



Higher Education Policy

Higher education and research are regarded as two of the cornerstones of modern society. Worldwide politicians and policy makers recognize the emerging knowledge of society's growing dependence on knowledge production and transfer. While the stakes are high, research and higher education face serious problems that require smart solutions and intelligent social engineering. The master track Higher Education Policy will prepare students to deal with these challenges by providing in-depth knowledge on the key issues and processes in higher education today. This master track builds on theories, concepts, ideas and practices from public administration in general and higher education and research studies in particular. It anticipates the growing need for leaders, managers, policy analysts and consultants trained to contribute to the key role of higher education and research in the knowledge society.

The master track Higher Education Policy offers an excellent opportunity for students to apply public administration knowledge to a highly relevant, challenging and fascinating public domain: higher education and research. It is aimed at:

- developing understanding of key concepts in the public administration and the higher education and research literature as well as in the field of professional practice;
- increasing critical awareness, drawing on a range of theoretical and practice-based perspectives and developing analytical and problem solving skills with respect to modern systems of governance, policy making processes and organizational management;
- preparing students for an academic or professional administrative career at local, national or international organizations such as universities, consultancy firms, ministries, national agencies and international institutions (e.g. European Commission, OECD or UNESCO).

Programme structure

Higher Education Policy is one of the tracks within the Public Administration Master's degree programme. The one-year PA Master's degree programme (in total 60 European Credits) is divided into four quarters. All courses are taught in English. The first quarter is devoted to

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key themes in the field of public administration. It provides a general multidisciplinary overview through three joint courses that are mandatory for all Public Administration master students. The courses in this first quarter are 'Comparative Public Governance', 'Styles of Policy Analysis' and 'Public Management' each comprising 5 ECTS.

The second quarter consists of three courses on governance, management and policy analysis in the field of higher education and research. Building on theories from the social sciences, and Public Administration in particular, students will be introduced to the world of higher education with its own institutions, logics and realities. The three courses address higher education governance, and higher education policies and instruments. One of the leading questions is 'What are the policy goals and instruments that governments use in an attempt to steer higher education systems effectively in modern governance contexts?' Students will also be trained in applying their theoretical and analytical knowledge in a practice-oriented assignment. With respect to a particular higher education policy topic, this assignment will focus on problem diagnosis, development of policy solutions and formulating substantive policy advice.

Master's thesis

The third and fourth quarter are mainly devoted to the master's thesis (25 EC). In order to prepare adequately for the master's thesis all Public Administration masters students will follow a special joint course in social science methodology (5 EC). The master's thesis consists of a high-level policy-based research project, in which students apply their theoretical, conceptual and methodological expertise of Public Administration to a subject in the field of higher education and research. If possible, students will form one or more groups that meet frequently to discuss and monitor each other's progress. In combination with these group sessions special classes will be organized in this period providing the student with additional knowledge on issues jointly selected by the students and lecturers.

Career perspectives

Students will be awarded a masters degree in Public Administration from the University of Twente. The career opportunities for graduates from Public Administration specialized in higher education and research policies are promising. The master's degree programme provides a strong base for further careers in the public domain in general and in higher education policy and management more specifically.

There is a growing need for leaders, managers, policy analysts and consultants trained to contribute to the key role of higher education and research in the knowledge society. International organizations such as the European Commission, OECD and UNESCO; national Ministries, agencies and foundations; and regional and local governments are increasingly seeking expertise in the fields of higher education and research. Universities, other higher education providers and research organizations look for professional staff who can contribute to the innovative capacities of their organization. Private companies are increasingly entering the field of higher education and research consultancy. The dynamics in the higher education and research domain itself also create great opportunities for young people interested in an academic career – working with staff provides an excellent foundation for this.

Additional information

The Public Administration (PA) Master's degree programme is a dynamic programme. Regularly consult our website www.graduate.utwente.nl for the latest developments. The website also presents information on such aspects as: tracks, courses, admission requirements and registration.

If you have specific questions regarding this track of the PA Master's degree programme, please contact the PA programme information desk by e-mail at master@utwente.nl or by phone on +31 (0)53 489 5489. You are also welcome to contact the HEP education coordinator, dr. Harry de Boer: h.f.deboer@utwente.nl, tel. + 31 53 489 3263.

