is going to be widened and they will also try to attract students from high income countries. This is important for collaborative learning in a diverse student group. Furthermore students from LMIC are mostly depending on **scholarships**, and if the largest provider of these scholarships – DGD – stops, the programmes would be in trouble. The programmes are also looking into funding from middle income countries, such as Thailand. Those countries are starting to set up scholarships as well.

Concluding, the MPH is an international example for this standard. The curriculum is well designed. It is quite demanding, but students receive a lot of support in a coherent and stimulating learning environment. The facilities are excellent. That is why the panel scores the learning process as 'excellent'. The MSTAH offered a programme that was well designed, but a little out of date. The new programme fixes some issues in the old one, but attention should be paid to supporting the students in this new online environment. Therefore, the panel evaluates the learning process of the MSTAH as 'satisfactory'.

Generic quality standard 3 - Outcome Level Achieved

The assessment panel evaluates the outcome level achieved for the Master of Science in Public Health as EXCELLENT and for the Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health as GOOD.

The **MPH** uses **rubrics** for student evaluation in some courses. The panel advises to develop these for all courses, in order to limit variation in evaluation standards resulting from differential interpretations. Also, training sessions on how to assess and evaluate (possibly even on developing rubrics) would put assessors on a level playing field and ensure

a standard is used. After looking at a selection of assignments, the panel concluded that the questions are varied and aimed at the right level.

The **theses**, the final product of the MPH, are of high quality and are accurately rated. They are thoroughly assessed by an independent jury, which is an appreciable and credible procedure. The entire thesis process is transparent. There are two readers, five jurors at the oral defense and clear feedback for the students.

The **MSTAH** uses **assessment and evaluation methods** that are well-designed, even if some students asked for more standardisation between the different lecturers. The thesis is judged by an external jury and with a grid of criteria to be taken into consideration. The panel appreciated this thesis procedure, just like the one of MPH.

The overall **level of the MSTAH theses** was good. The panel noticed that a few theses were over-graded, where they probably deserved a little less. After an explanatory talk with the teaching staff, the panel completely understands why this is done. The mission of the programme is to support students from LMIC, with several years of working experience, who come to Antwerp on a scholarship. Their level might not be high, but they still go back with a lot of useful knowledge and skills to start a process of capacity-building. To make sure everyone knows what the level of the graduated students is, an overview of all marks in the past five years is added to every diploma. This way, it is clear that the student with 10/20 succeeded, but did not excel. Sometimes, this is also due to their lack of proficiency in English.

For the **new web-based MSTAH programme**, the panel concluded that (at least for the teaching materials that were made available) **assessment methods** have been specifically chosen for assessing web-based modules. They also seem in coherence with the PLO. No students have yet been evaluated so it was impossible for the panel to assess the level achieved by future students. However, the panel is confident that this will be good, if sufficient attention is paid to the fine-tuning of the new programme.

In the new MSTAH programme, the **theses** are going to be defended in ITM or in UP. So in order to have a standardised evaluation system in both institutions, it is essential to prepare a joint document describing the way the jury should be organised and the criteria used for scoring, in order to insure an equivalent level of diploma in both institutions.

Alumni from both programmes report that they benefit from their education at ITM in tangible and intangible ways. They make clear steps forward in their careers resulting from obtaining their diploma. They also form a strong professional network and contribute to other influential networks for advocacy, capacity building and policy change. Alumni are extremely happy and satisfied with having attended ITM. They indicated they either progressed to a PhD or were promoted upon return to their home country. For the new programme, it will be important to monitor student's careers after the programme in order to assess if the change in the teaching methods impacted the employability level of graduates.

The panel thinks the programmes should consider developing robust **impact parameters** (for internal reflection and for sharing with stakeholders) that demonstrate the value of the programmes in careers of alumni, policy impact on countries in LMIC, and knock on effects, including building community and network strength for advocacy and knowledge uptake. The United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) Research Programme Consortium (RPC) projects have a robust template for such assessment, which could be used as a reference.

Concluding, the programmes successfully prepare their students for a next step in their career. Students clearly benefit from their time at ITM. The assessment and evaluation methods are varied and on the right level. The theses are generally of good quality as well. The MSTAH will have to make sure all assessment and evaluation methods are adapted to the new format. Therefore, the panel evaluates the outcome level achieved of the MPH as 'excellent' and that of the MSTAH as 'good'.

Generic quality standard 4 – Structure and Organisation of Internal Quality Assurance

The assessment panel evaluates the structure and organisation of the internal quality assurance of the Master of Science in Public Health as EXCELLENT and for the Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health as GOOD.

The panel was impressed by the attention that is paid to quality and quality assurance at ITM. It is not just a matter of formal rules, but quality is valued and treasured. Regular course evaluations, alumni surveys, staff meetings and student evaluations (both quantitative and qualitative) are undertaken. Typically complaints and concerns are viewed constructively,

problems are identified and often handled quickly. There is a clear organizational procedure for receiving information, discussing concerns and implementing changes. Concerning adaptation of the programme, the students notice that the required changes were adequately dealt with if student representatives brought them up. The small nature of the programmes also allows for close contact between everyone involved, so informal feedback is also given and used on a daily basis. The MPH in particular is a thorough and elaborate programme, and is often dynamically modified and updated.

The panel noted that both programmes had addressed some issues that came up during the self-assessment phase even before the site visit started. This shows that they are continuously improving.

ITM is part of TropEd and LINQED. TropEd is the Network for Education in International/Global Health. This is the only international accreditation system for course components for a master in International/Global Health. TropEd aims at improving student mobility and credit transfer between the 28 member institutions (as happens in the MPH-IH). LINQED is the Network for Quality in International Health Education. This is a DGD supported initiative, which links 14 institutional partners. They exchange experiences and good practices, review evidence and develop blueprints for seminars on specific quality assurance topics of common interest.

For the new web-based master, UP has someone who is specifically in charge of monitoring web-based learning. She makes sure students and staff receive all support necessary and even intervenes if module coordinators forget to reply in a discussion or to grade an assessment. There is also a plan to have a web-based questionnaire after each module to enable the students to evaluate the contents and teaching methods. The panel couldn't assess this questionnaire, because it was not yet available at the time of the site visit. It will be important to make this questionnaire short and to the point. If students realise actions are taken based on what they mentioned in the questionnaire, they will also take more time to fill them out. So continued attention is required for this. The informal small scale of the old programme is lost, but the quality culture should stay.

It will also be important to standardise the internal quality assurance system in both institutions. A document should be drafted, outlining who is responsible for what, as well as clear criteria. This framework for quality assurance will ensure the programme's quality into the future.

In short, the MPH has a true quality culture and is continuously evolving and improving. That is why the panel rates the structure and organisation of internal quality assurance of the MPH as 'excellent'. The MSTAH also has a sound system for quality assurance. However, attention should be paid to this system in the transition to a new master. The quality assurance should evolve with the programme and a clear framework needs to be constructed together with UP. Therefore, the panel rates the structure and organisation of internal quality assurance of the MSTAH as 'good'.

Final judgement of the assessment panel - MPH

Master of Science in Public Health

Generic quality standard 1 – Targeted Outcome Level	E
Generic quality standard 2 – Learning Process	E
Generic quality standard 3 – Outcome Level Achieved	E
Generic quality standard 4 – Structure and Organisation of Internal Quality Assurance	E

As the **Generic quality standard 1** is evaluated as 'excellent', the **Generic quality standard 2** is evaluated as 'excellent', the **Generic quality standard 3** is evaluated as 'excellent' and the **Generic quality standard 4** is evaluated as 'excellent', the final judgement of the assessment panel about the Master of Science in Public Health is 'excellent', according to the decision rules.

Final judgement of the assessment panel - MSTAH

Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health

Generic quality standard 1 – Targeted Outcome Level	G
Generic quality standard 2 – Learning Process	S
Generic quality standard 3 – Outcome Level Achieved	G
Generic quality standard 4 – Structure and Organisation of Internal Quality Assurance	G

As the **Generic quality standard 1** is evaluated as 'good', the **Generic quality standard 2** is evaluated as 'satisfactory', the **Generic quality standard 3** is evaluated as 'good' and the **Generic quality standard 4** is evaluated as 'good', the final judgement of the assessment panel about the Master of Science in Tropical Animal Health is 'good', according to the decision rules.

Summary of the recommendations for further improvement of the study programme

Generic quality standard 1 – Targeted Outcome Level

- If the new MSTAH programme wants to focus more on one health approaches in LMIC, add a PLO on indigenous knowledge, community approaches to health, qualitative and participatory approaches
- Make an overall document together with the University of Pretoria, standardising all the PLO and how they are distributed between the different modules of the new MSTAH programme.

Generic quality standard 2 – Learning Process

- Experiment in the MPH-programme with offering more choice to the students.
- Give specific attention in the MSTAH programme to the follow-up of the students during the web-learning time, in order to quickly identify any students that would need more help or support and to avoid drop-outs.
- In order to really achieve an international coverage of tropical animal health and to train international specialists, focus in the MSTAH programme on countries and diseases outside Southern part of Africa as well.
- Focus on the level of English theses are written in. Have the first report students write during the semester be checked with an official language institute and give feedback early on. Include one class on academic writing at the beginning of the semester.

Generic quality standard 3 – Outcome Level Achieved

- Develop rubrics for all courses of the MPH programme, in order to limit variation in evaluation standards resulting from differential interpretations. Training sessions on how to assess and evaluate would put assessors on a level playing field and ensure a standard is used.
- In order to have a standardised evaluation system of the theses In the new MSTAH programme and to insure an equivalent level of diploma in ITM and UP prepare a joint document describing the way the jury should be organised and the criteria used for scoring.
- Consider developing robust impact parameters (for internal reflection and for sharing with stakeholders) that demonstrate the value of the programmes in careers of alumni, policy impact on countries in LMIC, and knock on effects, including building community and network strength for advocacy and knowledge uptake. The United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) Research Programme

Consortium (RPC) projects have a robust template for such assessment, which could be used as a reference.

Generic quality standard 4 - Structure and Organisation of Internal Quality Assurance

- Pay attention to the system of quality assurance MSTAH in transition to a new master. Standardise the internal quality assurance system in ITM and UP. Construct together with UP a clear framework. Outline who is responsible for what and define clear criteria.
- The panel wishes to express its appreciation for the initiatives that are and will be taken to implement its suggestions. These include – based on the reflections during the first feedback round – for example an initiative that has been developed for the master students to get formal feedback on their level and academic use of English and the further development of a framework for quality assurance with mutual responsibilities taking into account the academic regulations and quality assurance procedures of both (UP and ITM) institutions.

APPENDIX

Curricula vitae of
the members of
the assessment panel

Prof. dr. Gerda Croiset studied medicin (MD in 1995) and biology (MSc cum laude in 1989) at Utrecht University (UU). She did research in the field of neuroscience and immunology and completed her PhD in 1989 at the Rudolf Magnus Institute for Neurosciences (UU). In 2002 she was appointed as Associate Professor of Medical Pharmacology at the Rudolph Magnus Institute for Neurosciences of the University Medical Center Utrecht. She also coordinated the development and implementation of two educational programmes: the international research master titled 'Neuroscience and Cognition' and a 4 year joint MD-PhD degree programme, the Selective Utrecht Medical Masters (SUMMA). She was appointed in 2006 as Professor of Medical Education at Utrecht University and in addition in 2007 as the Educational Director for Health Care Sciences which included the Master of Science programmes in nursing, physical therapy and speech therapy. In 2007, Gerda Croiset was also appointed as the Chairperson of the Educational Advisory Committee of the Board of Directors at Utrecht University. In 2009 she moved to the VU University Medical Centre in Amsterdam, where she became director of VUmc School of Medical Sciences which included the Bachelor of Science programme in Medicine, and the Master of Science programmes in Medicin, Oncology, Cardiovascular Research and Epidemiology. She does research of medical education and heads a group of one assistant professor and six PhD students. Since 2015 she is the chairmen of the Dutch committee of medical education directors.

Dr Flavie Goutard is a veterinarian specialised in applied epidemiology. She worked as a technical assistant for the French Cooperation in Namibia, where she spent 5 years (200-2005) and developed an animal surveillance network in the Northern provinces. She did her Master degree in Epidemiology and Public health, by long distance with the Royal veterinary college, in London. She is now working for CIRAD since 2005 within the research unit AGIRs. She has 15 years of experience in the field of infectious diseases epidemiology in tropical countries, working mainly on the development of adapted surveillance and control strategies for animal diseases in rural settings. She worked as an international consultant for the FAO and OIE in the development of training course in epidemiology. Her recent research focus on participatory epidemiology, evaluation of surveillance, risk assessment and on the ways to improve zoonotic diseases detection with risk-based methodology. She received her PhD in Public Health Security in 2015 with the CNAM, Paris. She is actually adjunct professor at Kasetsart University, Bangkok, Thailand, coordinating a new Master Program in One Health, InterRisk and coordinating the CIRAD research platform GREASE.

Dr Kabir Sheikh, Senior Research Scientist and Associate Professor at the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), New Delhi, is a field-leading global health practitioner and health policy and systems researcher. He is a public health physician with a Masters in Public Health and a PhD in Health Policy from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. At PHFI, Dr Sheikh directs the Health Governance Hub, a programme of research on diverse themes including the health workforce, community participation and decentralisation, health regulation and stewardship, primary health care, access to medicines, and universal health coverage, with research collaborations spanning across six continents. He also directs the WHO nodal centres for Health Policy and Systems Research and Implementation Research at PHFI.

Through a career of 15 years, Dr Sheikh has extensively engaged in building the global field of health policy and systems research (HPSR) – through research leadership, authorship of signal field-building publications, and various roles supporting and convening key knowledge translation initiatives and capacity and community building initiatives in different settings globally. His contributions to the HPSR field have ranged from advancing the question-driven, socially constructed and change-oriented character of the field, to innovating with social science approaches in the study of health policy implementation processes and health systems improvements and reforms in low and middle-income countries, to promoting norms for global HPSR practice as a silo-breaking enterprise spanning the boundaries of formal research, policy and field practice.

Dr Sheikh is Vice Chair of Health Systems Global, the first international membership organization dedicated to promoting Health Systems Research and knowledge translation. He is Honorary Senior Lecturer at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Asian Century Visiting Fellow at the University of Melbourne, and Visiting Professor at BRAC University Dhaka. He has been a Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio scholar-in-residence (2011) and Aga Khan Foundation International Scholar (2003–06). Dr Sheikh is health systems editor of the journal Health Policy & Planning, and an editorial board member of BMJ Global Health and Health Policy & Planning. He has authored numerous widely cited publications on health systems strengthening and health systems research. In 2011, he led the technical team (citizen and private sector participation) for the Government of India commissioned Expert Group recommendations on Universal Health Coverage.

Prof. dr. John Owusu Gyapong, Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery at the University of Science and Technology, Ghana, MSc. Public Health in Developing Countries, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of London, England and Ph.D Public Health Epidemiology, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of London, England. His main area of research is infectious disease epidemiology, especially lymphatic filariasis and other neglected tropical disease and malaria. He has been involved in several large scale field epidemiological trials in Ghana including the Ghana on Vitamin A Supplementation, Malaria intervention studies and Social and economic impact of lymphatic filariasis. For over 10 years he was Director for Research and Development of the Ghana Health Service where he was responsible for health systems research.
Before assuming responsibility as Pro-Vice Chancellor he was the Vice-Dean and Professor in Epidemiology and Disease Control at the School of Public Health of the University of Ghana, and an Adjunct Professor of International Health at the Georgetown University in Washington. He serves on several international research review committees and boards. He is Fellow of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene and the Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Ms. Shanna Boodhoo earned an Advanced MSc in Development Evaluation and Management from the Institute of Development Policy and Management (IOB) at the University of Antwerp in January 2016. Her specialization was on National Institutions, Poverty Reduction Strategies and Aid, focusing on the national Monitoring and Evaluation strategy of her home country (Guyana) specific to its extractive industry. Before completing this master she received a BSc in Sociology (distinction) from the University of Guyana. Professionally, she is a social development researcher with five years' experience conducting various types of research for international aid agencies and local governments. Prior to the evaluation of ITM, she has experience representing student interests in her capacity as elected student committee representative during her recently completed master programme.