# Internationalisation at Utrecht University: The integration of students within their master's programmes

Tom Gaut (6489184)

Supervisor: Amy Nivette

# Contents

1

## Abstract

The purpose of this research is to explore the impact of internationalisation within universities in the Netherlands by analysing the factors which influence student's integration on their master's programmes at Utrecht University, and to offer relevant policy advice based on these findings. This has been done in light of reports that international students may experience lower levels of integration on their programmes than domestic students which could have a negative impact on their studies and life in a new country. This has been analysed in a quantitative study by means of a questionnaire sent to master's students on programmes within the Faculty of Social Sciences at Utrecht University. The questionnaire finds no difference in the level of integration reported by domestic and international students and notes key predictors of academic and social integration, namely the student's English ability, the percentage of international students on the course and the average contact students have with other students. The paper concludes by offering policy advice that can help to facilitate the integration of students onto their master's programmes, such as by organising social events alongside the programme and ensuring that the quality of English spoken on courses is of a good standard.

# Introduction

Within higher education across the globe, a significant change in attitude and policy towards a more international university environment can be seen. Globalisation has made travel cheaper and easier than ever before, the internet allows for long distance ties to be maintained, and English has quickly become the international business language; all of this increased mobility leading to a transformation in societies across the globe. Such an increase in mobility allows for more opportunities for academics and students to work internationally, as well as partnerships between educational institutions to be fostered (see de Wit, 2011; Knight, 2004).

Universities in multiple countries have attempted to take advantage of the increased mobility of staff and students by implementing institutional policy to directly address and promote internationalisation, with the hope of improving the institution and gaining from the perceived benefits of internationalisation (Gao, 2014). These benefits are seen to be related to two themes: improving the academic quality of the university - whether it be through sourcing higher quality students from across the globe or improving learning by offering a multicultural experience (Castro *et al.*, 2016) – or, more cynically, by increasing universities' funding through the increased tuition charged to international students (Healey, 2008).  With regard to the economic benefit, there is also a debate within the Netherlands as to whether or not universities are using international students to compensate for their declining student numbers (Huygen, 2018).

### Societal Relevance

Within the Dutch context, internationalisation has been predominantly carried out through the use of English-medium teaching and the promotion of study opportunities abroad for students (Becker, 2018). Since 2008, the process of offering English taught courses has been implemented within all the major research universities in the Netherlands, and legislation has been introduced to enable these institutions to encourage international development (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, 2008). In a 2018 report, The Association of Dutch Universities states that internationalisation is still a key contributor to its educational goals, namely through the processes of 'socialisation, personality development and qualification' (VSNU & Vereniging Hogescholen, 2018:4).

The influence of English-medium teaching on universities has been significant, as research by the Volkskrant showed that in 2016 less than 30% of master's courses were taught in Dutch (Bouma, 2016). This has been met with some criticism, as shown by MPs within the *TweedeKamer* calling for better clarification of their policy regarding language code of conduct (Huygen, 2019). The wider public debate is centred around the impact of the large increase in international student numbers since policy was implemented in 2008, with student numbers rising from 17,704 students in 2008 to 48,672 students in 2017 (Dutch Education Executive Agency, 2018). Due to this large increase, there have been concerns raised over practical problems such as housing and the integration of international students into the university environment; whether or not the increased competition for Dutch students is fair; and whether the standard of English spoken by lecturers who run the courses is adequate (van Leeuwen, 2017).

### Scientific Relevance

This research aims to contribute to the existing scientific literature on internationalisation through an analysis of the factors that contribute to the integration of master's students at Utrecht University. This study will consider both domestic and international students in order to assess whether there are differences between the two groups, as oftentimes previous studies have focused upon the perspective of the international student. It is important to note that this research is specific to students studying in a country where the national language is not English. Therefore, many of the issues raised may only be relevant to universities where this is the case.

Due to the nature of integration requiring a minority group and a majority group, this research will aim to look at both the international and domestic perspective. Using both perspectives will allow for a more complete understanding of the mechanisms at play. Furthermore, it is important to note that neither a domestic student body nor an international student body are homogeneous. Through the understanding that these two overarching groups consist of a multitude of different students with differing experiences and qualities, an understanding of the issues faced by certain demographics may help to tailor policy advice to deal with a specific subgroup.

## Research Questions

This thesis will attempt to offer practical policy suggestions to the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences within Utrecht University by means of a quantitative survey understanding the factors involved in the integration of its students. The issue of integration is at the heart of the discussion on internationalisation, helping to stimulate a sense of belonging and enable the formation of an international community. Many of the issues faced by the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences appear to be related to this issue of integration, whether it is related to how to incorporate an international perspective into the curriculum; how to foster a sense of community within the classroom setting; or how to help international students integrate socially into the university environment.

Based upon the theme of building an international community for students, the first explorative research question follows, one which focuses upon the integration of students into English-taught master's courses:

*What are the issues regarding the integration of international and domestic students that develop when master's programmes at Utrecht University are taught in English?*

Building upon the initial research question, an explanatory research question to understand the mechanisms behind the integration of students into their courses can be produced:

*What are the factors that influence the integration of both domestic and international students into Utrecht University and the master's programmes?*

Finally, once the underlying mechanisms influencing the integration of students have been dealt with, policy advice can then be created, supported by these results. This leads to the final research question:

*How can Utrecht University help to better facilitate the integration of students into their studies at university?*

## Understanding Internationalisation

Due to the subject of internationalisation being broad, it is difficult to define exactly what the process is and what it entails (Knight, 2004; Guo and Chase, 2011). The most encompassing definition of internationalisation, however, comes from Knight (2003) who argues that internationalisation is 'the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education' (Knight, 2003:2). Therefore, internationalisation can apply to a number of actors working within the university environment, such as students, teachers or management staff. Each actor is likely to have different assumptions about what an international dimension into their education is, allowing for a broad range of ideas about what constitutes as internationalisation. For a student, this is likely to involve the inclusion of new perspectives and learning into their curriculum, whereas for a researcher it might be used to stimulate partnerships and new research opportunities. In recent years, the notion of internationalisation 'at home' (Knight, 2013:85) has been developed to differentiate between elements of teaching, research and services that are located on the primary university campus, and those that are done externally.

Furthermore, by this definition, internationalisation is not a single activity or task that can be achieved, but instead an ongoing process that occurs throughout each tier of the university. It is viewed by many universities across the world as an all-encompassing approach to education (Taylor, 2004). Some critics have pointed out that since earlier definitions of internationalisation do not explicitly state a goal, it then becomes a goal in itself (van der Wende, 1997). As argued by de Wit (2011), internationalisation should not be seen as a goal in and of itself, but rather a process to help assist in furthering other goals of the university - whether this be improving the quality of the education or preparing students for the labour market after their graduation. Social and intercultural skills are becoming more necessary for one to function effectively within the workplace, with internationalisation becoming then a useful tool that universities can use to offer students a safe place to practice these skills (Zha, 2003; Castro *et al*, 2016).

It is also important not to confuse internationalisation with globalisation as although they might appear similar, they are defined as separate processes. Globalisation has been argued to have changed our perceptions of time and space, stimulate cultural interactions and flows and to have led to growing interconnectedness among societies (Maringe, 2009). Knight (2004) posits that it is defined by 'the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values,

[and] ideas… across borders' (Knight, 2004:8). Internationalisation is then a process that is influenced by globalisation. If internationalisation is a tool that universities use, globalisation should be seen as an environmental factor that influences the decisions a university might make.

### *A framework for internationalisation policy*

There have been a number of methods for internationalisation that universities use identified within the literature. Zha (2003) puts forward four approaches that a university can utilise to help implement internationalisation. These consist of the *activity approach*, the most common approach, which focuses on factors such as a curriculum for international students, exchange, administrative networks and registering more international students; the *competency approach* that aims to develop the competencies of students and staff; the *ethos approach* that focuses on developing the climate or culture of the university to support an international perspective; and finally the *process approach* which means altering the curriculum to involve 'an international/intercultural dimension into teaching, research and service' (Zha, 2003:251). It is important to note that these approaches are all equal in their validity and are not mutually exclusive in their implementation.

Knight (2004) builds upon the idea of the internationalisation approaches by categorising the reasons why universities implement the process. The four rationales offered for why a university may wish to undergo the process of internationalisation are for social/cultural reasons, political reasons, academic reasons and economic reason (Knight, 2004:21). These rationales highlight the significance that universities have on the wider society as many of them have a far-reaching impact beyond the borders of the university campus, such as the development of a national cultural identity or helping to support the labour market. The importance of placing the institution in its national context is therefore necessary when developing a framework for internationalisation. The role of universities should not be understated, with their role being to 'generate and curate knowledge, connect places to the wider world, attract staff and students, provide leadership and strategic support and offer a window to the world' (Ransom, 2018:666).

Knight's (2004) framework has been developed further by Gao (2015) who has identified a number of strategies for policy makers to use when implementing internationalisation. At the institutional level, these are separated into programme-based strategies (the content of what

the university offers) and organisation-based strategies (the administrative/support network within the university) (Gao, 2015:362). The strategies are then categorised further into strategies aimed at the *management* of the university, such as human resources or the administrative systems in place; the *academic* side of the university, which involves collaborations with other universities, exchanges and the international students and staff recruitment; and the *service* side of the university, targeted at the infrastructure, academic support, welfare or accommodation (Gao, 2015:362).

There have been a number of studies focusing on the motives and challenges that universities face with implementing internationalisation (Castro *et al*, 2016; Taylor, 2004; Knight, 2013; Maringe, 2009; Maringe and Gibbs, 2008). For example, Maringe and Gibbs (2008) find 8 motives for universities to implement internationalisation policy, namely:

- For income generation;
- To provide a better experience for students and staff;
- To offer an international dimension to teaching and research;
- To raise the status of the institution;
- To improve the quality of the education offered;
- To prepare students for a career in an international environment;
- To maintain international relations with other universities and institutions outside the home country;
- To export educational services and products;
- And to achieve international standards and ensure that the university is internationally competitive.

These motives can be situated within the framework offered by Knight (2004), for example income generation and exporting educational services and products would fit within the economic rationale. Taylor (2004) argues that the success of these factors rests upon four key factors, notably: effective leadership within the university; a strong link to the goals for education and research; more comprehensive strategies for implementing internationalisation; and ensuring that there is a link between internationalisation and quality assurance.

Overall, these frameworks highlight the complex process of undertaking internationalisation and shed light on why there is such a debate over the motives of the universities in the Netherlands behind implementing internationalisation. Many of the motives highlighted by Maringe and Gibbs (2008) are not mutually exclusive, such that bringing more international

students could both provide an income and improve the quality of the educational institution. It is therefore more important for policy to focus on how this process is being conducted and ensuring that it is done in a way that is not detrimental to the quality of services on offer. This, combined with the policy approaches put forward by Zha (2003), shows that for in order for internationalisation to be effective across the board, policy should not be restricted to one aspect of internationalisation. Rather, it is likely that individual policy changes will influence many aspects of such a process.

## Internationalisation for Utrecht University

Utrecht University is a WO-university located within the province of Utrecht in the Netherlands, with a student population of over 30,000 and staff population of 6,700 (Utrecht University, 2019a). In total it offers 49 bachelor's programmes, and 147 master's programmes, with the Times Higher Education ranking it within the top 100 universities in the world (Times Higher Education, 2019). The university is split up into seven faculties, which are then separated into departments based on a specific field of science.

In 2018, Utrecht University published a report from the Internationalisation Taskforce that contains an analysis of the current goals and challenges that the university faces. The motivation behind internationalising within the university shares common themes with the motives studied from other universities offered by Maringe and Gibbs (2008). These targets include creating an 'appropriate academic and intellectual climate', 'fostering [students] development as responsible citizens' and stressing the importance of internationalisation for the quality of the education and research offered (Utrecht University, 2018:1). Using Knight's (2004) framework, the document also frames the argument for internationalisation from a social/cultural and academic standpoint, stressing explicitly that there is no economic motive behind internationalisation. In order to achieve these targets, the document highlights the desire to create an 'inclusive and diverse university' (Utrecht University, 2018:2), however the report highlights issues in doing so, notably problems with housing students, the lack of grants for outgoing students, the lack of resources available to staff and a lack of communication between the university faculties.

This research will focus on the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences (FSBS) within Utrecht University. The faculty is structured such that the Faculty Board and Council

manages twelve departments in total, separated into Education & Pedagogy, Social Sciences and Psychology. Within each of these are the undergraduate school (bachelor's), the graduate school (master's and PhD programmes) and the research institute.

The faculty also shares the same goals as the university, as seen within the *Faculty Strategic Plan for 2017-2020* (Utrecht University, 2017). The document outlines the desire for internationalisation to help improve the learning of students within the department, with an emphasis on the quality of the education offered to students (Utrecht University 2017). One ambition of note is through the creation of an 'international classroom' (Utrecht University, 2017:18), achieved through offering an increased number of international master's programmes and promoting student exchange within the faculty. The faculty defines an international master's programme as one that should be 'internationally accessible' (Utrecht University, 2017:21), which means offering every master's course in English to allow international students to study at the university. This is a standpoint also taken by other universities within the Netherlands as Dutch is not commonly spoken around the world, making it difficult for international students to study if the courses are not in English. English has also become the *lingua franca* of the academic world, with most academic literature being available in English and therefore a necessary skill for individuals who wish to enter academia. This standpoint on the importance of English is shown in Utrecht University policy (Utrecht University, 2016). Due to this policy there are, in 2019, 12 academic master's and 7 research master's on offer that are taught in English within the FSBS at Utrecht University (Oudelaar, 2018).

### *Master's Programmes within the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences*

Within the FSBS faculty there is a distinction between the research master's programmes and the academic master's programmes. The research masters have been running since 2005 and consist of two-year courses, with a smaller number of students being allowed onto these programmes than the academic masters. The academic master's, however, last one year and have a higher student cap, with some master's having more than 100 students. In total, there were 105 new students enrolled in the research master's programmes in 2018/2019, in addition to the 108 enrolled the previous year (Ouderlaar, 2018). This is in comparison to the one-year master's programmes which had in total 902 new students enrolled across all

courses in 2018/2019 (Ouderlaar, 2018). Please see *table.2* and *table.3* for a breakdown of all the master's programmes.

*Table.2 Student numbers for the academic master's programmes 2018/2019*

| Programme | Number of domestic students | Number of international students (% rounded) | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Applied Cognitive Psychology*** | 43 | 6 (12%) | 49 |
| Clinical Psychology** | 64 | 38 (37%) | 102 |
| Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*** | 50 | 13 (20%) | 63 |
| Cultural Anthropology: Sustainable Citizenship* | 32 | 9 (21%) | 41 |
| Clinical Child, Family and Education Studies* | 166 | 4 (2%) | 170 |
| Educational Sciences*** | 101 | 3 (3%) | 104 |
| Neuropsychology*** | 54 | 2 (4%) | 56 |
| Sociology: Contemporary Social Problems* | 49 | 6 (11%) | 55 |
| Social, Health and Organisation Psychology** | 77 | 32 (29%) | 109 |
| Social Policy and Public Health* | 64 | 6 (9%) | 70 |
| Youth Education and Society* | 48 | 6 (11%) | 54 |
| Youth Studies** | 28 | 1 (3%) | 29 |

*Source:* Oudelaar, 2018

*Note:* Indicates year of switch to English *2016-2017 **2017-2018 ***2018-2019

*Table.3 Student numbers for the research master's programmes 2018/2019*

| Programme | Number of domestic students | Number of international students (% rounded) | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cultural Anthropology: Sociocultural Transformation | 10 | 7 (41%) | 17 |
| Development and Socialisation in Childhood and Adolescence | 11 | 3 (21%) | 14 |
| Educational Sciences: Learning in Education | 9 | 3 (25%) | 12 |
| Methodology and Statistics for the Behavioural, Biomedical and Social Sciences | 12 | 7 (37%) | 19 |

| Migration, Ethnic Relations and Multiculturalism | 9 | 6 (40%) | 15 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Social & Health Psychology | 8 | 3 (38%) | 11 |
| Sociology and Social Research | 8 | 9 (53%) | 17 |

*Source:* Oudelaar, 2018

Whilst the research master programmes have always been taught in English, the academic master's programmes have shifted from Dutch-medium teaching to English-medium teaching, with all of the programmes now being taught in English. The switch to English medium teaching and the increase in international students has, however, brought with it some challenges that the university needs to deal with. From informal conversations with staff, policy documents and reports from the Student Assessor, the university highlights a number of challenges to the integration of students on their programmes at university, with sources citing problems such as struggling to find an internship, international and domestic students not mixing and differences in ability between such a diverse mix of students. This is an issue for internationalisation aims as a lack of communication between international and domestic students undermines the benefits that internationalisation may bring to the classroom. Castro *et al* (2016) argue that the 'first-hand experience of otherness' (2016:429) is of benefit to students in promoting an intercultural dialogue and highlight the importance of communication for cultural competency building, neither of which can occur without communication between international and domestic students. The added value that internationalisation brings to the classroom is then unrecognised at the student level. Therefore, it is useful to understand the underlying mechanisms that support students' integration onto their master's programmes at Utrecht University.

## The significance of integration

The problem of a lack of integration for international students on their courses has been documented at a number of other universities (Castro *et al*, 2016; Young, 2014; Guo and Chase, 2011; O'Connor, 2018). Some of the problems that international students experience might include a 'culture shock' (Guo and Chase, 2011:313), difficulties in sharing living arrangements with domestic students (O'Connor, 2018) and difficulty engaging and

interacting with domestic students (Kücking, 2011), with part of this issue of engaging being argued to be related to greeting students (Spencer-Oatey, 2018).

Integration is by no means a one-sided problem and also relies on the support of the domestic student body to engage with the international students. The importance of intercultural competencies has been noted, with 'overwhelmingly positive learning experiences' (Guo and Chase, 2011:314) being reported in cases where there is an emphasis on teaching students about intercultural differences. For example, The Barnga game developed by Thiagarajan (2006) has been shown to help in raising awareness of students' cultural differences (Fowler and Pusch, 2010). Whether or not there is a culture of teaching domestic students' intercultural differences are therefore likely to have an impact on the success of international students' integration into their university programmes. Furthermore, Bond (2003) highlights the importance of a climate of cooperation, communication and an active effort made in getting to know students. This requirement would require work from both the domestic and international students to achieve, meaning it is therefore important to consider the experiences of both domestic and international students when researching this topic.

The issue of integration is complex, and its success is often dependent on the institutional structures in place. For example, the existence of student societies or clubs has been noted to help improve integration by offering international students a platform to meet new individuals (Young, 2014). The use of living arrangements has also been shown to influence students' experiences of integration, albeit negatively. In a study on an Irish university, O'Connor (2018) found that shared living arrangements often created an additional tension between domestic and international students due to the intimacy of the space shared. Castro *et al* (2016) also note that in many cases the institutions do not offer international and domestic students the opportunity to mix, nor do they offer a support network for students beyond the initial orientation and introductions to the university. Additionally, Harrison and Peacock (2010) note that there is 'little spontaneous mixing between [international and domestic students] where this is not actively managed' (2010:880), making active intervention by the university almost necessary in order to facilitate greater levels of integration. Therefore, the structure and support networks within the university are fundamental to understanding how the process of integration within the university occurs.

### *Distinguishing between academic and social integration*

For the purposes of this study, there has been a distinction made between *academic* integration and *social* integration. This is based on the distinction made by previous studies on the same themes (Kücking, 2011; Stadtfeld *et al*, 2019; Nevill and Rhodes, 2004; Rienties *et al*, 2011) and the distinction made in the SACQ student adaptation to college questionnaire developed by Baker and Siryk (1999).

The definition of social integration used within this research comes from Redmond and Bunyi (1993) and is defined as 'the degree to which an individual is able to assimilate into the social or relational network of a given culture' (1993:240). This is developed by Spencer-Oatey (2018) who defines social integration as 'a process through which individuals help develop and increasingly exercise capacities for interpersonal connectedness and citizenship (2018:302). Therefore, social integration depends on whether the student is able to create and sustain social connections within the university environment. These connections may be in the form of friendship networks, study groups within their programme or access extra-curricular activities on offer at the university. The key aim of social integration in this context is then offering students the ability to participate in the student culture.

Academic integration in this context refers to the ability of students to 'persist in their study in order to graduate' (Rienties *et al*, 2011:687). Examples of this within the context of Utrecht University is the ability for students to complete their work to a satisfactory level, motivate themselves to work and, due to many master's programmes requiring the completion of an internship, finding and completing a suitable internship.

Based on these definitions of integration, the current issues faced by the master's programmes at Utrecht University have been categorised (see *table.4*). Only the issues relating to the integration of students have been extracted. Issues faced by researchers, lecturers and support staff have been ignored unless they are related to the integration of students on their master's programmes. These issues have been drawn from faculty documents and previous research made available as part of an internship within the department. The documents include lunch discussions with master's coordinators, focus group discussions with students on the problems they face, and discussions with the Student Assessor within the department.

*Table.4 Categorisations and explanations of current issues within an integration framework*

| | Examples of academic and social integration: | Current problems seen for academic or social integration: |
|---|---|---|
| **Social Integration** | Are students able to…?<br><br>- Have a satisfying social life?<br>- Have satisfying interactions with others on their course?<br>- Maintain family ties whilst studying?<br>- Get involved in university social activities? | Not enough 'openness' with Dutch students.<br><br>In seminars, domestic and international students don't often work together.<br><br>Loneliness recorded for international students. |
| **Academic Integration** | Are students able to…?<br><br>- Complete work to a satisfactory level?<br>- Develop their skills during the course?<br>- Cope with the required workload?<br>- Motivate themselves to work?<br>- Finance their studies?<br>- Find a house?<br>- Gain access to areas for their study?<br>- Access non-study related support if they need it? | Troubles in finding internships.<br><br>Disparity in the competencies of students that allow them to complete the course.<br><br>Concerns that international students overcompensate with their workload.<br><br>International students may be over dependent on their lecturers.<br><br>Concern that English isn't enforced on courses.<br><br>Difficulty for international students in finding suitable housing.<br><br>Problems with the graduation ceremony since international students may have already left, and if conducted in English this may exclude some parents who do not speak the language. |

*Sources:* from discussions with staff and students within the faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, notes from 'Internationalisation Lunches' and focus groups with students by the Student

Assessor Merlijn Zuiderwijk.


## Factors influencing integration

The first hypothesis stems from the aforementioned literature on student integration into their university programmes. Given the difficulties that international students face in adjusting to their master's courses (as seen in *table.4)* it is likely then that international students will have lower levels of academic and social integration onto their master's programmes at Utrecht University. An explanation for this may be found in cultural distance theory. Cultural distance theory argues that the 'wider society exerts a greater or lesser degree of influence on how the individual views the world and the place of that society in reference to others' (Harrison and Peacock, 2010:881), which is therefore likely to create a disparity between international and domestic students as the cultural environment within which they have grown up in is at least somewhat different. When defining culture, Harrison and Peacock (2010) offer the definition of a 'collection of socially-learned rules, norms, values and shared meanings' (2010:881). The differences in culture between international and domestic students can be situated in terms of Bourdieu's (1986) theory on cultural capital, as domestic students who have grown up within the Netherlands will have a greater understanding of the norms and values in place, not only within the university environment, but also outside in the wider society. This may be seen within the classroom through the study expectations of students, or in terms of the greetings used when saying hello to other students (see Spencer-Oatey, 2018) used in everyday social situations. For example, Spencer-Oatey (2018) found that students from China found the greetings used by British students confusing at first, with these students often avoiding interaction with British students so as not to feel awkward. If students are avoiding social interaction due to something as essential as greeting another student, it could be seen that students then avoid other situations entirely.

Additionally, the problems faced by international students could be explained through integrated threat theory, a framework for analysing the relations between a minority group (international students/outgroup) and a majority group (domestic students/ingroup). This theory contains four assumptions that ingroup members have about interaction with the outgroup, namely: *realistic threats* about their quality of life or safety; *symbolic threats* where there are concerns about the integrity of the existing culture or position in society; *intergroup anxiety* through fears around being able to communicate effectively; and *negative*

*stereotyping* which relate to pre-existing assumptions and expectations of the outgroup (Harrison and Peacock, 2010). The outcome of these assumptions may be to create a distance between international students and domestic students and problems in communication between the two. This is likely therefore to mean that international students have a difficult time integrating socially into their master's courses where there are a majority of domestic students, due to it being difficult to build up a social network on their master's programme. These factors lead to the first hypothesis, namely: *(H1) Domestic students have greater levels of academic and social integration than international students.*

The two theories, cultural distance theory and integrated threat theory, may together explain some of the difference in integration between international and domestic students. For example, where there is a larger cultural distance between two students, it may be found that there are greater levels of intergroup anxiety or negative stereotyping. It may be possible that the greater cultural distance exacerbates any existing negative stereotypes, or the stereotypes could exist because of the cultural distance. Therefore, it may be difficult to suggest which theory might explain any differences in the integration of domestic and international students. These processes may work hand in hand to explain any difference in integration between the two groups and so it may be difficult to distinguish between the effects of both.

Furthermore, research has shown that there is a correlation between a student's level of academic integration with their level of social integration. Stadtfeld *et al* (2019) analysed the influence of three types of social networks (positive interaction, friendships and group study) and found that there was a positive relationship between the student's social integration and their academic integration. They hypothesised that this is largely due to students being able to rely on one another for support during the year and share useful information amongst themselves. From this, we can construct the following hypothesis: *H2: The higher an individual's level of social integration, the higher their level of academic integration.*

Another major factor in integration across borders is the development of cultural competencies over time by individuals. Cultural competencies can be defined as 'the *effective* and *appropriate* behaviour and communication in intercultural situations' (Deardroff, 2006:242). When considering factors such as students' cultural competencies Spencer-Oatey (2018) highlights the fact that developing cultural competencies is an iterative process and is something that develops over time through interaction with members of an outgroup. This is indicative of Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory which argues that contact with the

outgroup helps to reduce ingroup prejudices. In this, Allport (1954) sets out a number of requirements for intergroup contact to be beneficial, namely: an equal status between the ingroup and outgroup; an egalitarian culture in the social environment; shared goals for ingroup and outgroup members; and the opportunity for positive interaction between the groups. Within the master's courses, these criteria are likely to be fulfilled as the students are all on the same courses, working towards the same goals, and, in the case of group work, working on the same tasks. This notion also correlates with Bond's (2003) arguments for a positive climate within the classroom to be created to gain the benefits of internationalisation. This process of contact also applies outside the classroom environment if international and domestic students have contact at student societies and events on the campus. In a large analysis of the literature on intergroup contact theory, Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) found that there is support for intergroup contact theory, and particularly the assumption that a structured programme would reduce prejudice. The existence of a structured programme fits within Allport's (1954) framework as within the classroom all individuals take up the role of 'student', meaning that everyone takes an equal status and the students are all following the same task of learning. When working as a group it may mean that students again share another goal and the forced interaction from group work may help to contribute to this feeling. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be constructed: *H3: The more contact a student has with other students, the greater the levels of academic and social integration of the student.*

It could be argued that the presence of intergroup contact may help to counteract the previous theories on integrated threat and cultural distance, meaning that there may be no difference between domestic and international students when measuring their levels of integration. The influence of intergroup contact on the course may mean that any negative stereotypes or notions of 'threats' are quickly dispelled, helping to create a parity between the levels of integration that international and domestic students report. The development of intercultural competencies is likely to lead to negative stereotypes being dispelled as students learn about one another and a reduction in intergroup anxiety with communication helping to break down the barriers to integration.

Following on, since the introduction of English-medium teaching within the master's programmes the issue of language has been noted within the classroom environment, with students often not feeling comfortable communicating in a language that is not their mother tongue. This ties into the *intergroup anxiety* assumption in integrated threat theory, as

students may be concerned about being able to communicate with international students for fear of causing offence. Language is also considered a form of cultural capital within Bourdieu's (1986) theory and a form of the cultural distance that occurs between international and domestic students. Therefore, it is likely that reducing these differences will lead to greater levels of social integration between domestic and international students. This brings forth the following hypothesis: *H4: The better an international or domestic students' Dutch language ability, the greater their level of social integration.* Moreover, due to the course and all academic literature being in English, would make sense to assume that there is a link between students' English language ability and their level of academic integration. This is similar to the fourth hypothesis where reducing the cultural distance and creating a more equal level in ability may help to stimulate interaction between students and help to develop their cultural competencies. This leads to the fifth hypothesis: *H5: The better a domestic or international students' English language ability, the greater their level of academic and social integration.*

Finally, the sources from the university indicate differences in the level of integration experienced between programmes. This difference may in part be due to the differences in the number of international students within each programme, with percentages varying between 2% and 52% per programme (see *table.2* and *table.3*). The relationship between group size and integration has been noted on a societal level with public attitudes towards migrant populations, however the literature on this in relation to the classroom is small. In a study on attitudes towards migrant populations, Schlueter and Scheepers (2010) found that as outgroup size increased, the larger the perceived threat of the ingroup became. Using integrated threat theory, this would suggest that with a larger body of international students, there are likely to be lower levels of academic and social integration in master's programmes with higher numbers of international students. However, the study also found that the larger immigrant group size helped to stimulate intergroup contact, which based on our earlier hypothesis would mean that academic and social integration should increase with a larger number of international students on a course. Mullen *et al* (1994) found that in order to reduce prejudice among ingroup members, one should attempt to 'structure the interactions so that the outgroup is not in the minority' (1994:263). This would offer additional support to the notion that the larger the number of international students on a programme, the greater the level of social and academic integration on said programme. We are therefore able to construct the following hypothesis: *H6: The larger the body of international students on a*

*programme, the greater the level of social and academic integration of students on said programme.*

## Methodology

In this research, differences between international and domestic students' academic and social integration within their master's courses will be analysed by using data gathered from an online questionnaire at the University of Utrecht. This questionnaire was created specifically for the purpose of this analysis. The questionnaire was created online and sent to all the course co-ordinators of the 19 master's programmes on offer within the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences at Utrecht University, along with a brief introduction paragraph to the questionnaire. This was then shared by the course co-ordinators among their students either through email or through a posting on Blackboard. The survey begins by asking participants for some background information, including age, gender, their programme and language proficiencies, before continuing onto a number of 5-point Likert-scale questions measuring the other factors in the survey. The survey concludes with some open qualitative questions asking for their opinion on the subject and whether they had anything more to add. For their participation, the students were entered into a raffle to win a voucher worth €20.

For to ethical considerations, the students' involvement in the survey was anonymous. The survey began with an introduction paragraph informing the participants of the purpose of the survey, the risks and how the data will be used. The anonymisation of the survey has meant that there is no information from the questionnaire gathered on some details such as the students' country of origin, due to the possibility of the information being used to work out who the student is.

Whilst there were over 200 responses from the questionnaire, many of these were incomplete from the student opening the questionnaire and then not filling in any answers. This sample is from a total population of 1007 students across a total of 14 out of the 19 programmes on offer within the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences; a total response rate of 17.2%. Part of the reason that not all students filled in the questionnaire is likely to do with many students on courses being away from the university at internships during this time period, meaning they are not in regular contact with their professors or other students at the university. The missing values were set as such within the dataset and can be seen in *Table.5*. There are a larger number of missing values from both the language proficiency variables. Although there was a link to the CEFR language framework in the questionnaire, this may have been missed by some students.

*Table.5: Missing data*

|  | N | Missing % |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Academic Integration** | 172 | .6 |
| **Social Integration** | 164 | 5.4 |
| **International Student** | 168 | 3 |
| **Average Contact with other students** | 171 | 1.2 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Proficiency in Dutch Language** | 156 | 10.2 |
| **Proficiency in English Language** | 153 | 12 |
| **% of International Students on Programme** | 172 | .6 |
| **Programme** | 172 | .6 |
| **Female** | 170 | 1.8 |
| **Age** | 167 | 3.6 |

## *Operationalisation*

*Academic and Social Integration:* To construct the variables measuring academic and social integration, a number of Likert-scale questions were adapted that are based on the Students' Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ) (Baker and Siryk, 1999). This was used as a guide for creating the variables as it has been validated in other studies since and is applicable to the European context due to similarities that both the US higher education system and the Dutch higher education system share (Rienties *et al*, 2011). For example, both systems are situated within Western countries where often-times students move away from home and start living on their own.

For social integration the questions asked students about their satisfaction with their social life at university, whether they got on well with other students on their course, whether students had friends they could rely on for support and their feeling of belonging on the course. The responses were on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree'. These variables were tested for reliability using Cronbach's alpha (where $\alpha=.76$) and combined into one variable for social integration by taking a mean of the scores.

In terms of academic integration, there were four variables used in the analysis, namely: how the student felt about their academic performance, their motivation to study, the students' ability to cope with their workload and whether they felt they were learning skills to complete their studies. The responses were on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree'. These variables were again tested for consistency using Cronbach's alpha (where $\alpha=.79$) and combined into one variable called academic integration by taking a mean of the scores. In the questionnaire, there were also two other questions relating to academic integration, namely the student's difficulties in finding an internship and whether they relied on their teacher's network in finding an internship. These have not been included in the variable measuring academic integration for a number of reasons. Firstly, not all students are required to complete an internship and so this would reduce the size of the N for the study, and secondly when included in the consistency tests caused the alpha to decrease significantly.

When looking at the components for academic and social integration, Table.6 and Table.7 show the results from the correlation analysis between the component variables. The results show significant positive correlations between each of the variables within social and academic integration. The variables relevant to the students process of finding an internship has been left out of the analyses due to reasons listed previously.

*Table.6 Correlation results for the academic integration components*

|  | Satisfaction with academic performance | Motivation to complete work | Ability to cope with the workload | Academic skills |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Satisfaction with academic performance** | 1.0 | | | |
| **Motivation to complete work** | .46** | 1.0 | | |
| **Ability to cope with the workload** | .37** | .39** | 1.0 | |
| **Academic skills** | .52** | .45** | .51** | 1.0 |

*p<.05 **p<.01

*Table.7 Correlation results for the social integration components*

|  | Satisfaction with Social Life | Ability to get on well with other students | Friends at university | Feeling of belonging |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Satisfaction with Social Life** | 1.0 | | | |
| **Ability to get on well with other students** | .42** | 1.0 | | |
| **Friends at university** | .59** | .48** | 1.0 | |
| **Feeling of belonging** | .40** | .59** | .46** | 1.0 |

*p<.05 **p<.01

*International or domestic student:* To create this variable, students were asked whether they were considered an international student by the university. For analysis this variable was then turned into a dummy variable (1=International, 0=Domestic). This question was asked in such a way that the questionnaire lines up with what the university itself deems an international master's student, namely anyone who has not completed their bachelor's degree within the Netherlands.

*Average contact:* Within the questionnaire, students were asked two questions on their contact with other students within the university: one about their contact with any other student and another about their contact with (other) international students. These questions is separated into five categories, ranging from 'Less than 5 hours a week' to 'Greater than 25 hours a week', and were recoded into numeric variables for analysis. When analysing the data these two variables are seen to have a high correlation (0.77) and so in the analysis only the question on contact with any other students has been used. Using average contact with any student will also mean that international students' contact with Dutch students is included in the dataset as this is also an important factor in measuring social integration.

*Proficiency in Dutch and English:* For these variables two questions in the dataset the students were asked to state what they felt their language proficiency was based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), a link to the description of which was provided within the survey itself (Council of Europe, 2018). Whilst this is not as accurate as having a language test done for all students, it is the most feasible option given the time frame and large number of participants. Therefore, the fact that the language ability is a self-reported figure should be taken into account, as factors such as confidence could influence this result. This variable ran from 'A1' up to 'C2' and was recoded into a numeric ordinal variable for analysis.

*Percentage of International Students per programme:* This variable was created in SPSS after the completion of the survey using the figures gathered by Oudelaar (2018). These were input as integer values to create the variable for use in the analysis.

*Controls – Female and Age:* The two control variables were created through questions asked in the questionnaire. *Female* was created by making a dummy variable where Female=1 and Male=0. Students were asked for their biological sex rather than gender for the purposes of this analysis. *Age* was created as an integer to create a continuous numeric variable for use in the analysis.


### Data analysis

Firstly, in order to answer *H1 - Domestic students have greater levels of academic and social integration than international students -,* two independent sample t-tests will be used to find out if there is a difference between international and domestic students for academic and social integration.

Secondly, correlation analysis will be used to explore the relationship between academic and social integration, as well as the relationship among the component variables, in order to answer *H2 - The higher an individual's level of social integration, the higher their level of academic integration*.

Thirdly, empty multi-level multivariate regression models will be run for both academic and social integration using the *Programme* as the nested variable. Due to the students studied being clustered in multiple programmes it is therefore important to account for any

differences that may influence integration within the programme. If there is variation between groups then a multi-level analysis will be used for the model, however if the test finds limited variation between clusters then multivariate regression will be used instead. This will mean that the final hypotheses can be tested, namely: (H3) *the more contact a student has with other students, the greater the levels of academic and social integration of the student*; (H4) *the better an international or domestic students' Dutch language ability, the greater their level of social integration*; (H5) *the better a domestic or international students' English language ability, the greater their level of academic and social integration*; and (H6) *the larger the body of international students on a programme, the greater the level of social and academic integration for students on said programme.*

# Results

See table.8 for the descriptive statistics for all the variables used within this analysis, and table.9 for the correlations for all the variables used in the analysis.

*Table.8: Summary statistics*                                                      Valid N (listwise)=139

|  | N | Mean | S.D. | Min | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Individual variables** | | | | | |
| **Academic Integration (α=.79)** | 172 | 4.02 | .63 | 1.5 | 5 |
| **Social Integration (α=.76)** | 164 | 3.90 | .76 | 1 | 5 |
| **International Student** | 168 | .27 | .45 | 0 | 1 |
| **Average Contact with other Students** | 171 | 2.08 | 1.32 | 1 | 5 |
| **Proficiency in Dutch Language** | 156 | 4.70 | 1.99 | 1 | 6 |
| **Proficiency in English Language** | 153 | 4.82 | 1.15 | 1 | 6 |
| **Female** | 170 | .81 | .40 | 0 | 1 |
| **Age** | 167 | 24.52 | 4.09 | 21 | 66 |
| **Grouping variables** | | | | | |
| **% of International Students on Programme** | 172 | 25.06 | 15.85 | 2 | 53 |

*Table.9*
*Correlation statistics*

| | Academic Integration | Social Integration | Average Contact Any | Dutch Ability | English Ability | International Percent | Age | Female | Internationa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic Integration | 1.0 | | | | | | | | |
| Social Integration | .29* | 1.0 | | | | | | | |
| Average Contact | .09 | .43 | 1.0 | | | | | | |
| Dutch Proficiency | .04 | .12 | -.05 | 1.0 | | | | | |
| English Proficiency | .30* | .26* | .17* | .06 | 1.0 | | | | |
| International Percent | .04 | .20* | .30*. | .29* | .26* | 1.0 | | | |
| Age | .08 | .02 | .03 | -.06 | .05 | .08 | 1.0 | | |
| Female | .09 | .10 | -.16 | .13 | .06 | -.32* | -.19 | 1.0 | |
| Interational | .03 | -.10 | .12 | -.58* | .15 | .31* | .10 | -.23* | 1.0 |

Note:
*p<.01

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare social integration between international students and domestic students. There was no significant different in the results for international students (M=3.77, SD=.93) and domestic students (M=3.93, SD=.68); t(158)=1.21, p=.23, meaning we fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no difference in social integration for international and domestic students.

A separate independent samples t-test was conducted to compare academic integration between international and domestic students. The test found no significant different in the results for international students (M=4.05. SD=.76) and domestic students (M=4.01, SD=.58); t(165)=-.39, p=.70). Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no difference in the means for academic integration between international and domestic students. The first hypothesis that (H1) domestic students have greater levels of academic and social integration than international students is not supported.

(*H2*) *The higher an individual's level of social integration, the higher their level of academic integration:* When looking at the correlation between academic integration and social integration the results show a significant positive correlation between the two (r=.29, p<.01). This means that students with higher academic integration on their master's courses are also likely to experience greater levels of social integration as well. This confirms the second hypothesis as we can reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the higher an individual's level of social integration, the higher their level of academic integration.

*Multivariate regression analysis*

In order to assess whether a multi-level model is necessary, both academic integration and social integration are run as empty models using the master's programme as a group variable. The results show that there is little variance at the group level for academic integration (ICC<.01), and so therefore academic integration will be analysed using multivariate regression analysis. The results show that there is some variance at the group level for social integration (ICC=.06) and so social integration will continue to be analysed using the grouping variable.

*Academic Integration:* The multivariate regression analysis using academic integration as a dependent variable (see table.10), controlling for age, sex and international student, shows that a student's English language ability can be used to predict academic integration in Models 2 and 3 ($\beta$=.28, p<.01 and $\beta$=.28, p<01). These results show partial confirmation for H5; however, we see partial rejection for H3 and H6. This means that for each standard deviation increase in English proficiency (i.e. a CEFR level), then academic integration is predicted to increase by .28. This relationship can be seen in figure.1 After the analysis, the model was tested for collinearity, and no variables show signs of being correlated. Here we see a large change in $R^2$ between models 1 and 2 where English ability is added, signifying that English ability can be used to explain an additional 8% of the variance in academic integration.

*Table.10 Academic integration regression analysis*

|  | Model 1 | | Model 2 | | Model 3 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variables: | β | t value | β | t value | β | t value |
| **Average Contact** | .01 | 1.23 | .02 | .29 | .02 | .21 |
| **English Ability** | | | .28 | 3.37** | .28 | 3.23** |
| **International Percent** | | | | | .03 | .33 |
| Control variables: | | | | | | |
| **Age** | .01 | 1.19 | .08 | 1.03 | .08 | 1.02 |
| **Female** | .15 | 1.77 | .13 | 1.46 | .13 | 1.49 |
| **International Student** | .06 | .79 | .01 | .15 | .00 | .07 |
| | | | | | | |
| **Constant** | 3.35 | 9.36** | 2.8 | 7.16** | 2.8 | 7.03** |
| **F-statistic** | | 1.34 | | 3.51** | | 2.92* |
| **R²** | | .03 | | .11 | | .11 |

*Note:* **Standardised coefficients are shown. *p<.05 **p<.01**
**Model 1 N=160**

**Model 2 N=144**

**Model 3 N=144**
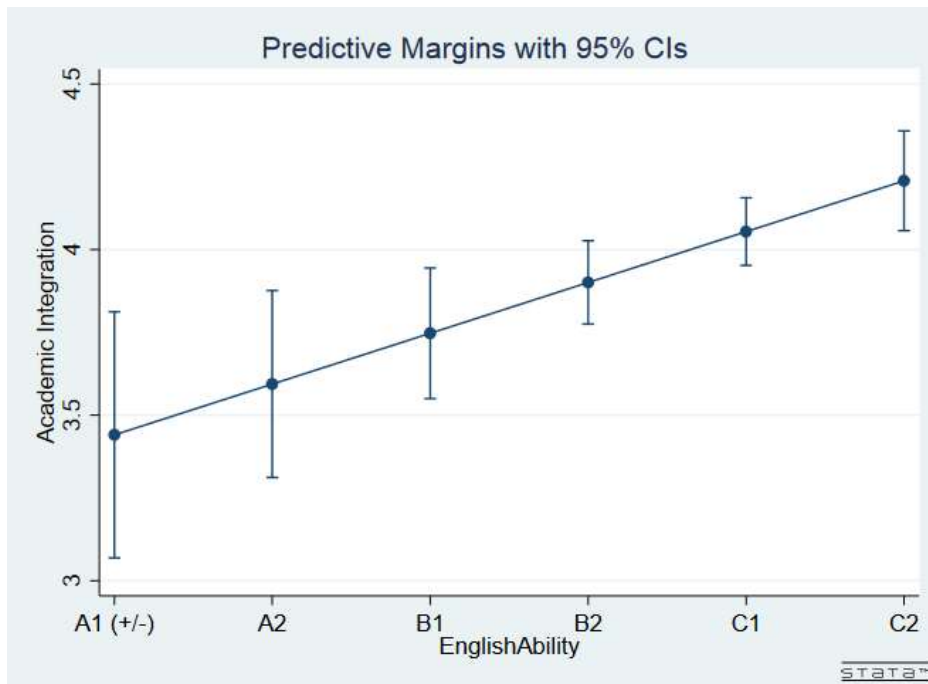
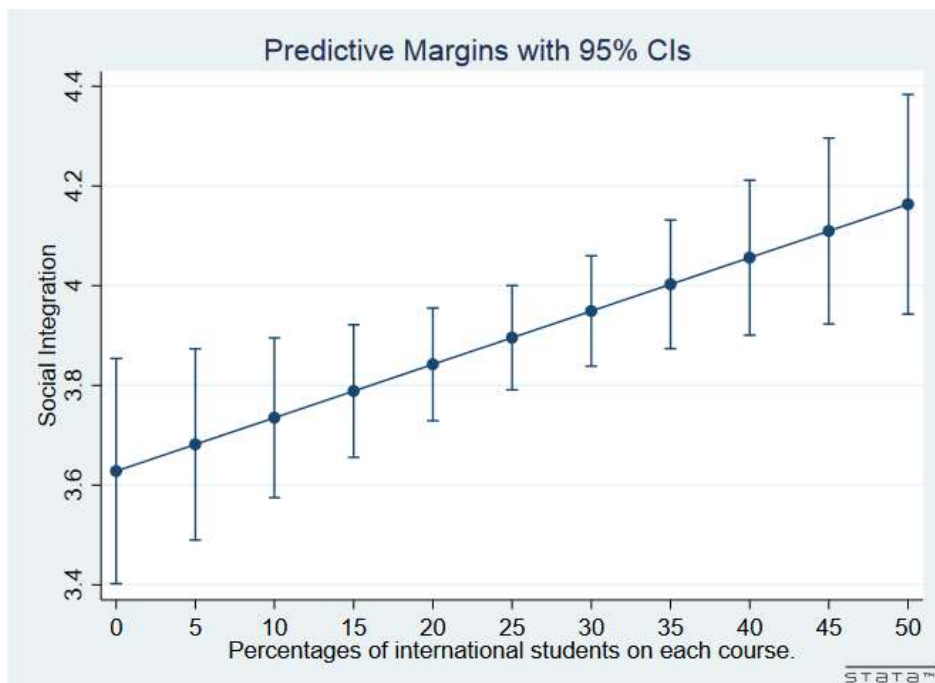*Figure.1 Predicted level of acdemic integration for English ability using Model 3 with other variables at means*

*Social integration:* The multivariate regression analysis using programme as a grouping variable for social integration can be seen in *table.11*. Once again, age, sex and international student were used as control variables in this analysis. Here we see that average contact for all categories ($\beta$=.38, $\beta$=.40, $\beta$=.82 and $\beta$=.75), English proficiency ($\beta$ =.11), international percent ($\beta$ =.01) and female ($\beta$ =.44) are all predictors of social integration. These results offer partial confirmation for hypotheses H3 (, H5 and H6, however we reject H4. For each 1 increase in English proficiency (each increase being a level of the CEFR framework), social integration is predicted to increase by .11. For each percentage increase in international students on the course, social integration is predicted to increase by .01 on the course. For the graphs of these relationships, see figures 2 and 3. For average contact we see a significant difference between the categories '15-20hours' ($\beta$=.40) and '20-25hours' ($\beta$=.82), indicating that there is a .40 difference in the social integration of these groups.

*Table.11 Two-level regression analysis for social integration*

| Fixed Effects | Model 1 | | Model 2 | | Model 3 | | Model 4 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | β | S.E. | β | S.E. | β | S.E. | β | S.E. |
| **Intercept** | **3.88 \*\*** | **.08** | **2.93\*\*** | **.38** | **2.34\*\*** | **.44** | **2.07\*\*** | **.44** |
| **Average Contact (Base= Less than 10hours)** | | | | | | | | |
| **10-15hours** | | | .40\*\* | .14 | .43\*\* | .14 | .38\*\* | .14 |
| **15-20hours** | | | .46\* | .18 | .43\* | .18 | .40\* | .18 |
| **20-25hours** | | | .88\*\* | .17 | .89\*\* | .18 | .82\*\* | .20 |
| **More than 25hours** | | | .94\*\* | .21 | .84\* | .21 | .75\*\* | .20 |
| **English Proficiency** | | | | | .13\*\* | .05 | .11\* | .05 |
| **Dutch Proficiency** | | | | | .01 | .03 | .02 | .03 |
| **International Percent** | | | | | | | .01\*\* | .00 |
| Control variables: | | | | | | | | |
| **Age** | | | .00 | .01 | .01 | .01 | .01 | .01 |
| **Female** | | | .32\* | .15 | .33\* | .15 | .44\*\* | .15 |
| **International Student** | | | -.23 | .12 | -.26 | .16 | -.29 | .44 |
| **Random Effects** | **Programme Variance** | **S.E.** | **Programme Variance** | **S.E.** | **Programme Variance** | **S.E.** | **Programme Variance** | **S.E.** |
| **Programme** | .54 | .06 | .44 | .05 | .41 | .05 | .40 | .05 |

*Note: *p<.05 **p<.01, Programme-level N = 14*

**Model 1 N=163**

**Model 2 N=155**

**Model 3 N=140**

**Model 4 N=140**
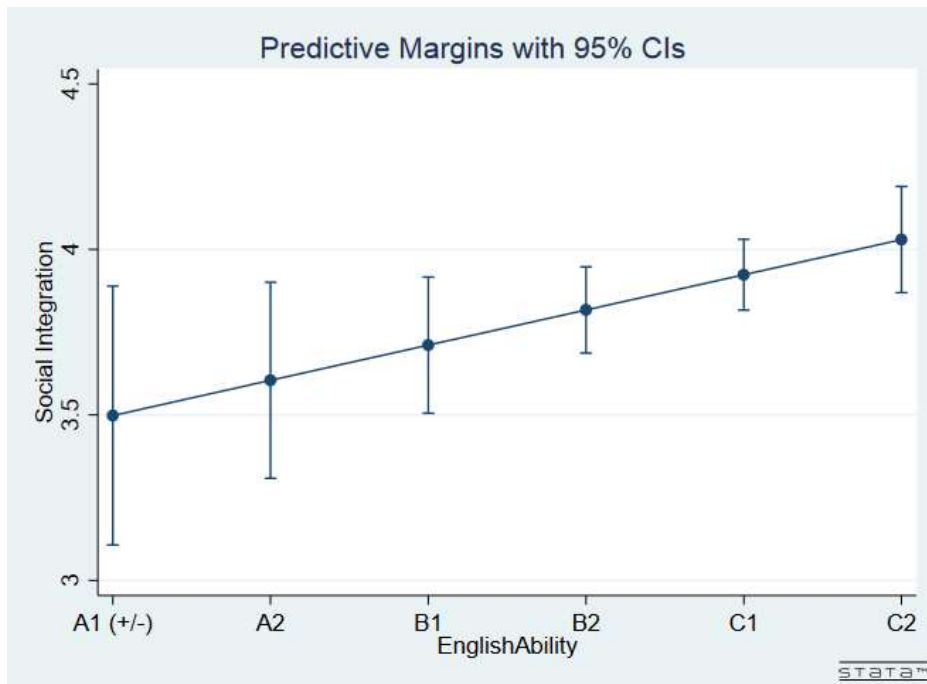
*Figure.2 Predicted level of social integration for English ability using Model 4 with other variables at means*



*Figure.3 Predicted level of social integration for international percentages using Model 4 with other variables at means*

# Discussion

*Hypothesis 1*

The results of this survey find no support for the first hypothesis (H1) that domestic students have greater levels of academic and social integration than international students. Whilst the results show a mean difference, this is not significant. The results may find a difference between students if there were a larger sample used.

The lack of a difference in the integration of international and domestic students may in part be due to similarities in educational cultures between countries. The cultural distance definition used by Harrison and Peacock (2010) of a collection of socially-learned rules, norms, values and shared meanings' (2010:881) may be more applicable to the context of wider society than the classroom setting where there are more shared norms for academia and study. Additionally, the differences in norms, such as the differences in study expectations that previous staff and students had noted, may not be significant enough to create a noticable disparity in the outcomes. It is also possible that by the time of this survey (8 months into the academic year) the cultural differences in the classroom had already been reduced as students could have changed their behaviour to fit these norms. This reduction over time may come from social contact, as hypothesised by Allport (1954), whereby contact leads to the development of social connections that could mean that international students and domestic students experiencing the same levels of integration. In this scenario, international students may develop academic relationships or friendships with domestic students that lead to them supporting one another academically and socially. This would also suggest that the results of the survey could be different had the questionnaire been sent out a couple of months into the programme, as opposed to nearer the end of their study.

The finding of no difference in integration between international and domestic students may also be due to the existence of a positive work environment, such as one described by Bond (2003). Due to the time the survey was shared among students, any 'positive learning experiences' (Guo and Chase, 2011:314) that may have come from an environment of cooperation and communication could have caused the differences in integration to become less significant. Conducting the survey throughout the course of the programme and asking students about these factors may mean it is possible to test this hypothesis.

An additional reason why there may not be a difference could be related to the way in which Utrecht University classifies international and domestic students. As mentioned in the methodology section, this questionnaire has used the definition given by Utrecht University to classify whether a student is an international student or not, namely if they have completed their undergraduate studies at a university in the Netherlands. This may mean that for some students who may view themselves as an international, the university does not see them as such, creating a disparity between the lived experience of the individual and the administrative boundaries placed upon them by the university. This misalignment of boundaries may have led to some international students being listed as a domestic student within this survey, which may have skewed the results slightly. If the survey were to be

repeated, taking into account the individual's understanding of whether they view themselves as an international student, the results may be different. Taking into account the individual's understanding may mean that individuals who perceive themselves as international but are currently classed as domestic students cause any differences in integration to be more pronounced.

The categorisation of international and domestic student itself may also not be the most reliable method of distinguishing between students. In addition to the issue with the classification of international students, the terms may be too broad to find a significant difference in the integration of students. For example, there are likely to be differences in the cultural distance of students from other European countries and Asia. The broader term 'international' doesn't take into account the possible differences between students from different parts of the world, meaning that a more specific definition could be used. For example, 44% of international students stated that they already speak Dutch to B1 ability (defined as the ability to express oneself in familiar situations (Council of Europe, 2018)). Additionally, the negative stereotyping aspect of integrated threat theory may not necessarily be applied to all international students, but instead to certain demographics within the international student classification. For example, it was noted in the focus groups by the student assessor that some students find it difficult to socialise with Chinese students in particular. It may then be worthwhile to make further distinctions within the term 'international' in order to better assess differences in the social or academic integration of students.

*Hypothesis 2*

The results did, however, find support for the second hypothesis (H2) in that the higher an individual's level of social integration, the higher their level of academic integration. Whilst this does not mean that one causes the other, it tells us that the two are correlated. These results are in keeping with the findings by Stadtfeld *et al* (2019) who also found a positive relationship between the student's social integration and their academic integration, with the hypothesis that this is related to students building a social network. The notion that the students' friendships and group study could be part of the explanation for this finding was supported in some of the interviews conducted with participants afterwards. During the interviews, a number of students commented on their academic relationships and the way that they are able to rely on others on their programme for academic support. This support from others may be helping to contribute to students' feelings of academic integration, as well as helping to provide students with the feeling that they are part of a wider network of students. The significance of students' social networks is also noted in other studies (Brunton and Jeffrey, 2014; Young 2014) and so may also be significant in understanding not just the level of integration itself, but also the process of integration that occurs over time.

*Hypothesis 3*

This study finds partial support for the third hypothesis (H3), where the more contact a student has with other students, the greater the level of social integration of the student. This study doesn't find support that more contact with other students aids academic integration. This may be due to a student's academic success being largely dependent on their personal skills and abilities, instead of the social network within which they are situated. For those students who want relationships with others on their programme, social integration is reliant on other students to occur. These results might indicate further support for intergroup contact theory, as part of the reason students experience greater levels of social integration with more contact may be because over time any ingroup prejudices are broken down and individuals become more familiar with others (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006). This familiarity may in turn lead into an academic relationship that could help to benefit students academically.

The high correlation of average contact with any student and average contact with international students would suggest that domestic students are also to some extent in contact with international students. Part of this correlation may also be due to international students mixing with other international students, with previous literature arguing that spontaneous mixing is uncommon (Castro *et al*, 2016; Harrison and Peacock, 2010). Using data from the questionnaire, 48% of Dutch students stated that their friend group mostly consists of other Dutch students, compared to 37% of international students stating that their friend group consists mostly of other international students. This signifies a large percentage of the student population that is not in contact with students from an outgroup, thus a large percentage that may not be developing their own cultural competencies (see Spencer-Oatey, 2018). This structuring of friend groups through contact may be partly a structural phenomenon, as many of the programmes on offer have very few international students on them. If contact hours with students were to increase without the structures in place to allow international and domestic students to interact, then the benefits to learning and stimulating a positive work environment that Bond (2003) argues for, in addition to a reduction in between group prejudices, may not be seen. Offering a structure where international and domestic students could mix is a policy put forward by Harrison and Peacock (2010), with their argument being that it is almost necessary to enable mixing to occur.

When looking at the predicted margins graph for average contact (see figure.2), average contact has the widest range for social integration out of all the non-control predictors, ranging from around 3.6 up to just over 4.5. Increasing the average contact of students may then lead to the greatest increase in social integration based on this model.

*Hypothesis 4*

Following on, this research finds no support for the fourth hypothesis (H4), that the better an international or domestic students' Dutch language ability, the greater their level of social integration. This may not be significant due to the questionnaire measuring integration within the classroom and university setting, a space where English spoken well by everyone in classes and on campus. In such a space, Dutch is then of a lesser importance. This correlates

with Bourdieu's (1986) theories on cultural capital as within the context of the university and the classroom, speaking Dutch may not hold as greater cultural value as elsewhere in the Netherlands. Research conducted by Brunton and Jeffrey (2014) found that prior knowledge of the host country's native language was a significant predictor of integration, a finding that isn't supported here. This may, however, be due to the Dutch context in which English is spoken to a high standard by the majority of the population, meaning the significance of knowing Dutch is underplayed. The results may differ if social integration was measured outside the university context and in situations where speaking Dutch would be useful to communicate. This is not to forget, however, that many Dutch students and professors often still use Dutch both within the classroom and in between lectures, although this use may not be significant enough to impact much on non-Dutch speaking students' social integration.

*Hypothesis 5*

This study also finds support for the fifth hypothesis (H5), which states that the better a domestic or international students' English language ability, the greater their level of academic and social integration. With regard to academic integration, this finding is expected since the use of English to express one's thoughts and arguments is necessary to complete the course to a sufficient standard. Proficiency in English is also likely to make writing coursework faster, improving the ability of the student to cope with their workload. English proficiency still only predicts around 8% of the variance in academic integration, meaning there are other more significant factors at play, indicating that one's English ability does not need to be perfect in order to sufficiently academically integrate onto the programme.

*Hypothesis 6*

Furthermore, this research has found partial support for the sixth hypothesis (H6), which states that the larger the body of international students on a programme, the greater the level of social integration for students on said programme. Again, this was not a factor in predicting the academic integration of students. This would further support the notion that academic integration is largely based on the individual ability of the student and not their social network ties. This study cannot make a claim for the theory on perceived threat by Schlueter and Scheepers (2010), however it does support the findings in the same paper on reducing prejudices through intergroup contact. This ties into the results on the average contact students have with other students in that more contact with other students is likely to help create familiarity among students. What's notable here is that the results show that having international students on the course is a significant predictor for both international and domestic students, meaning that it is not only the international students who could benefit from greater numbers of international students on a programme.

Finally, the existence of some differences in social integration caused by the programme highlights the fact that some of the difference could be down to the structure of the

programme, or even the individuals present on the programme. Further research could be done into what these differences are that cause the programs to have different levels of social integration. The results of the questionnaire show a significant difference in social integration between research master's and academic master's programmes (3.8 for academic master's compared to 4.0 for research master's, where $p<.05$), which may be due to a number of factors. For example, the length of the programmes, the numbers of students or time that they've been running for in English could all contribute to the difference.

## Policy Advice

The policy recommendations here are based upon the findings from the questionnaire within this thesis, informed by the existing literature. If using the framework set out by Zha (2003), the suggestions here will largely be recommendations based on the *competency* and *ethos* approaches, with more general advice falling under the *activity* approach. For reference, the *activity* approach encompasses active changes that can be made at the university to assist the internationalisation process*,* the *competency* approach entails developing the intercultural competencies of students or staff and the *ethos* approach is related to developing a more positive climate or culture within the university for internationalisation (Zha, 2003:251). Whilst wider policy changes can be offered, such as those that come under the *service* (see Gao, 2015:362) provision within the university (e.g. infrastructure changes and accommodation), the content of the questionnaire has focused on programme level factors that may influence students' academic or social integration and so this advice will be related to these factors. Furthermore, documents from within the university show that there are already changes made to the *services* offered by Utrecht University (such as improving housing and student welfare) and so won't be covered here.

Additionally, the results of the survey show that on average students experience a good level of academic and social integration. The average scores of 4.02 for academic integration and 3.90 for social integration correspond to most students clicking 'Agree' with the statements offered in the questionnaire. This policy advice is therefore not advocating for drastic change to the way the programmes are run, but instead offering suggestions for where small adjustments could be made or offering support for existing practices. Furthermore, the advice offered here may not be applicable to all master's programmes offered at Utrecht University due to differences in the structure of the programmes – for example some programmes run internships throughout the year or some may contain large segments where individual work is necessary (e.g. thesis writing). Whilst some of these suggestions may not be feasible for all the programmes, offering each programme a degree of autonomy to make adjustments that work for that programme may be of benefit. There is no one-size-fits-all policy for improving the integration of students onto their programmes.

Beginning with the finding that academic integration and social integration are related to one another, there is then rationale for the university to be interested in both the academic and social integration of its students. It could be argued, then, that it is in the interest of the university to ensure that there is also consideration for the social aspect of university on each of the master's programmes and get to know their peers. For example, in the open questions at the end of the questionnaire there were a large portion of responses related to either students praising the social events on offer or stating that they would like to see social events being held. Some of the events the students mentioned were drinks after classes, orientations with their classmates or networking evenings where alumni might also be present. These events are likely to be of benefit for a number of reasons. Firstly, these events will provide students the ability to network and develop their academic relationships with their peers. Secondly, it creates and environment that stimulates international and domestic students to mix and interact with one another in informal settings. Whilst coming under the *activity*

approach of Zha (2003), social occasions may also be seen to fall under the *competency* approach since social contact is likely to help students develop their intercultural competencies. Such events are also likely to be possible on programmes where individual work is unavoidable. Further tools to allow students to develop their network could be used, such as supporting students to create a LinkedIn profile and add their classmates or encouraging the use of WhatsApp groups to share information, may also help to aid students integration.

Also, the connection that social integration has to academic integration offers support for the use of some segments of group work within programmes. Not only is this a method of stimulating contact with other students in a setting that corresponds with Allport's (1954) intergroup contact framework, but it could be an easy way of increasing the amount of contact students have with other students without increasing teaching hours. Average contact was found to be significant within this study for explaining social integration and so students may benefit from this increased contact. Whilst students may end up continuing to work alone on group work, with persuasion from teachers to meet in person these occurrences could be avoided. Although the use of group work may not be possible for all programmes on offer it is something that could be considered, despite its challenges. The interviews with students and existing literature within the university suggest that some students are unsatisfied with group work, with one interviewee believing that their grades were lower when working as a group. Such expectations would need to be managed if it were to be implemented in order to avoid any issues.

Following on, the finding that English ability is significant for both academic and social integration suggests that effort should be made to ensure a good standard of English on the university. In the interviews and questionnaire international students reported that the levels required to take the courses are adequate, however it is currently only international students who are required to take a language test. Although domestic students indicated that they would not want to take an official language test upon entry into the programme, more informal means (such as submission of coursework in English) could be used to ensure a good standard of English on the programmes. Additionally, providing students with the opportunity to improve their English whilst on the course with language workshops or ensuring it is taught adequately on the bachelor's programmes may help with integration. Creating a climate within the classroom where students feel able to express themselves and make mistakes with their grammar may also help to foster the atmosphere that Bond (2003) argues can allow students to better integrate within the classroom environment. These changes with relation to the English language fit more within the *competency* and *ethos* approaches – making it important to ensure that all students have the skills to complete their programmes and a positive environment to practice them in.

# Conclusion

This paper has explored the impact of internationalisation on universities within the Netherlands by looking at the way students experience integration onto their master's programmes at Utrecht University. Specifically, quantitative research by means of a questionnaire has looked at the programme-level factors that can influence how a student experiences integration onto their programme, taking into account both domestic and international students experiences. In order to do this a number of research questions have been answered.

Firstly, the explorative research question was answered: *What are the issues regarding the integration of international and domestic students that develop when master's programmes at Utrecht University are taught in English?* This research question was answered by means of a literature review and discussions with senior staff and students at the university. A distinction between academic and social integration was made in order to assist in classifying these issues. Some of these problems classified were related to a lack of mixing between international and domestic students, troubles for international students in finding an internship and disparities between students and their academic competencies.

Secondly, the explanatory research question was answered: *What are the factors that influence the integration of both international and domestic students into Utrecht University and the master's programmes?* This question was answered by means of a questionnaire distributed to all students and then analysed using statistical analyses. The questionnaire found no difference in the academic or social integration between international and domestic students, with a student's English ability being a significant factor in explaining academic integration, as well as students' average contact with other students, their English ability and the percentage of international students on the course being significant factors in explaining social integration.

Finally, the policy advice question was answered: *How can Utrecht University help to better facilitate the integration of students into their studies at university?* This question was answered using the findings from the literature review and reinforced with the results of the questionnaire. The key pieces of policy advice entail the continuation of the social structures in place on some courses so as to allow students to network and come into informal contact with other students and continuing to ensure that there is a high standard of English spoken on the courses. These recommendations are already in place on some programmes and may not always be applicable to other programmes, however if a flexible approach were to be taken then these changes may be of benefit to all programmes.

### Limitations

There are a few limitations with this study. Firstly, the size of the study is relatively small and specific to the situation at Utrecht University, which may make it more difficult to generalise to a wider population of master's students. The response rate of 17.2% is also relatively small

and does not cover all 19 of the master's programmes on offer. It is important then to also consider any sample bias in the data and the types of students who may have filled in the questionnaire.

Another limitation is to do with the fact that many of the questions are self-reported. For example, the variables on language proficiency are all self-reported and so may not reflect the true language levels of the student. The dependent variables use questions are all self-reported questions in order to ascertain the experience of the students, however there is always the concern that the participant has misunderstood the question or interpreted the measurement scales incorrectly.

One recommendation for future research would be to track students' levels of integration over the course of the year to see whether this fluctuates at all, and at which points it fluctuates. This may then offer an indication of the structural influences that may affect integration, such as whether the student is currently undertaking an internship or about to enter a period with minimal contact with other students. Furthermore, students may feel as though their competencies improve over the period of the study which would offer a way of identifying which factors are most beneficial to students.s

Finally, this research did not ask students about their ethnic background due to ethical concerns about anonymity. From the literature it is noted that these ethnic differences may in part help to explain any differences in students' ability to integrate onto their university programmes. This could therefore be improved by taking into account students ethnic backgrounds when constructing the models for analysis. A way of doing this could be through asking students more broadly about their ethnicity, such as the way that Nevill and Rhodes (2006) conducted their questionnaire on first-year students, or a better way could be to categorise students into the categories of 'Western' and 'non-Western', as was done by Rienties *et al* (2011). The distinction of 'Western' and 'non-Western' might allow the model to account for the process of cultural distance as one of the key differences noted in the literature is that of individualist and collectivist cultures, where often Western society is argued to be more individualistic (Harrison and Peacock, 2010). This distinction is still not without its critiques given that migration and increasingly multicultural societies make it difficult to take a more general approach to defining culture.

## *Bibliography*

Allport, G.W. (1954) *The Nature of Prejudice*, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company

Baker, R. W., & Siryk, B. (1999) *SACQ student adaptation to college questionnaire* (2nd ed.), Los Angeles:Western Psychological Services

Becker, R. (2018) 'Shaping Transnational Education in the Netherlands: National Policy Directions' in Lawton, W. and Tsiligiris, V. (Eds) *Exporting Transnational Education: Institutional Practice, Policy and National Goals*, Palgrave Macmillan

Bond, S. (2003) *Untapped resources, internationalization of the curriculum and classroom experience: A selected literature review*, Ottawa, ON: Canadian Bureau for International Education

Bourdieu, P. (1986) 'The Forms of Capital' from Richardson, J.E. (Eds) *Handbook of Theory of Research for the Sociology of Education*, Greenwood Press

Bouma, K. (2016) 'Meer dan de helft van de studies volledig in het Engels', *de Volkskrant*, available online at: https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/meer-dan-de-helft-van-de-studies-volledig-in-het-engels~bbac97c2/ (accessed on 11/2/2019)

Brunton, M. And Jeffrey, L. (2014) 'Identifying factors that influence the learner empowerment of international students', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, Vol.43, pp.321-334

Castro, P., Woodin, J., Lundgren, U. and Byram, M. (2016) 'Student mobility and internationalisation in higher education: perspectives from practitioners', *Language and Intercultural Communication*, Vol.16(3), pp.418-436, DOI: 10.1080/14708477.2016.1168052

Council of Europe (2018) *The CEFR Levels*, available online at: https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/level-descriptions (accessed on 3/4/2019)

Deardroff, D.K. (2006) 'The Identification and Assessment of Intercultural Competence as a Student Outcome of Internationalization at Institutions of Higher Education in the United States', *Journal of Studies in International Education*, Vol.10(1), pp.241-266

Dutch Education Executive Agency (2018) *Nuffic,* available online at: https://www.nuffic.nl/en/subjects/ (accessed on 18/2/2019)

Fowler, S.M. and Pusch, M.D. (2010) 'Intercultural Simulation Games: A Review (of the United States and Beyond)', *Simulation & Gaming*, Vol.41(1), pp.94-115

Gao, Y. (2014) 'Constructing internationalization in flagship universities from the policy-maker's perspective', *Higher Education*, Vol.70, pp.359-373

Guo, S and Chase, M. (2011) 'Internationalisation of higher education: integrating international students into Canadian academic environment', *Teaching in Higher Education*, Vol.16(3), pp.205-318

Harrison, N. and Peacock, N. (2010) 'Cultural distance, mindfulness and passive xenophobia: using Integrated Threat Theory to explore home higher education students' perspectives on 'internationalisation at home'', *British Educational Research Journal*, Vol.36(6), pp.877-902

Healey, N.M. (2008) 'Is higher education *really* 'internationalising'?', *Higher Education*, Vol.55(3), pp.333-355

Huygen, M. (2018) 'Hoger onderwijs wil numerus fixus op Engelstalige opleidingen', *NRC.nl*, available online at: https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2018/05/14/hoger-onderwijs-wil-numerus-fixus-op-engelstalige-opleidingen-a1602843 (accessed on 20/2/2019)

Huygen, M. (2019) 'Tweede Kamer wilactietegen 'verengelsing', *NRC.nl*, available online at: https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2019/01/16/tweede-kamer-wil-actie-tegen-verengelsing-studies-a3650531 (accessed on 20/2/2019)

Knight, J (2003) 'Updating the definition of internationalization', *International Higher Education* Vol.33, pp.2-3

Knight, J. (2004) 'Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, and Rationales', *Journal of Studies in International Education*, Vol.8(1), pp.5-31

Knight, J. (2013) 'The changing landscape of higher education internationalisation – for better or worse?', *Perspectives: Policy and Practices in Higher Education*, Vol.17(3), pp.84-90

Kücking, S. (2011) *Internationalisation and the Integration of International Students at the University of Twente: Reasons and possible solutions for the gap between Dutch and International Students*, University of Twente

Maringe, F. and Gibbs, P. (2008) *Higher Education Marketing*, Sage: London

Maringe, F. (2009) 'Strategies and challenges of internationalisation in HE: An exploratory study of UK universities', *International Journal of Educational Management*, Vol.23(7), pp.553-563

Molesworth, M., Scullion, R. and Nixon, E (2011) *The Marketisation of Higher Education and the Student as Consumer*, Routledge

Mullen, B., Johnson, C. and Anthony, T. (1994) 'Relative Group Size and Cognitive Representations of Ingroup and Outgroup: The Phenomenology of Being in a Group', *Small Group Research*, Vol.25(2), pp.250-266

Nevill, A. and Rhodes, C. (2004) 'Academic and social integration in higher education: a survey of satisfaction and dissatisfaction within a first-year education studies cohort at a new university', *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, Vol.28(2), pp.179-193

Oudelaar, C. (2018) *International Master's Students FSBS: Registration & Application Numbers*, Utrecht University

Pettigrew, T.F. and Tropp, L.R. (2006) 'A Meta-Analytic Test of Intergroup Contact Theory', *Journal of Personality and Social Pscychology*, Vol.90(5), pp.751-783

Rienties, B., Beausaert, S., Grohnert, T., Niemantsverdriet, S. and Kommers, P. (2011) 'Understanding academic performance of international students: the role of ethnicity, academic and social integration', *Higher Education*, Vol.63, pp.685-700

Schlueter, E. and Scheepers, P. (2010) 'The relationship between outgroup size and anti-outgroup attitudes', *Social Science Research*, Vol.39(2), pp.285-295

Spencer-Oatey, H. (2018) 'Transformative learning for social integration: overcoming the challenge of greetings', *Intercultural Education*, Vol.29(2), pp.301-315 DOI:10.1080/14675986.2018.1425828

Stadtfeld, C., Vörös, A., Elmer, T., Boda, Z. and Raabe, E.J. (2019) 'Integration in emerging social networks explains academic failture and success', *PNAS*, Vol.116(3), pp.792-797

Taylor, J. (2004) 'Toward a Strategy for Internationalisation: Lessons and Practice From Four Universities', *Journal of Studies in International Education*, Vol.8(2), pp.147-171, DOI: 10.1177/1028315303260827

Thiagarajan, S. (2006) *Barnga: A simulation game on cultural clashes*, Boston: Intercultural Press

Times Higher Education (2019) *World University Rankings 2019*, available online at: https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2019/world-ranking#!/page/0/length/25/sort_by/rank/sort_order/asc/cols/stats

Utrecht University (2016) *Utrecht University language policy: advice to the executive board*, available online at: https://www.dub.uu.nl/sites/default/files/attachments/93/16-115_university_language_policy_uu.pdf (Accessed on 4/3/2019)

Utrecht University (2017) *Faculty Strategic Plan for 2017-2020*, Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, available at: https://indd.adobe.com/view/717642a9-ae81-4e43-87ea-23a7def10778 (Accessed on 24/3/2019)

Utrecht University (2018) *Report: Internationalisation Taskforce*, available online at: https://www.uu.nl/sites/default/files/beta_international_office_advies_internationalisering_def_2018_09_16_en.pdf (Accessed on 24/3/2019)

Utrecht University (2019a) *Organisation: Facts and figures*, available online at:
https://www.uu.nl/en/organisation/profile/facts-and-figures (Accessed on 24/3/2019)

Utrecht University (2019b) *Faculty profile,* available online at:
https://www.uu.nl/en/organisation/faculty-of-social-and-behavioural-sciences/about-the-faculty/faculty-profile (Accessed on 4/3/2019)

van Leeuwen, Abuzer (2017) '"Yes, but, also!" Students not too Happy with teacher's English skills', available online at: https://dutchreview.com/news/dutch/yes-also-students-not-happy-teachers-english-skills/ (Accessed on 11/2/2019)

Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap (2008) *Grenzeloos Goed: internationaliseringsagenda hoger onderwijs-, onderzoeks- en wetenschapsbeleid*, Den Haag: Ministerie van OCW

VSNU & Vereniging Hogescholen (2014) *Gezamenlijke Visie Internationaal* available, online at: https://vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Internationaal/Notitie%20Visie%20Internationaal%20definitief.pdf (accessed on 11/2/2019)

VSNU & Vereniging Hogescholen (2018) *Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education* available online at: http://www.vsnu.nl/files/documents/Internationalisation%20Agenda%20for%20Higher%20Education.pdf (accessed on 18/2/2019)

de Wit, H. (2011) *Trends, Issues and Challenges in Internationalisation of Higher Education,* Centre for Applied Research on Economics & Management: Hogeschool Amsterdam

van der Wende, M. (1997) 'Missing Links: the relationship between national policies for internationalization and those for higher education in general', in Kälvemark, T. & van der Wende, M. (Eds) *National Policies for the Internationalization of Higher Education in Europe*, Stockholm: National Agency for Higher Education.

Young, N.E. (2014) *Seeking Best Practices for Integrating International and Domestic Students*, University of Minnesota

Zha, Q (2003) 'Internationalization of higher education: Towards a conceptual framework', *Policy Futures in Education*, Vol.1(2), pp.248-270

# Appendices:

*Appendix.1: Questionnaire*

‖‖ ‖‖‖ ‖‖‖‖‖ ‖‖ ‖ ‖‖‖ ‖‖ ‖‖‖‖ ‖‖

Welcome! This short questionnaire is aimed at finding out your experience of integrating into your international masters programme here at Utrecht University. This study is being conducted by a student (Tom Gaut) at Utrecht University. The results of this data will be used for a master's thesis and by the faculty to help improve the experience of future students and should take you approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. Your participation in this questionnaire is voluntary and you do not have to complete any questions you feel uncomfortable giving a response to. We believe there are no known risks to you in completing this questionnaire. The answers given in this survey will remain anonymous and the answers will not be traced back to you. All data will be stored on a password protected computer and only those involved in the study will have access to the raw data. The data collected will be destroyed after the completion of the master's study.

## Section A: Background Information

A1.    What is your age (in years)?

*Leave this blank if you would prefer not to say.*

A2.    What is your sex?

Male ☐

Female ☐

A3.    Are you classified as an international student at Utrecht University?

Yes ☐

No ☐

A4.    What is your continent of origin?

Europe ☐

Central and South America ☐

North America ☐

Asia ☐

Oceania ☐

Prefer not to say ☐

**A5.    Which master's programme are you currently enrolled on?**

1-year Applied Cognitive Psychology ☐

1-year Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology ☐

1-year Clinical Child, Family and Education Studies ☐

1-year Clinical Psychology ☐

1-year Cultural Anthropology: Sustainable Citizenship ☐

1-year Educational Sciences ☐

1-year Neuropsychology ☐

1-year Social, Health and Organisational Psychology ☐

1-year Sociology: Contemporary Social Problems ☐

1-year Social Policy and Public Health ☐

1-year Youth, Education and Society ☐

1-year Youth Studies ☐

2-year Cultural Anthropology: Sociocultural Transformation ☐

2-year Development and Socialisation in Childhood Adolescence ☐

2-year Educational Sciences: Learning in Interaction ☐

2 year Methodology and Statistics for the Behavioural, Biomedical and Social Sciences ☐

2-year Migration, Ethnic Relations and Multiculturalism ☐

2 year Social & Health Psychology ☐

2 year Sociology and Social Research ☐

**A6.    What is your previous educational attainment?**

Dutch Master ☐

Non-Dutch Master ☐

Pre-master ☐

Dutch Bachelor (WO) ☐

Non-Dutch Bachelor ☐

**A7.    Do you plan on staying in the Netherlands once your study has finished?**

Yes ☐

No ☐

## Section B: Language

**B1.** Is English your first language?

Yes ☐

No ☐

**B2.** What, to the best of your knowledge, is your English language ability?
*If you are unsure what your exact level is, then please see here for descriptions of each level and make an educated guess: CEFR Description.*

C2 ☐

C1 ☐

B2 ☐

B1 ☐

A2 ☐

A1 (+/-) ☐

**B3.** What, to the best of your knowledge, is your Dutch language ability?
*If you are unsure what your exact level is, then please see here for descriptions of each level and make an educated guess: CEFR Descriptions.*

C2 ☐

C1 ☐

B2 ☐

B1 ☐

A2 ☐

A1 (+/-) ☐

**B4.** Did you take a language test upon entry to the master's programme?

Yes ☐

No ☐

**B5.** Did you feel that the language requirements were suitable to complete the course?

Yes ☐

No ☐

**B6.** Would you want to be tested for your English language ability before the start of the course?

Yes ☐

No ☐

48

**B7.** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(Please ignore if this doesn't apply to your course)

*1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree*

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I feel comfortable expressing myself in English during my seminars and lectures. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| I feel comfortable expressing myself in English when writing my assignments. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

## Section C: Academic Integration

**C1.** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

*1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree*

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I am satisfied with my academic performance. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| I am motivated to study and put in the effort required to complete the master's programme. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| I am able to cope with the workload required to complete the master's programme. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| I have the necessary skills required to complete work to a good standard. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| I did not have any serious issues when searching for an internship. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| I relied on the connections of my teachers to find an internship. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

## Section D: Social Integration

**D1.** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

*1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree*

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I am satisfied with my social life at Utrecht University. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| I get along well with other students on my master's programme. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| I have several friends at the university I can rely on. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| I am aware of and participate within the student study associations on offer. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| I have a sense of belonging on my master's programme. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

**F2.** **Please tick the boxes that apply to your previous experience:**

**Please only include experience prior to beginning your current programme.**

I have completed a different educational programme abroad (i.e. Bachelor's or another Master's programme). ☐

I have been on exchange abroad. ☐

I have worked abroad. ☐

I have travelled for more than 3 consecutive weeks abroad. ☐

Other ☐

Other

[          ]

**F3.** **To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?**

*1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree*

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I value meaningful interaction with students of a different nationality to myself. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

## Section G: Further Comments

**G1.** **What has helped you integrate onto your master's programme and the university? What (if anything) could be improved?**

[          ]

**G2.** **What is your opinion on the fact that the master's programmes have become more internationally focused?**

[          ]

**G3.** Is there anything else related to the themes in this questionnaire that you would like to share with us?

## Section H: Interview integration students

**H1.** Would you be willing to participate in a short interview related to these themes?

Yes ☐

No ☐

**H2.** Thank you for your participation! Please send an email to the following address so we can get in touch with you: internationalmastersuu@gmail.com

## Section I: Research Sociology

**I1.** Would you be interested in participating in an experimental observational study conducted by Sociology, about interactions between Dutch and international students?

Yes ☐

No ☐

I2. The Department of Sociology is looking for participants for a behavioural experiment to study the interactions within and between Dutch and international students. They are running multiple sessions of the experiment from the beginning of April to the end of May in the Experimental Laboratory for Sociology and Economics (ELSE) at Utrecht University. Participants will earn money depending on the decisions made by themselves and other participants in the experiment. In order to participate, please sign up as soon as possible by clicking the following link: https://www.elseutrecht.nl/public/index.php. If you are already enrolled in the ELSE-database you don't need to register via this link again.

Thank you for your time! To show our appreciation, we will raffle five Bol.com vouchers (with a value of 20 Euro each) among all students who have completed the questionnaire. If you wish to be eligible, please click the following link. Clicking the link will send you to a new survey environment separate from this one, to guarantee the anonymity of your answers. You can fill out your email address there. We will randomly select five winners and get it touch with the lucky individuals!

53

*Appendix.2: Stata Syntax*

alpha C1a_AcadPerformance C1b_Motivation C1c_CopeWorkload C1d_Skills

alpha D1a_SocialSatisfaction D1b_StudentsGetOnWell D1c_FriendsAtUni D1e_Belonging

corr C1a_AcadPerformance C1b_Motivation C1c_CopeWorkload C1d_Skills

pwcorr D1a_SocialSatisfaction D1b_StudentsGetOnWell D1c_FriendsAtUni D1e_Belonging, star(.01)

pwcorr D1a_SocialSatisfaction D1b_StudentsGetOnWell D1_FriendsAtUni D1e_Belonging, star(.01)

pwcorr AcademicIntegration SocialIntegration International AvgContactAny DutchAbility EnglishAbility InternationalPercent Female Age Programme, star(.01)


ttest AcademicIntegration, by(International)

ttest SocialIntegration, by(International)


corr SocialIntegration AcademicIntegration, star(.01)


mixed SocialIntegration || Programme:

estat icc

mixed AcademicIntegration || Programme:

estat icc


reg AcademicIntegration AvgContactAny Age Female International

reg AcademicIntegration Avg ContactAny EnglishAbility Age Female International

reg AcademicIntegration AvgContactAny EnglishAbility InternationalPercent Age Female International

vif


mixed SocialIntegration AvgContactAny Age Female International

mixed SocialIntegration AvgContactAny EnglishAbility DutchAbility Age Female International

mixed SocialIntegration AvgContactAny EnglishAbility DutchAbility InternationalPercent Age Female International

vce