

## **Development dialogue MSc MADE 10 April 2024**

### *Participants MSc MADE:*

Stefan van der Spek Programme Director MADE F (TUD), Nina Bohm Ex-coordinator Living Lab, Programme Developer Education (TUD), Saskia Leenders-Pellis Study advice (WUR), Jess Wreyford PC chair, Living Lab + thesis coordinator (WUR) Nils Wolff PC student member, and Marta Nosowicz PB student

### *Panel:*

Hans Bressers, Ana Vasques, Sarah Cornell, Gerd Weitkamp, Fenna Oostrum (student member), Esther Poort (Secretary)

The central theme of the development dialogue was Recalibrating MADE. The programme management has posed three specific questions to the committee. Each question was preceded by a brief introduction by MSc MADE.

### *Question 1: Paths*

*How can we structure and design individual study paths, while safeguarding the freedom to explore new fields and connect those in innovative ways?*

During the conversation, it became evident that all participants recognized the dilemma between students seeking more guidance and those prioritizing autonomy. There was unanimous agreement that tailored packages, comprising specific combinations of electives with a proven track record of success, could be provided to those seeking guidance. The programme explained that several of these packages had naturally evolved over the past years.

The panel advises increasing the visibility of these packages and communicating them more explicitly as potential suggested routes to students. However, the panel advises against formalizing these into official tracks to preserve the flexibility of the programme. Instead, it suggests that the programme continues to encourage students to explore how they can utilize the elective space to craft a study path that aligns with their individual backgrounds and ambitions.

### *Question 2: Educational Forms*

*MADE educates for sustainable development and innovation in complex urban contexts, for which students learn to deal with uncertainty in an academic and professional manner. The programme makes use of both transformative and conventional educational forms.*

*How can we optimize the balance between these (seemingly) contradictory educational forms, as well as between group work and individual assessment?*

The panel observed that the transformative perspective is dominant and believes that this aligns well with the vision and objectives of the programme. Additionally, the panel thinks that the programme has effectively integrated knowledge and skills, such as research, into the thematically organized education. Furthermore, the panel believes students have ample opportunity within their elective courses to explore specific theoretical aspects or methodologies.

The panel finds the significant emphasis on group work to be fitting for the programme's objectives. It has mixed feelings about the transition from a collaborative and innovative working approach during the initial 1.5 years of the programme to a more individual and traditional thesis format. Some may advocate for a slightly more innovative approach, while others may see the traditional thesis as a necessary safeguard to ensure students meet academic standards by the end of their education. The panel suggests the programme to explore innovative approaches that align with the programme's objectives and intended learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the panel emphasizes that the transformative teaching methods are functioning effectively with the current number of students. It would be undesirable to compromise the distinctive teaching methods and the unique Living Lab approach simply to accommodate more students. The panel advises maintaining the current number of students to ensure the quality of the programme remains guaranteed.

*Question 3: Identity*

*Each MADE student enters the programme with their own specific set of disciplinary experience and skills. How can we improve balanced learning both within and across the domains of Analysis, Design and Engineering, ensuring high-quality transfer of knowledge and methods?*

The panel emphasizes that the programme trains students as generalists rather than specialists in any particular area. Its effectiveness lies in cultivating a synthesis of diverse perspectives centred on the urban environment. Therefore, the panel suggests enhancing communication about the programme's goal of nurturing urban specialists with versatile skill sets. Additionally, the panel advises further leveraging the identity of the AMS Institute in these endeavours.