

# **Bachelor International Food & Agribusiness**

## **Limited Study Programme Assessment**



## Summary

In July 2018 the bachelor programme International Food & Agribusiness was visited by an audit panel from NQA. The programme is a full time four year programme. The audit panel assesses the quality of the study programme as **satisfactory**.

### Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes

The study programme receives the judgment **good** for standard 1.

The panel is convinced that the programme's aim is very relevant for the international food & agribusiness sector. The programme wants to inspire students to become game changers in global agri-food systems and wants to educate the holistic approach to solve issues and introduce innovations in the food and agribusiness world. The panel sees that the programme qualifications are formulated in close cooperation with the professional work field and are linked to the hbo-standard and Dublin descriptors. The qualifications are agri-food knowledge based and focus on contributing to international business development. The combination of these qualifications with leadership and personal skills are unique according to the panel. It leads to professionals being able to make changes in agri-food systems with a value based mind-set and with a sustainable and integrated approach. In addition the programme demonstrates a good connection with the professional field and shows abilities to adapt the programme qualifications in the right direction.

### Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment

The study programme receives the judgment **satisfactory** for standard 2.

The panel finds the programme design adequate to achieve the final qualifications. The qualifications are translated into learning objectives at three levels and they are assigned to thematic modules. The thematic structure ensures the integral holistic approach of the programme. The second study year has a high study load for the students and a high work load for the lecturers involved. The panel agrees with the intention to shift some of the business subjects to the first year, since students mention that the business focus in the first year is minimal. To the panel's opinion the business focus in the whole programme could be stronger and especially in accounting and administration. Students indicate they would welcome this and the panel believes that the business focus on the whole sustainable chain has to be a part of the programme. The programme made the research skills in the programme more explicit to create awareness. The panel supports this and advises to make other subjects like business administration more explicit without losing the unique integrated approach of the programme. Staff is paying a lot of attention to the programme and students. The panel experienced a very dedicated and motivated staff. Students and work field praise the staff commitment and their professional experiences. According to the panel this is a good basis to improve the teaching and learning environment even further.

### **Standard 3: Assessment**

The study programme receives the judgment **satisfactory** for standard 3.

The panel sees that the HAS assessment policy is applied in the IFA assessment programme. The assessment programme and assessment plan provide more than sufficient insight in the assessment development and execution. The documents form a good basis for the assessment execution. The assessments are an integral part of the student learning and development. The panel sees that assessment execution is in development. The examination board explains that the assessment transparency is improving after assessments being offered for the first time. There is sufficient attention for staff development in assessing. All staff is basically qualified in examination and some have additional qualifications. The panel finds the assessment forms clear and the feedback given comprehensive. The panel notes that in the written examinations of the second and fourth year mainly remembering and understanding are tested and advises to put more emphasis on the testing of applying and analysing. The panel advises also to pay attention to discriminative marking since the marking of and the feedback on the professional assignment is comprehensive but rather friendly.

### **Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes**

The study programme receives the judgment **satisfactory** for standard 4.

Graduates are successful. The most recent graduation overview shows that graduates have good starting positions. Graduates start in various positions and the labour market is diverse. The employability of graduates is good; they are employed or study a master course with success. The final Professional Assignments could be more programme specific and business-focused. Students seem to find it difficult to limit the information. The panel believes it is important to reduce the volume of the report, to separate main issues from side issues and to focus more on the message for the commissioner. The panel recommends strengthening the network with typical employers of the graduates because graduates show that they bring a different mind-set and can build bridges within food systems.

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## Introduction

This is the assessment report of the existing bachelor programme International Food & Agribusiness by HAS University of Applied Sciences. The assessment was conducted by an audit panel compiled by NQA on behalf of HAS University of Applied Sciences and in consultation with International Food & Agribusiness programme. Prior to the assessment process the audit panel has been approved by NVAO.

The report describes the panel's findings, considerations and conclusions. It also contains some recommendations for the study programme. The report has been prepared in accordance with the *Assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands* (NVAO, 2016) and the *NQA Protocol 2017 for limited programme assessment*.

The site visit took place on 4 July 2018.

The audit panel consisted of:

D.W. Richters, MBA (panel chair),

G.A.M. Kouwenhoven, MBA (domain expert),

C. Blokland, Dr (domain expert),

R.T. de Bruin (student member).

A.B.C. Hoitink, MSc, NQA-auditor, acted as secretary of the panel.

The bachelor programme International Food & Agribusiness is part of the visitation group HBO HAO bedrijfskunde. Alignment between the sub-panels was first of all ensured by the assessment framework instruction the panel members received. The assessment criteria calibrated between Hobéon and NQA are part of this instruction. Prior to this, alignment is guaranteed by overlap in the composition of all subpanels. In addition, taking into account the fact that each programme evaluation concerns an individual evaluation, on the basis of overlap across the panels, there has been continuous reflection of the previous site visits within this visitation group. Furthermore, the alignment between the panels is guaranteed by the support of, as much as possible, the same auditor from both Hobéon and NQA and by the recruitment of trained chairmen.

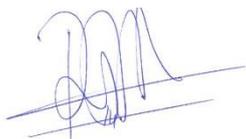
The study programme has provided the panel with a self-evaluation report. Its form and content comply with the requirements of the appropriate NVAO assessment framework and the NQA protocol 2017. The panel studied the self-evaluation report as well as a sample of fifteen Professional Assignments completed in 2015-2016, 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. The panel visited the study programme on 4 July 2018. The visit consisted of a tour to the environmental sciences lab, greenhouses and the food technology lab. The self-evaluation report and other materials, interviews with students, staff, work field, management and the tour enabled the panel to reach a well-considered judgement.

The panel declares that the assessment of the study programme was carried out independently.

Utrecht, 22 oktober 2018

Panel chair

Lead auditor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized, overlapping letters that appear to be 'DWR'.

D.W. Righters, MBA

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized, overlapping letters that appear to be 'ABC'.

A.B.C. Hoitink, MSc

## Short outline of the programme

The bachelor programme International Food & Agribusiness (IFA) is offered by HAS University of Applied Sciences. This University of Applied Sciences is an educational and expertise centre for the agri-food and environment sectors. The University is a medium sized university; it employs over 450 employees and offers educational programmes to about 3,000 students and professional courses to about 300 participants.

Typical for universities of applied science is the intensive link between education and work field. HAS University pictures this intensive link as a dynamic triangle of students, lecturers and the professional work field. This dynamic triangle forms the core of the educational activities. The university combines education with knowledge development and knowledge transfer. These three activities are connected with each other. On one hand the university offers students a learning environment with input from the professional work field. On the other hand students and staff work in a commercial setting on innovative projects for the professional work field. In this way there is a continuous interaction between education and professional practice.

The IFA programme is relatively new. The programme started for the first time in 2012 with 25 students. In the following years, intake gradually increased to 76 students in 2017. Currently almost 200 students enrolled in this programme. The student population is rather international since about thirty percent of the students come from abroad.

The programme is primarily a bachelor of International Business Administration. Additionally the programme focuses on technological and sustainable aspects of food production. It also focuses on leadership and personal development. The experiences of graduates entering the professional work field are very recent, since the first students graduated from the IFA programme in June 2016.

## Standard 1

## Intended learning outcomes

*The intended learning outcomes tie in with the level and orientation of the programme; they are geared to the expectations of the professional field, the discipline, and international requirements.*

### Conclusion

The study programme receives the judgment **good** for standard 1.

The panel is convinced that the programme's aim is very relevant for the international food & agribusiness sector. The programme wants to inspire students to become game changers in global agri-food systems and wants to educate the holistic approach to solve issues and introduce innovations in the food and agribusiness world. The panel sees that the programme qualifications are formulated in close cooperation with the professional work field and are linked to the hbo-standard and Dublin descriptors. The qualifications are agri-food knowledge based and focus on contributing to international business development. The combination of these qualifications with leadership and personal skills are unique according to the panel. It leads to professionals being able to make changes in agri-food systems with a value based mind-set and with a sustainable and integrated approach. In addition the programme demonstrates a good connection with the professional field and shows abilities to adapt the programme qualifications in the right direction.

### Substantiation

#### *Professional and educational profile*

The international agri-food business domain faces many challenges. The domain is in need for professionals who want to work internationally and are capable of working internationally. It is important to face these challenges with an interdisciplinary approach, to identify opportunities and to contribute to solutions for sustainable agri-food business development in an international context.

The programme's educational profile combines business administration with the technological foundation of agri-food production and aims to qualify students for further study or work in the constantly changing global food system either in the Netherlands or abroad. Typical professions are: manager agro commodities, specialist-advisor sustainable chains, advisor in development and environmental NGO's, area manager or international entrepreneur.

According to the panel the combination between sustainability, business and trade is unique compared to similar programmes offered in the Netherlands. Where agribusiness programmes focus on multidisciplinary approaches of business issues, this programme has a holistic approach on the agri-food supply chain in the context of the global food system and looks for sustainable business opportunities within this supply chain.

### *Final qualifications*

The panel notes that the programme is unique and that it has formulated nine unique final qualifications in close cooperation with the professional field. Four final qualifications are agri-food knowledge based. The other five final qualifications focus on skills needed in professional roles in the international agri-food system. The final qualifications are:

Agri-food knowledge based qualifications:

1. Improving sustainability of the global agri-food system,
2. Applying bio-based & circular economy principles in agri-food systems,
3. Contributing to sustainable innovation in a sector; animal production, crop production or food processing/nutrition,
4. Contributing to international business development.

Leadership and personal skills qualifications:

5. Providing advice,
6. Networking & influencing,
7. (Self)-reflection and judgement,
8. Project management,
9. Doing research.

The final qualifications demonstrate, according to the panel, the combination of sustainable improvements and innovations with international business, leadership and personal skills. The programme linked the qualifications with the Dublin descriptors and demonstrates in this way the linkage with the international professional qualifications. The final qualifications are also linked to the hbo-standard and therefore are in line with the bachelor level of higher education.

### *Alignment with the professional field*

Every two to three years the programme scans the professional field for developments. The panel finds these professional field scans of an outstanding level and believes that the programme is in good connection with the professional field. The programme demonstrates clearly that these work field scans contribute to specific and deliberate improvements. The world field scan in 2014 – 2015 led to the following adjustments:

- The bio based domain is integrated as a mandatory component,
- The qualification “Contributing to sustainable innovation in a sector” is limited to the three domains crop, animal and food,
- The farm management qualification was dropped since these aspects are covered in the international business development qualification and actual farm management was considered to be less relevant since the professional profile does not include a farm manager.

In a recent professional field scan experiences from professional assignment companies and graduates could be included. The companies stated that students have a good overview and understanding of supply chains and see the bigger picture. They have well developed communication skills, a good body of knowledge and their self awareness and flexibility are excellent. Graduates on the other hand find their networking skills and links to the professional field well developed. Both companies and graduates feel that the programme could focus more on business economics data collection and analysis. Additionally they both mention that research skills could receive more attention in the programme. The programme is working on this as is

explained in the next standard. This confirms to the panel that the programme is dedicated to uphold the quality of its final qualifications.

## Standard 2

## Teaching-learning environment

*The curriculum, the teaching-learning environment and the quality of the teaching staff enable the incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.*

### Conclusion

The study programme receives the judgment **satisfactory** for standard 2.

The panel finds the programme design adequate to achieve the final qualifications. The qualifications are translated into learning objectives at three levels and they are assigned to thematic modules. The thematic structure ensures the integral holistic approach of the programme. The second study year has a high study load for the students and a high work load for the lecturers involved. The panel agrees with the intention to shift some of the business subjects to the first year, since students mention that the business focus in the first year is minimal. To the panel's opinion the business focus in the whole programme could be stronger and especially in accounting and administration. Students indicate they would welcome this and the panel believes that the business focus on the whole sustainable chain has to be a part of the programme. The programme made the research skills in the programme more explicit to create awareness. The panel supports this and advises to make other subjects like business administration more explicit without losing the unique integrated approach of the programme. The staff is paying a lot of attention to the programme and students. The panel experienced a very dedicated and motivated staff. Students and work field praise the staff commitment and their professional experiences. According to the panel this is a good basis to improve the teaching and learning environment even further.

### Substantiation

#### *Programme content*

For the content of the programme the final qualifications are leading. The final qualifications are translated into learning objectives at three different levels. The first level is achieved after completing the propaedeutic phase. The second level is completed after the third study year and the third level after the fourth study year. The panel finds the learning objectives descriptions rather brief. A more detailed description of the learning objectives will give more direction to the programme content. It also will improve the focus of the teachers and make the objectives more measurable for students and work field.

The panel notes that the programme content is continuously related to the professional work field. In the first year, the content has an orientating and selecting function. All subjects are to be covered in this year and skills development is combined with knowledge acquirement through problem-based learning. Through group projects, tutorials and practicals the programme provides various approaches of learning. Because of the international student population, the student background and experiences vary. Lecturers mention that it takes specific international teaching skills to stimulate participation of all students. Although all subjects are to be covered, students note that the focus in year one is more on agri-food and sustainable subjects and less on

business subjects. . The panel advises to cover more business subjects in the first year to ensure that the first year is a good reflection of the total programme content.

In the second year, knowledge is deepened and applied in real life projects. Students choose one domain; animal production, crop production or food to continue their development in contributing to sustainable innovation in that domain. The other two domains remain at the first level. The project work becomes more extensive and more independent study is needed. The projects are commissioned by or in cooperation with internationally operating companies. Students and lecturers experience this year as a tough year with a high workload. During the location visit lecturers explained to the panel that options to shift subjects to the first year were discussed.

In the third year, students create their own personal profile and gain practical experiences in their domain of interest. The programme consists of one or two internships of which one is an internship abroad. The length of the internships can vary between 45 and 60 credits in total. Students can also choose for a minor of fifteen credits offered by HAS or take part in an exchange programme with a partner university like Harper Adams University of Applied Sciences in the United Kingdom. According to the students this year is a jewel since they can give direction to the content and practical elements within the guidelines of the programme.

Finally, the fourth year prepares students for professional life. In the first half of this year students study the module Future Food Systems. In this module they investigate production chains and come up with ideas for sustainable business improvement. The module focus is on the innovation process and on the transformation into new food systems. In the last half year, the professional development is addressed. Students work in teams on a professional assignment which is a real-life assignment from the professional field. Finally, the qualifications reflection, judgement and networking skills are addressed in the Professional Assessment.

The panel learned from the interviews with students and work field representatives that the international focus of this programme is excellent; the National Student Enquiry shows that students are very satisfied. The classroom is quite international as are the educational approach and the subjects of the programme. These findings are substantiated by the work field representatives; they are impressed by the international skills and orientation of the students.

From the interviews, the panel also learned that the business component in the programme could be stronger. Students and work field think that some aspects in business administration like business accounting and business strategies need more attention in the programme. The panel agrees and advises to give more attention to subjects like business accounting and administration. This additional attention is not only meant for the primary production and processing but is also meant for the whole sustainable chain.

Finally, the panel advises a better insight in the programme learning lines. Already the programme team made the research skills more explicit as a follow-up on the feedback given in the work field scan. The aim is to create more awareness for students and staff and to subsequently apply more research skills. The panel agrees with this aim and advises to make other subjects like business administration also more explicit.

### Programme design

The programme design is clearly student centered. The teaching methods and learning methods vary but the assignments are mostly done in groups of three to five students. Students coming from abroad mention that they need to get used to the group work in which they learn to work together and to be dependent on each others efforts. Therefore, there is good attention for the personal development and professional orientation by the lecturers and through the modules Coaching & Skills throughout the whole programme. According to the National Student Enquiry (NSE) the student satisfaction for 'preparation professional career' is very good; 4.15 on a scale from 1 to 5. Students are also very satisfied with the tutorial and lecture group size; score 4.33.

The programme design is structured through thematic modules like Global Food Systems, Bio based Economy and Circular Economy. Within these themes various subjects are presented in an integrated way. An overview of the modules (and ec) is given in the table below.

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
Year 1	Global Food Systems (6)	Agri-Food Business (6)	Bio based Economy (6)	Work Experience placement (Internship) (12)
	Crop Production (6)	Animal Production (6)	Food (6)	
	Coaching & Skills (3)	Coaching & Skills (3)	Coaching & Skills (3)	Coaching & Skills (3)
Year 2	Supply Chain Management (6)	Food Governance (6)	Sustainable Trade (5)	Business Plan 2 (6)
	Circular Economy 1 (4)	Business & Marketing (5)	Business Plan 1 (4)	Extension on Sustainability (8)
	Domain Track (Food, Animal or Crop) (6)		Circular Economy 2 (3)	
	Coaching & Skills (2)	Coaching & Skills (2)	Coaching & Skills (2)	Coaching & Skills (2)
Year 3	Internship(s) and choice of Exchange and Minor(s) (45-60)			Optional: International Business Development (15)
Year 4	Future Food Systems (30)		Professional Assignment (28)	
			Professional Assessment (2)	

### Admission

The panel finds the enrolment criteria adequate. The criteria are similar to those of other agribusiness bachelor courses. Students from the Netherlands with a havo or vwo qualification are admissible with all profiles that include mathematics. Students coming from mbo level 4 courses are admissible and are strongly advised to have mathematics and English included in their programme. International students need to have a secondary school diploma that is equivalent to the Dutch havo diploma with mathematics included in the final year. To study the programme successfully a good command of English is necessary; for Dutch students B1 level and for international students IELTS score 6.0, Cambridge score B2 or TOEFL score 70.

### *Student support*

The programme has several arrangements to support students in their study progress and personal development. Every student has an academic advisor who coaches the student during the whole study programme. The coaching focuses on the students' personal development and the study progress. If needed the study advisor can be contacted for matters concerning delay of the study, alternative tailor-made programmes or leaving the programme. The study advisor informs prospect students also about the programme and the enrolment criteria. The panel sees that the coaching is mainly individual. Since student numbers are increasing, the panel advises to introduce group coaching and to involve final year students in the coaching of group work.

The panel sees that the student diversity provides a good environment for encountering cultural differences in the classroom. It gives good opportunities to learn to operate and cooperate in other cultures and settings. Around 30 percent of the students come from abroad. This percentage varies per year. Currently there are 18 nationalities present in the programme. The programme aims for 50% Dutch students and 50% coming from all over the world. There is sufficient attention for intercultural aspects. There are team building activities like an excursion to Texel and there is attention for international business communication in year 1. Staff and students mention the focus from the beginning on intercultural differences and how to deal with them effectively.

The panel notes that the dropout rate after the first year is high and above the target of the programme. This rate varies between 20 and 36 percent per year. Students explain that students drop out for personal reasons or because of the culture shock. Some students do not have a clear idea about the programme or what they want to do as a professional. According to the staff the concept of an applied university with a practical orientation and the amount of group work are also important reasons for the dropout rates. The programme improved communication to prospect students and paid attention to these aspects.

### *Staff*

It is the panel's opinion that the lecturers are very dedicated to the programme. The NSE scores show that students are very satisfied with the teachers. They are available outside contact hours and interact very well with the students. Furthermore, all lecturers acted or worked in the international agri-food business. The HAS International Projects office creates opportunities to participate in international projects and to maintain and develop international experiences. Students also praise the experienced staff and feel looked after; they receive a lot of personal attention from the staff. Programme management wants to hire more international, non-native staff members, since the student number is rapidly growing. The panel believes that non-native lecturers would indeed increase the intercultural and international features of the programme. The panel advises to look for experienced staff with a business administration background to increase the business experiences in the team since all current lecturers have a technical educational background. The panel also advises to involve associate professors throughout the whole programme.

### *Facilities*

The general facilities are adequate for the programme. In the first year, crop production is demonstrated via the greenhouses on the premises. Also, every student experiences food processing in the Food Technology Lab through a practical in which apples are processed into apple sauce. The environmental sciences lab is used to demonstrate sustainable techniques that can be applied in agri-food production. Staff mentions that a hangout place for international students would be appreciated, but in general the facilities support the programme sufficiently.

## Standard 3                      Assessment

*The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.*

### Conclusion

The study programme receives the judgment **satisfactory** for standard 3.

The panel sees that the HAS assessment policy is applied in the IFA assessment programme. The assessment programme and assessment plan provide more than sufficient insight in the assessment development and execution. The documents form a good basis for the assessment execution. The assessments are an integral part of the student learning and development. The panel sees that assessment execution is in development. The examination board explains that the assessment transparency is improving after assessments being offered for the first time. There is sufficient attention for staff development in assessing. All staff is basically qualified in examination and some have additional qualifications. The panel finds the assessment forms clear and the feedback given comprehensive. The panel notes that in the written examinations of the second and fourth year mainly remembering and understanding are tested and advises to put more emphasis on the testing of applying and analysing. The panel advises also to pay attention to discriminative marking since the marking of and the feedback on the professional assignment is comprehensive but rather friendly.

### Substantiation

#### *Assessment policy*

The programme has incorporated the HAS assessment policy in the IFA assessment programme and IFA assessment plan. These documents provide more than sufficient insight in the assessment policy. They guide the lecturers involved through the assessments of the programme. The assessment policy aims to determine achievements of learning outcomes and to inform students about the expected performance. The IFA assessment policy specifically aims to stimulate student learning and development through assessing. It also aims programme and instruction improvement through assessing.

#### *Assessment execution*

Because the programme is relatively new, assessments are in development. The examination board adequately monitors the assessment execution. Their findings are that there is sufficient transparency in assessments and in their results. Also, they experienced improvements after the first time assessments were given. The main improvements and developments are:

- Connecting assessment questions or criteria to learning objectives,
- Including peer assessment and self reflection in assessments from the second year onwards,
- Adding individual assessments components to group assessments.

The panel studied some examinations of the second and fourth year like Food Governance and Animal Production in Future Food Systems and sees that the questions mainly focus on the level of remembering and understanding, while applying and analysing would be more appropriate for the second and third level of the learning objectives. The panel notes that learning objectives are now described in general terms. Specifying learning objectives can improve the assessment alignment to the level of the learning objectives.

The panel finds the marking for the Professional Assignment marks too positive. The average mark is 8. At first the panel believed that the high marks are related to the thorough attention for leadership and personal development in the programme but the level of elements like doing research and providing advice do not justify the high marks given. The panel agrees with the holistic nature of assessing, it is very appropriate for this programme, but a more discriminating and sharper marking through thorough discussions between assessors is advised. The panel recommends paying more attention to the discriminate marking and benchmarking with other programmes during the calibration sessions that are regularly organised by the programme.

The panel experiences a close relationship between students and lecturers. This leads to comprehensive and personalized feedback. The panel wonders if this close relationship could hinder objective marking and could make it difficult to keep the level of the product or examination in mind. There is room for improvement in the focus towards the commissioner of a project or to the level of learning objectives in case of an examination.

#### *Supervision and assurance*

Supervision and assurance is organised according to the assessment policy. The programme pays good attention to validity, reliability and transparency of assessments. The national student survey results show that assessments have sufficient quality and students are satisfied. The examination board is in good position to supervise assessments and to monitor the assessment quality. They have a good supportive role in supervising and assuring the assessments.

The programme staff is trained adequately in assessing. All lecturers have a basic qualification in examination and the testing plan for designing assessments provides tools to continuously improve the assessments. Within the team the four-eye principle is applied and the team calibration sessions are organised to assure assessment quality. The panel finds these procedures supportive to improve assessments.

## Standard 4 Achieved learning outcomes

*The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.*

### Conclusion

The study programme receives the judgment **satisfactory** for standard 4.

Graduates are successful. The most recent graduation overview shows that graduates have good starting positions. Graduates start in various positions and the labour market is diverse. The employability of graduates is good; they are employed or study a master course with success. The final Professional Assignments could be more programme specific and business-focused. Students seem to find it difficult to limit the information. The panel believes it is important to reduce the volume of the report, to separate main issues from side issues and to focus more on the message for the commissioner. The panel recommends strengthening the network with typical employers of the graduates because graduates show that they bring a different mind-set and can build bridges within food systems.

### Substantiation

#### *Graduation year*

The fourth year consists of three elements in which students achieve the required learning outcomes; Future Food Systems, Professional Assignment and Professional Assessment. The module Future Food Systems covers subjects like transition management, leadership, research skills and innovations. The Professional Assignment is a real-life project related to the international agri-food supply chain and puts the acquired knowledge and skills into practice. The graduation year is completed by the third module professional assessment. In this module students reflect on their professional development and their professional network.

All elements contribute to the final level of the qualifications. The table below gives an overview of their contribution to the final qualifications.

IFA final qualifications	Future Food Systems (30 EC)	Professional Assignment (28 EC)	Professional Assessment (2EC)
<b>Agri-food knowledge based qualifications</b>			
1. Improving sustainability of the Global Agri-food System	x	X	
2. Applying bio-based & circular economy principles in agri-food systems	x		
3. Contributing to sustainable innovation in a sector	x		
4. Contributing to international business development	x	x	
<b>Leadership and Personal skills qualifications</b>			
5. Providing advice	x	x	
6. Networking & influencing	x		x
7. (Self)reflection and judgement	x	x	x
8. Project management	x	x	
9. Doing research	x	x	

### *Realised final level*

The panel examined a representative selection of fifteen Professional Assignments and additionally examined the Future Food Systems and Professional Assessment results of four students.

The subjects of the Professional Assignment are relevant for the programme, but vary a lot and in some cases the relation with the domain chosen is weak. Therefore, the panel advises a stronger relation between the subject and the domain chosen by the student. Also the panel finds the reports very extensive and advises to limit the volume, to discriminate more between main and side issues and to focus more on the main research question. The Future Food Systems exams and reports are adequate and valid. One of the components is the individual research. The panel finds this component important to enhance the individual development of the qualification doing research. Finally the Professional Assessment is comprehensive and the assessment of this element is impressive and of a good quality.

The commissioners that were interviewed by the panel are satisfied with the realised final level. Students are motivated for the assignment. And to their opinion they put in a lot of effort and they perform beyond expectations. Some commissioners note that the agri analytic skills are better developed than the agribusiness skills. This is in line with the panel's findings. In the reports a lot of information is described but the information could be directed more to the commissioner. The panel would expect a more in-depth research and a more specific research question to be addressed. This would help to target the results better to the assignment given by the commissioner.

### *Performance graduates*

During the visit the panel met commissioners from professional assignments. They unanimously agree that students are very motivated, operate independently, show self awareness and take initiative. They also value the holistic approach and are impressed that students can focus if needed. These findings are in line with the aim of the programme to educate generalists rather than specialists. The commissioners have an important advice for the programme; include more business knowledge and skills. The analysis is good but the conversion to business can be better. Therefore, core business skills would be adding to this generalist programme.

Labour market statistics from first graduates show that graduates end up in all kinds of positions from entrepreneur to sales and advisory positions. About 30% of the students continue in a master programme. The hbo-monitor survey shows that students feel well prepared and are linked well to the professional field. However, the professional field varies to a great extent. The panel recommends that the programme builds and strengthens a network with typical employers of graduates to become important game changers in the agri-food world.



# General conclusion of the study programme

## Assessments of the standards

The audit panel comes to the following judgements with regard to the standards:

Standard	Assessment
<i>Standard 1 Intended learning outcomes</i>	Good
<i>Standard 2 Teaching-learning environment</i>	Satisfactory
<i>Standard 3 Assessment</i>	Satisfactory
<i>Standard 4 Achieved learning outcomes</i>	Satisfactory

The International Food & Agribusiness bachelor course aims to educate game changers for the global agri-food systems. The panel is convinced that this aim is very relevant. The programme solves issues and introduces innovations with a valuable holistic approach. Therefore the programme needs to be open over the direction in which the game might change, stimulating students to think out of any box. The agri analytic focus is well developed and the business focus could be strengthened. The programme staff is very committed and pays a lot of attention to the students. Assessing is adequate and the feedback given is comprehensive. The marking is in some cases quite friendly. The panel suggests paying attention to this during calibration sessions. The first students graduated recently and they experience a good connection to the professional field. Although the labour market for this programme is diverse, the programme deserves a coherent network of employers that employ the professionals who build bridges within global food systems. The audit panel assesses the quality of the existing hbo bachelor International Food & Agribusiness from HAS University of Applied Science as **satisfactory**.

# Recommendations

The audit panel has the following recommendations for the study programme:

## Standard 2

- Describe the learning objectives more in detail,
- Cover more business subjects in the propaedeutic phase to ensure a good reflection of the whole programme,
- Reduce the workload in the second study year for students and lecturers,
- Continue to explicit learning lines of the programme like is done for research,
- Pay more attention to business accounting and administration for the whole sustainable chain,
- Involve associate professors throughout the whole programme,
- If new staff is to be appointed, hire non-native staff with an international business administration background.

## Standard 3

- Specify learning objectives and assessment criteria,
- Align the assessments to the criteria of the learning objectives,
- Pay attention to discriminative marking and benchmarking with other programmes.

## Standard 4

- Target the Professional Assignment report more to the commissioner, through improved business writing and discriminating main issues from side issues.
- Strengthen the network with typical employers of graduates from this programme.

## Appendix 1: Programme site visit

Time	Subject	Participants
08.30 – 09.00	Presentation study programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ir. J.E.T.M. (Erwin) Bouwmans, Lecturer</li> <li>• Ir. A.H.A.C. (Toon) Keijsers, Lecturer</li> <li>• E.E.R. (Esther) van Lieshout, Study adviser</li> <li>• Ir. F.M. (Frederike) Praasterink, Associate professor (lector) Future Food Systems</li> <li>• M. (Razee) Seyyed, Student</li> </ul>
09.00 – 10.15	Preparation and inspection of the material	
10.15 – 11.00	Tour	<p>Environmental Sciences Lab:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M.C.A.A. (Mieke) van Eerten PhD, Docent Sustainable Processing of Food and Biomass,</li> </ul> <p>Greenhouses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• R.N.W. (Roger) Watts MSc, Docent Arable Farming Agronomics,</li> </ul> <p>Food Technology Lab:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• S. (Sandra) van den Berg MSc, docent Food security, food &amp; health, Chemistry</li> <li>• M.C. (Marnix) Wolters BSc, Lecturer Supply Chain Management,</li> </ul>
11.00 – 11.45	Talks with students & Alumni	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frenske Blom, vierdejaars student IFA, Animal, vooropleiding Havo Nieuw (E+M), Nederland</li> <li>• Gilme Davids, vierdejaars student IFA, Crop, vooropleiding Havo Nieuw (N+G), Nederland</li> <li>• Poppy Eyre, derdejaars student IFA, Food, vooropleiding, Gen. Cert. of Education Advanced Subsidiary Level, UK</li> <li>• Faye Hartman, tweedejaars student IFA, Food, vooropleiding VWO Nieuw (N+G &amp; N+T) Nederland</li> <li>• Luc van Heumen, vierdejaars student IFA, Food, vooropleiding MBO Ondernemer Groothandel 10002, Nederland</li> <li>• Wesley (Wes) Noland, tweedejaars student IFA, Crop, vooropleiding USA High School Diploma, USA</li> </ul> <p>Allumni: Lucy van Rijswijk BBA, afgestudeerd in Juli 2017</p>
11.45 – 12.30	Talks with teachers and examiners about content program, assessment and graduation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M.C.A.A. (Mieke) van Eerten PhD, Docent Sustainable Processing of Food and Biomass, Valorising food wastes, Calculating the food print of agri-food products, Involved in lectorate Food, ProCom, Module &amp; domain coordinator</li> <li>• R.N.W. (Roger) Watts MSc, Docent Arable Farming Agronomics, Plant Breeding, Management, Internationalization, Module &amp; domain coordinator, COP</li> <li>• Ir. J.E.T.M. (Erwin) Bouwmans, Hogeschooldocent Animal production systems, Transition and New Business Models, Personal Leadership, Communication &amp; Consultancy, Module coordinator, Involved in lectorate Transition</li> <li>• M.C. (Marnix) Wolters BSc, docent Supply Chain Management, Fresh Produce Trade, Sustainable Trade, Smallholder Development, Public-Private-Partnerships, Intercultural business communication, PA Acquisition, PA Coordinator, Module coordinator</li> <li>• N. (Neeltje) Bekkers BBA, docent Global Food Systems, Food Security, Internationalization of higher education, ProCom, Internships, Module coordinator, Minor coordination</li> <li>• Ir. B. (Barbara) van Mosselvelde, docent, Food (safety, production, ingredients, nutrition), B-to-B sales, account management, (e-) learning/training &amp; development, Module &amp; domain coordinator</li> <li>• E.E.R. (Esther) van Lieshout, Study adviser</li> </ul>

Time	Subject	Participants
12.30 – 13.15	Lunch	
13.15 – 13.45	Exam Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. B.J. (Bram) van Helvoirt, Docent Food Governance (institutional framework of global food system), Food and Nutrition Security, Private sector development, Value chain analysis, Development studies, Exam Committee, Module coordinator, Involved in lectorate Future Food Systems</li> <li>• Drs. H. (Henco) Vonk Noordergraaf, Hoogeschooldocent, lid examencommissie</li> </ul>
13.45 – 14.30	Talk with the Study Program Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M.E. Overdijk-Kerkhoff MBA, Program Director</li> <li>• Dr. Ir. J.A. (Jeannette) van de Steeg, Docent, Coördinator Opleidingsorganisatie</li> <li>• R.N.W. (Roger) Watts MSc, Docent Arable Farming Agronomics, Plant Breeding, Management, Internationalization, Module &amp; domain coordinator, COP</li> </ul>
14.30 – 14.45	Coffee Break	
14.45 – 15.30	Work Field Representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marianne van Keep, Director of Sustainability, Verstegen Spices and Sauces</li> <li>• Maren Peters, Sourcing Development Coordinator, Tradin Organic</li> <li>• Adrian de Groot Ruiz, Executive director true price, True Price</li> <li>• Pierre van Hedel, Rabobank Foundation</li> <li>• Jeanette van de Ven, Bestuur ZLTO (Gezonde dieren/integriteit LTO Nederland), Goat Farm, ZLTO</li> <li>• Lennart Visser, Manager Duurzaamheid &amp; Marketing, Total Produce</li> </ul>
15.30 – 16.45	Assessment consultation audit panel	
16.45 – 17.00	Closing talks with team and study program management with feedback and conclusions	
17.00 – 17.30	Development talk: <b>Creative solutions for individual assessing to create a high impact / efficient / challenging / inspiring classroom.</b>	

## **Appendix 2: Documents examined**

Teaching and Examination Regulations 1 2017-2018  
Teaching and Examination Regulations 2 2017-2018  
Module Descriptions  
Expertise IFA team 2018  
Literature List IFA 2018  
Professional Assignment manual 2017-2018  
Future Food Systems manual 2017 - 2018  
Professional Assessment manual 2017 - 2018  
2017 NSE Factsheet  
Realised improvements based on previous accreditation  
Dublin Descriptor and IFA qualifications  
Work field scan 2014-2015  
Work field scan 2017-2018  
HAS Assessment Policy  
Assessment Plan IFA  
Assessment Program IFA  
Exam Committee Annual Report  
Jaarrapport "Studeren met een functiebeperking 2017"  
Self Evaluation report International Food & Agribusiness  
A representative selection of fifteen professional assignments including assessments  
A representative selection of four Future Food Systems and Professional Assessments including assessments.