



ASSESSMENT REPORT

Limited programme assessment

Bachelor International Business

Full-time

Fontys Hogescholen

**De kracht van
kennis.**

ASSESSMENT REPORT

Limited programme assessment

Bachelor International Business
Full-time

Fontys Hogescholen
(Fontys International Business School Venlo)

Croho registration: 30029

Hobéon Certificering
12 December 2019

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1. GENERAL AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

Name Institution	Fontys Hogescholen
Status	Funded
Outcomes of Institutional Quality Assessment	Positive (30 August 2019, valid until 4 September 2025)
Name of programme in Central Register of Higher Professional Education (CROHO)	International Business
ISAT code CROHO	30029
Domain/sector CROHO	Economics
Orientation	Higher Vocational Education (In Dutch: <i>hoger beroepsonderwijs</i>)
Level of the programme	Bachelor
Title, grade	Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)
Number of credits	240
Specialisations	n/a
Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Venlo (Fontys International Business School) covered in this advisory report - Eindhoven (Fontys Hogeschool Marketing and Management) covered in a separate advisory report
Variants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Single degree 4 year full-time FIBS programme - Double degree in collaboration with the Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences (Finland)
Joint programme	n/a
Language	English
Date site visit	8 October 2019

2. SUMMARY

The programme of International Business (IB from now on) aims to deliver graduates in international business who are young business professionals, trained to be as dynamic as the global business environment around them. They are multilingual, interculturally competent and globally oriented. They have acquired a solid generalist understanding of business in the 21st century which has been experienced in practical business contexts, both in the Netherlands and abroad, making them adaptable, flexible and solution oriented.

Graduates are able to evaluate and apply information in order to solve business problems. This fosters skills which are sustainable across multiple environments and contexts. The IB graduate is prepared for jobs in the future which may not yet have been defined today. Their careers typically begin with entry-level positions requiring broad business knowledge, soft skills and a hands-on attitude. An open and flexible attitude plus key skills make them well positioned for strong professional development and lifelong learning. The knowledge acquired and the attitude developed mean that any organisation can benefit from their contribution through innovative thinking, creative problem solving and quickly grasping the core issues of the business.

This profile was translated into the IB National Framework, composed in 2017. Four former programmes (i.e. International Business and Languages, International Business and Management Studies, Trade Management for Asia and an older "version" of International Business) merged into a new IB programme in accordance with the general tendency towards fewer but simultaneously broader programmes.

The National Platform IB (*Landelijk Opleidingsoverleg*) in which all universities of applied sciences offering an IB programme are represented, provided a transition matrix which demonstrates how previous competencies of these four former programmes match the new intended learning outcomes in the national framework.

For Fontys International Business School in Venlo, this meant a transition from IBMS to IB. The transition was made through a so called "*harde knip*", meaning the old IBMS programme has been closed altogether and a completely new IB programme has been opened for freshmen and for students enrolled in the former IBMS programme as well. Graduates up to and including cohort 2017-2018 received an IBMS diploma, all students graduating since September 2018 receive an IB diploma.

Standard 1. Intended Learning Outcomes

The panel found the national framework to be the outcome of a careful and well organised research process. The national framework describes intended learning outcomes (called programme learning outcomes) for a new generation of IB professionals who will be flexible, well equipped to do business research, internationally and interculturally aware and oriented and well prepared for many more changes in business and society to come. The link with the HEO Standard and the Dublin descriptors is transparent as is the choice for using KSAVE and AuCom.

IB Venlo serves a region where logistics and sustainability are key topics. The region is therefore sometimes called Greenport. This specific identity of the region does not require specific qualifications from professionals on top of the general qualifications described in the national framework. The work field representatives consider soft skills the most important skills for the jobs of today and tomorrow and especially these skills have been emphasised in the new national framework.

The programme meets standard 1.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

The translation from national programme learning outcomes into FIBS IB's module learning outcomes is adequate. The module learning outcomes make it possible for the student to grow towards an IB graduate in terms of a starting professional.

The 'Euregion Rijn-Maas-Noord' is recognisably reflected in the learning environment. The programme is strongly connected to the nearby work field through manufacturing, agrofood and logistics companies.

Fontys Venlo offers a coherent IB programme focused on project-based learning (and correspondingly on an authentic learning environment) which is a distinctive feature of IB Venlo. This project-based learning creates a vibrant learning community of lecturers and students and stimulates students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The transition from IBMS to IB through a fade-in curriculum and the implementation of the project-based learning system were demanding in the beginning for everyone involved. But management, lecturers and students all agree that it was worth the effort.

The programme management takes its responsibility of facilitating and professionalising the team of lecturers very seriously. This is reflected by the high percentage of BKO and BKE certificates among lecturers, the AuCom workshops and the scheduled meetings for the complete team of lecturers every Monday morning. The team is genuinely working as a team within the new curriculum and with the new didactical methods.

Facilities are well designed to serve project-based teaching and learning. Digital facilities are good.

The complete programme is taught in English which is the only logical choice regarding the jobs the graduates will apply for, regarding the profile of the programme and regarding the diversity of the lecturers and students.

The double degree which is on offer is an interesting trajectory for IB students. A double degree obtained in two different countries will surely have a positive effect on their employability.

The programme meets standard 2.

Standard 3. Student assessment

The various assessment types used within the programme reflect a clear connection to the learning objective(s) of the module or project. All assignments conducted by a group also contain an individual component. Rubrics and other grading criteria are being used consequently by the examiners. For online assessment outside the Netherlands the assessment environment is videotaped by using two cameras.

The assessment of the graduation project combines assessing the bachelor's degree level with the level of practical professional skills. Assessing research skills is well addressed during the graduation phase and students are thoroughly prepared for this by the previous modules Business research I, II and III. Two well-trained examiners are responsible for the grading. They are advised by an external industry expert.

The assessment programme of the IB curriculum is well thought through, valid and reliable.

A wide variety of assessments is being used and the well-trained FIBS IB lecturers and examiners (almost all of them are BKO and BKE certified) are qualified to execute all these different types of testing methods.

The EB and the TAC both have their own distinctive task and role. The distribution of roles and tasks was transparent to everyone involved and has clearly resulted in a fruitful collaboration. According to the panel the examiners, the TAC and the EB function on a high level and guarantee safeguarding the quality of the programme assessment today and in the future.

The programme meets standard 3.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

The panel was impressed by the level and the quality of the final products. All were showcases of bachelor level. Some of the theses dealt with subjects less obvious connected to the IB field. This was then reflected in the grades. Very well elaborated criteria are being used, and the grading forms completed by the examiners contained substantiated judgments.

In recent years the programme moved into the right direction to tie in with the changes in the work field; soft skills have been emphasised, including skills for working in projects and groups.

The programme meets standard 4.

Recommendations

The most important recommendations of the panel include improving communication about the programme and the assessments to students, integrating research outcomes of the research group ("*lectoraten*") into the IB curriculum and putting more effort in advertising the double degree programme with SeAMK (standard 2). The panel also likes to stress that the valuable calibration sessions inside and outside Fontys should generate more (documented) output and food for thought. This will not only be useful within the single degree programme but can also add value to the annual meetings with SeAMK where the (assessing of the) double degree is evaluated (standard 3).

Overall conclusion

The programme meets all four standards. The panel advises the NVAO to **extend the accreditation** of the programme.

Upon agreement with the panel members the chair adopted this report on 12 December 2019.

3. INTRODUCTION

Venlo University of Applied Sciences (*Hogeschool Venlo*) was founded in 1986. In 1990, a bachelor programme in Marketing was added to a bachelor programme in Business Economics. Initially, both programs focussed on the Dutch educational market. By 1996, *Hogeschool Venlo* had become part of *Fontys Hogescholen*. In 2002, International Business and Management Studies was inaugurated. In 2007, the three study programmes were clustered together under the title of *Fontys Internationale Hogeschool Economie* (FIHE). In 2012, the name of the school was changed to Fontys International Business School (FIBS). In 2013 a fourth study programme, International Fresh Business Management, was inaugurated. In 2018 International Business and Management Studies was merged into the IB Croho 30029. Today FIBS offers four bachelor programmes: International Business, International Finance and Control, International Marketing and International Fresh Business Management. Two master programmes are offered by FIBS: Master of science in Business and Management and Master of Business Administration.

The IB degrees offered in Venlo and Eindhoven stem from the same set of national programme learning outcomes as defined by the National Platform IB, but IB Venlo and IB Eindhoven serve different regions and use different didactical approaches. IB Venlo is located at the border between Germany and The Netherlands and is a unique location between the "Randstad" and the "Ruhrgebiet". It is a geographic hotspot for regional business with a global perspective, focused on logistics and sustainability, and therefore called the Greenport region. IB Eindhoven on the other hand is located in the Brainport region. This region is known for its entrepreneurship and strong technology sector. Differences between the regions led to differences between the programmes. This advisory report only concerns the IB Venlo programme. A separate report is drafted on the IB Eindhoven programme.

In 2013 a Hobéon panel audited the IBMS programme. The panel recommended to focus on a specific profile for Venlo, provide education in an extra foreign language besides English, pay more attention to research skills, work on improving the performance level of the Examination Board and upgrade the level of the graduation products. The panel noticed that these recommendations were carefully addressed. The Venlo profile is now stronger connected to the region in terms of involving the employers nearby. In year 1 and 2 an extra language is offered and in year 1, 3 and 4 Business research modules are implemented to prepare students for doing applied research in their graduation project. The Examination Board focusses on safeguarding the quality of assessing as a whole and on monitoring the achieved end level of the graduates, while the Test Audit Committee does regular check-ups on the exams. These adjustments led to demonstrable improvement reflected by the graduation products which were of high quality. Chapter 4 contains detailed information on all of these matters.

4. FINDINGS AND JUDGMENTS

4.1. Intended learning outcomes

Standard 1: 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.

Explanation: The intended learning outcomes demonstrably describe the level of the programme (Associate Degree, Bachelor's, or Master's) as defined in the Dutch Qualifications Framework, as well as its orientation (professional or academic). In addition, they tie in with the regional, national or international perspective of the requirements currently set by the professional field and the discipline with regard to the contents of the programme. Insofar as is applicable, the intended learning outcomes are in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations.

Findings

The programme of International Business (IB) aims to deliver graduates in international business who are young business professionals, trained to be as dynamic as the global business environment around them. They are multilingual, interculturally competent and globally oriented. They have acquired a solid generalist understanding of business in the 21st century which has been experienced in practical business contexts, both in the Netherlands and abroad, making them adaptable, flexible and solution oriented.

Graduates are able to evaluate and apply information in order to solve business problems. This fosters skills which are sustainable across multiple environments and contexts. The IB graduate is prepared for jobs in the future which may not yet have been defined today. Their careers typically begin with entry-level positions requiring broad business knowledge, soft skills and a hands-on attitude. An open and flexible attitude plus key skills make them well positioned for strong professional development and lifelong learning. The knowledge acquired and the attitude developed mean that any organisation can benefit from their contribution through innovative thinking, creative problem solving and quickly grasping the core issues of the business.

This profile was translated into the IB National Framework, composed in 2017. Four former programmes, International Business and Languages (IBL), International Business and Management Studies (IBMS), Trade Management for Asia (TMA) and an older "version" of International Business (IB) merged into a new IB programme in accordance with the general tendency towards fewer but simultaneously broader programmes. For Fontys International Business School in Venlo, this meant a transition from IBMS to IB.

The new framework for the IB programmes has been developed with input from more than 140 international companies, 11 partner universities, professors from 4 universities of applied sciences and more than 60 lecturers to assure that current international business practices as well as recent insights from research were represented. An important change in the new framework is that the requirements for an IB graduate are more than before geared towards so-called 21st century skills; generic skills that add value in a broad range of jobs.

The national consultative body (*Landelijk Opleidingsoverleg*) in which all universities of applied sciences offering an IB programme are represented, provided a transition matrix which demonstrates how previous competencies of former programmes (i.e. IBL, IBMS, TMA and the former IB programme) match the new intended learning outcomes in the national framework.

The new framework is derived from Binkley's KSAVE structure (Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes, Values and Ethics) and consists of 4 domains. The 4 domains are divided into 14 themes and each theme is outlined in at least one programme learning outcome (PLO):

Themes in domain 1 Ways of thinking	Nr	PLOs
Critical thinking	WT1	Use the process of thoughtful evaluation to deliberately formulate a reasonable conclusion.
Innovation and creativity	WT2	Create innovative ideas in a changing business environment in a systematic fashion.
International Business Awareness	WT3	Analyse patterns in global macroeconomic factors and policies that drive international trade and business development.
International Business Communication	WW4	Communicate (business) messages effectively and persuasively using advanced English to an (un)informed audience.
	WW5	Optional: Use one or two additional languages to facilitate international business.
Themes in domain 2 Ways of working	Nr	PLOs
Collaboration	WW6	Collaborate effectively with different kinds of stakeholders in different cultural, organisational and political landscapes to contribute to achieving agreed goals.
Management of information as digital citizen	WW7	Produce management information from various data sources in an international business environment.
Themes in domain 3 Living in the world	Nr	PLOs
Personal and professional development	LW8	Express reflections on one's personal development with the aim of personal growth.
	LW9	Respond appropriately to an unfamiliar, or unexpectedly changing, business environment.
Ethical and societal responsibility	LW10	Formulate one's own position concerning ethical and social responsibility in a professional environment.
Intercultural proficiency	LW11	Mitigate the pitfalls of cultural differences in business and social contexts
	LW12	Display willingness to work with people from other cultures and to work in countries with different cultural backgrounds.
	LW13	Use appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication in an intercultural setting.
	LW14	Assess the effect of cultural differences on organisational behaviour and strategic choices.
Themes in domain 4 Tools for working and management	Nr	PLOs
Marketing and sales	TW15	Develop a well-founded marketing plan to support the creation of value for international customers.
	TW16	Use appropriate sales techniques in support of durable customer relationships.
	TW17	Incorporate developments of the digital landscape in a marketing strategy.
Finance and accounting	TW18	Evaluate financial performance of the organisation from different stakeholders' perspectives.
	TW19	Recommend financing possibilities in a dynamic international environment.
Operations and supply chain management	TW20	Evaluate operations processes within and between organisations.
	TW21	Manage operations processes within and between organisations.
Organisation and people	TW22	Draft the strategic cycle of part(s) of the organisation (process and content).
	TW23	Assess the impact of change on the organisation.
Business research	TW24	Analyse a complex business problem in an international business setting with use of adequate research design, resulting in an evidence-based, feasible solution.

Domains and themes in the national framework are linked to the HEO Standard and the Dublin descriptors. The framework uses Bulthuis's AuCom model (AuCom stands for Autonomy and Complexity) to distinguish three competence levels determined by a combination of complexity and autonomy.

The national framework has been validated by FIBS through dialogue with the professional field in the Advisory Board (AB). IB FIBS adopted the full national framework.

IB FIBS serves the Greenport region where logistics and sustainability are key topics. According to the work field representatives "from the region" (who are also members of the IB FIBS Advisory Board) this specific identity of the region does not require specific qualifications from professionals on top of the general qualifications described in the national framework. The work field representatives consider soft skills the most important skills for contemporary and future jobs and especially these skills have been emphasised in the new framework.

AB meetings take place twice or three times a year. Both intended learning outcomes (ILOs) and translation from ILOs to the curriculum are discussed in these meetings to assure the connection of the programme to the work field remains strong and up to date.

In the institute's strategic plan 'Fontys Focus 2020' three focus areas are described: focus will be put on student-centred learning, on intensifying the connection with the professional field on several levels, including stimulating cross-fertilisation and on innovating the organisation.

Considerations

The panel found the national framework to be the outcome of a careful and well organised research process. The national framework describes intended learning outcomes (called programme learning outcomes) for a new generation of IB professionals who will be flexible, well equipped to do business research, internationally and interculturally aware and oriented and well prepared for many more changes in business and society to come. The link with the HEO Standard and the Dublin descriptors is transparent as is the choice for using KSAVE and AuCom.

Since the national framework has been fully adopted by FIBS without any differentiation connected to the identity of the region, the panel questioned the direct link to the professional field nearby. The work field representatives / AB members advocated convincingly that the special needs of the region were well translated in this new national framework by putting more emphasis on soft skills than the former IBMS profile did. Extra differentiation would not be of any added value for the region.

Connection with the professional field is good, while there's still some room for improvement regarding the intensity of the relationship with the alumni. Alumni too can provide valuable information on updating the profile.

The intended learning outcomes of the national framework correspond with the focus of *Fontys Hogescholen* described in the strategic plan 'Fontys Focus 2020'. According to the panel the connection with the professional field is strong, both on a strategic level and on a practical level (see standard 2). The way the programme incorporates the other focus areas mentioned in the strategic plan is described under standard 2.

Judgment

The panel concludes ***the programme meets standard 1.***

4.2. Teaching-learning environment

Standard 2: The curriculum, the teaching-learning environment and the quality of the teaching staff enable the incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Explanation: The intended learning outcomes have been adequately translated into educational objectives of (components of) the curriculum. The diversity of the students admitted is taken into account in this respect. The teachers have sufficient expertise in terms of both subject matter and teaching methods to teach the curriculum and provide appropriate guidance. The teaching-learning environment encourages students to play an active role in the design of their own learning process (student-centred approach). If the programme is taught in a language other than Dutch, the programme must justify its choice. This also applies if the programme bears a foreign language name. The teaching staff must have a sufficient command of the language in which they are teaching. Services and facilities are not assessed, unless they have been set up specifically for the programme concerned.

Findings

In designing the new IB curriculum the following principles were used by FIBS:

- Project-based learning is the leading didactic principle: students work in project teams and - with help from lecturers who stimulate them in developing a proactive attitude - work towards delivering milestones.
 - Each semester is constructed around a major project.
 - Projects gain in importance from the first year to the last year.
- An authentic learning environment is implemented as much as possible through working together with the industry in logistics, agrofood start-ups and in the manufacturing industry.
- Internationalisation
 - Teaching and assessing in English
 - International staff
 - International student population
 - Two internships in two different countries and the possibility of a minor abroad, including a double degree opportunity
- Orientation towards the KSAVE model.
- Orientation towards the AuCom model:
 - Year 1 – orientation and selection, level 1
 - Year 2 and 3 – main phase, level 2
 - Year 4 – graduation phase, end level, level 3
- Stimulating individual paths of development.
- Stimulating international exposure.
- Focus on skills in business research.
- All PLOs are addressed in each year and the ILOs of the national framework (i.e. themes and PLOs) have been translated into learning objectives on the level of the modules, so called module learning outcomes (MLOs).
- Module learning Outcomes (MLOs) build up to PLO level in consecutive steps.
- All PLOs in the domain Tools for Working and Management (TWM) are to be assessed at end level in semester 7 with the exception of TWM 24 (analyse a complex business problem in an international business setting with use of adequate research design, resulting in an evidence-based, feasible solution) which can only be finalised at end level in the graduation project.

These principles resulted into the following curriculum blueprint (see next page).

Curriculum blueprint IB FIBS

Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3	Semester 4	Semester 5	Semester 6	Semester 7	Semester 8
Project investigate your market	Project Analyse your company	Project Develop your business	Project Drive your business	Internship	Minor study (abroad)	Project Strategic review of a company	Graduation assignment
Marketing analysis	Accounting & finance						
Business research I	Operation & supply chain	Start-up factory I	Start-up factory II			Business research III	
Organisation & people I	Organisation & people II	Business intelligence I	Business intelligence II	Business research II		Elective I	
Effective communication I	Effective communication II	Effective communication III	Effective communication IV				
Additional language I	Additional language II	Additional language III	Additional language IV			Elective II	PPD
PPD	PPD	PPD	PPD				

Explanation of the used colours:

Projects
Feed in module
Skills module
Personal and professional development
Internship
Elective part
Graduation assignment

The complete programme is taught in English. The main reason for this choice is to prepare students for the international labour market where English is the most commonly used language. Besides the demands of the professional field, English is the language in which the very diverse staff communicates. Most of the lecturers are German, only 20% of the staff is Dutch. The same applies to the student population; communication among students is in English (and German) since 70% of the students are native speakers of the German language. Only about 10% is native speaker Dutch.

The team of 48 IB lecturers represents 15 nationalities. The lecturers operate in different roles (subject lecturer, lecturer in research skills, coach in personal and professional development, graduation supervisor etc.). Almost all of them (93%) hold a BKO certificate and 82% holds a BKE certificate issued by Cito. All lecturers have connections in the professional field and 86% have experience in the professional field. They all speak English on at least level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and 15% is native speaker English (CEFR level C2).

Currently two lectorates are operational within FIBS: the lectorate Business Services and Innovation (since 2017) and the new lectorate Cross Borders Business Development which is in the course of being installed.

As stated before, the vast majority of the students comes from Germany. German students tend to choose Venlo because Germany doesn't offer an IB programme, Venlo is nearby for the (densely populated) *Ruhrgebiet*, the Dutch educational system is less hierarchical, the didactical model of project-based learning is attractive, and the level of English is higher than in Germany.

Both lecturers and students are enthusiastic about the system of project-based learning, although both groups also acknowledge that the switch hasn't been a hassle-free transition. Lecturers had to acquire new teaching skills to be able to make the transition from "spoon-feeding" to "answering questions by replying with new questions" and from being a specialist in one field to becoming a generalist and carry out a more interdisciplinary approach. The IB programme manager organised various workshops (for example regarding working with AuCom) and the lecturers read and discussed articles about project-based teaching and learning (for example about combining the roles of lecturer, coach, "mum" etc.). According to the complete IB team a huge effort has been made and almost everyone stayed on board. As one of the lecturers said: "During this process only three lecturers resigned, the rest of us was willing to go the extra mile (i.e. working extra hours) because we believe in it". Students had to make an effort as well by making the transition from learning in a more traditional "passively absorbing" way to a modern proactive way. This implied they had to get used to not getting straight answers from their lecturers anymore, but getting guidance, help, advice and new questions instead. As one of the students stated: "The planned chaos at the beginning of a project can be quite annoying but turns out to be effective in the end". Both lecturers and students characterised the process of getting there as challenging, but also concluded that in the end this education strategy pays off: students become more in charge of their own learning path and are more effectively stimulated to develop their own personal profile. This enables them to become proactive assertive young professionals. The work field representatives confirm this outcome. According to them the students they welcome into their companies are indeed assertive, proactive, persistent, flexible and very well equipped for dealing with nowadays complex problems.

Special facilities are designed to facilitate project-based teaching and learning: one area of the campus is designated to IB for the project modules. The area can accommodate 60 students. The size of a project group varies between 2 and 10 students. Students state that freeriding within a group is not possible. They mention several occasions in which diligent students kicked out one or more of the lazy ones.

The library offers books, workspaces and digital resources. The main digital platform used for communication is 'FontysConnect'.

Students are quite positive about the physical and digital facilities. Their complaints are restricted to the sometimes-inconsistent information.

For foreign students special facilities are available. The international office organised a buddy system for all incoming exchange students.

Since September 2018 IB FIBS offers a double degree programme with their partner *Seinäjoen ammattikorkeakoulu* (SeAMK, in English the Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences) in Finland. The programme management of both programmes meet annually and compare their intended learning outcomes, subjects, didactical systems and ways of assessing. They then deliver a comparison matrix. Recent results of comparing both profiles and programmes pointed out that the intended learning outcomes were addressed more or less equally in both programmes, with one distinctive exception: Business research seems to be assessed on a lower level at SeAMK than at FIBS. This made FIBS decide to make Business research II (a third-year module) compulsory for outgoing students to make sure that they will be able to follow Business research III when they come back after their year abroad. An online module is designed for them to prevent them from study delay. To assure that all Dutch PLOs - and especially TWM 24 - are achieved and assessed at end level, the complete fourth year of the programme in Venlo is compulsory for both FIBS and SeAMK students.

Summarising the DD programme, FIBS students go to Finland in their third year, SeAMK students come to the Netherlands in their fourth year:

	FIBS Venlo (The Netherlands)		SeAMK Seinäjoki (Finland)	
	Single degree	Double degree	Single degree	Double degree
Year 1	Regular year 1 60 EC	Regular year 1 60 EC	Regular year 1 60 EC	Regular year 1 60 EC
Year 2	Regular year 2 60 EC	Regular year 2 60 EC	Regular year 2 60 EC	Regular year 2 60 EC
Year 3	Regular year 3 60 EC	1 year at SeAMK 60 EC	Regular year 3 60 EC	Regular year 3 60 EC
		Minor at SeAMK		
		Work placement in Finnish company		
		FIBS online module Business research II		
Year 4	Regular year 4 60 EC	Regular year 4 60 EC	Regular year 4 30 EC	1 year at FIBS 60 EC
Total duration	4 years	4 years	3.5 years	4 years

So far only one student from FIBS went to SeAMK (and just returned for his graduation year in the Netherlands) and no students from SeAMK came to FIBS yet.

In the institute's strategic plan 'Fontys Focus 2020' three focus areas are described: focus will be put on student-centred learning, on intensifying the connection with the professional field on several levels, including stimulating cross-fertilisation and on innovating the organisation.

Considerations

According to the panel the translation from national PLOs into FIBS IB's MLOs is adequate. The MLOs make it possible for the student to grow – in steps – from level 1 to level 3 (AuCom) and develop their knowledge, skills, attitude, values and ethics (KSAVE) towards an IB graduate in terms of a starting professional. The programme is coherent and the focus on project-based learning with an increasing importance of projects from year to year is a distinctive feature of IB Venlo. The panel witnessed a vibrant learning community in which project-based learning brings lecturers and students together in a way that is effective regarding working on the intended learning outcomes.

The transition from IBMS to IB through a fade-in curriculum and the implementation of the project-based learning system were demanding in the beginning, but the panel noticed that the lecturers were willing to put a lot of energy into these processes, together with each other and with their students.

The panel also noticed that the programme management takes its responsibility of facilitating and professionalising the team of lecturers very seriously. This is for example reflected by the high percentage of BKO and BKE certificates among lecturers, the AuCom workshops and the scheduled meetings for the complete team of lecturers every Monday morning. Lecturers appreciate these efforts. The panel concludes that the team is genuinely working as a team within the new curriculum and with the new didactical methods, while there is also still room for personal and professional differences.

Facilities are good and where necessary well designed to serve project-based teaching and learning. Students mention that digital facilities are good, but communication through these facilities could still be improved. The panel agrees and thinks that especially with FIBS's huge numbers of incoming IB students from different countries every year, clear and unambiguous information is of vital importance.

The panel has noticed that whereas the 'Euregion Rijn-Maas-Noord' was not immediately recognisably reflected in the intended learning outcomes (without being an issue, which was explained convincingly by the work field representatives from the region), the region was clearly recognisably reflected in the authentic learning environment. The programme turns out to be strongly connected to the nearby work field through manufacturing, agrofood and logistics companies.

The complete programme is taught in English. According to the panel this is the only logical choice regarding the jobs the graduates will apply for and regarding the diversity of nationalities of the lecturers and students.

The panel has high expectations of the newly installed lectorate Cross Borders Business Development and hopes the lectorate will soon blossom and integrate its research outcomes into the IB curriculum.

The double degree which is on offer is an interesting option for IB students. A double degree obtained in two different countries will surely affect their value on the labour market in a positive way. According to the panel FIBS could put more effort in advertising this double degree programme.

The panel wonders, since FIBS decided to make Business research II compulsory for the double degree students who spend their third year in Finland, if students from Finland won't encounter problems when entering FIBS fourth year, without the basis of Business research I and II. This possible issue should be addressed before students from SeAMK come to FIBS.

The teaching-learning environment corresponds with the focus of *Fontys Hogescholen* described in the strategic plan 'Fontys Focus 2020'. According to the panel the didactical approach of project-based learning is FIBS's distinctive and adequate translation of student-centred learning. By using authentic learning environments as much as possible, the connection with the professional field will be further intensified which will lead to fruitful cross-fertilisation. Last but not least, the new didactical approach had an innovative effect on the organisation as a whole.

Judgment

The panel concludes ***the programme meets standard 2.***

4.3. Student assessment

Standard 3: The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.

Explanation: The student assessments are valid, reliable and sufficiently independent. The requirements are transparent to the students. The quality of interim and final examinations is sufficiently safeguarded and meets the statutory quality standards. The tests support the students' own learning processes.

Findings

For IB a test programme has been developed in accordance with FIBS's assessment policy. This test programme of summative tests is translated into test matrices per module/project. Test matrices contain information about PLOs and MLOs, expected achievements, AuCom levels and weighting. The test programme has been formalised in the Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER).

A varied set of assessment types is being used, consisting of written exams, oral exams, knowledge tests, skills tests, project assignments, research assignments, case studies, activity tests, portfolio assignments and many more. Some assessments are individually executed, other assessments are group assignments.

The programme also pays attention to formative testing. Formative testing is focused on skills development during the projects. Formative feedback mostly consists of oral feedback, for instance given during a scheduled consultancy hour.

A semester is based on a 20-week structure: the first 16 weeks are lesson weeks, the last 4 weeks are assessment weeks.

Information about the assessments includes details on the MLOs and on timing, structure and grading criteria of the exam. This information is published on FIBS's IB student portal.

The graduation project is assessed through a competency report, a research report and a defence session. The research report and the defence of the findings are both professional end products of a trajectory of applied research, executed in an authentic learning environment. Grading is conducted by an examination panel consisting of a first and a second FIBS examiner appointed by the Examination Board. During the final presentation an external industry expert comments on the practical usability of the product in the work field.

The vast majority of lecturers (82%) holds a BKE certificate issued by Cito. A lecturer can only be appointed as an examiner when BKE certified, so all examiners (100%) hold a BKE certificate. Lecturers and examiners are used to using test matrices as the point of departure for designing an assessment and are used to completing the grading forms after examination including a substantiated judgment and feedback for the students.

The Test Audit Committee (TAC) has the task of monitoring the quality of the assessments. All test instruments undergo screening. The TAC checks and evaluates tests, rubrics, grading criteria and forms before and after examination. The TAC operates under the authority of the Examination Board.

The Examination Board (EB) monitors the process of formulating the TER content, formulates policy (for example to prevent fraud and plagiarism) and monitors the end level of the programme by taking samples of graduation products and by attending calibration sessions with representatives of the IB programmes in Eindhoven (*Fontys Hogeschool Marketing en Management, FHMM*) and in Maastricht (*Zuyd Hogeschool*).

The EB focusses on the PDCA cycle and functions on metalevel whereas the TAC does the exam checks. One of the members of the EB is also a member of the TAC and thereby serves as a linking pin. Recent changes based on recommendations of the TAC and the EB include the implementation of more professional products in semester 7 and a rubric for reporting.

The assessment of the double degree programme is monitored by the programme management and the EB. One of the most important outcomes of the annual meeting earlier this year was that the business research skills at IB FIBS are assessed at a higher level than at SeAMK. Therefore, the EB decided to make the subject Business research III a mandatory module.

Considerations

The various assessment types used within the programme reflect a clear connection to the learning objective(s) of the module or project. Written assessments are used for assessing writing skills, oral exams for oral skills, group assignments for skills in communicating and collaborating, research assignments for research skills, assignments in an authentic learning environment for professional skills etc.

All assignments conducted by a group (mostly used for testing the intended learning outcomes of projects) also contain an individual component which assures prevention of freeriding. (The panel indicates this as an extra safeguarding procedure on top of the “kicking-out system” used by students themselves, see standard 2.)

Rubrics and other grading criteria are provided beforehand in test matrices and on the student portal. The panel noticed that they are being used consequently by the examiners, but that clear and complete information about the assessments could be provided sooner to the students.

The online assessment of Business research II deserves to be mentioned separately because this module is assessed outside FIBS: instead of physical surveillance the environment in which the assessment takes place is videotaped using two camera viewpoints.

The assessment of the graduation project combines assessing the bachelor’s degree level with the level of practical professional skills. Assessing research skills is well addressed during the graduation phase and students are thoroughly prepared for this by the previous modules Business research I, II and III.

Objectivity and reliability in grading is achieved by appointing two well-trained examiners. To assure a valid judging of the practical usability in the field, they are advised by an external industry expert.

According to the panel this makes the assessment programme of the IB curriculum a well thought through, valid and reliable assessment programme. When it comes to transparency towards students there is still some room for improvement regarding information provided beforehand.

A wide variety of assessments is being used and the panel is convinced that the well-trained FIBS IB lecturers and examiners (almost all of them are BKO and BKE certified) are qualified to execute all these different types of testing methods.

The EB and the TAC both have their own distinctive task and role. The panel noticed that this distribution of roles and tasks was clear to everyone involved and has obviously resulted in a fruitful collaboration. Although calibration sessions are being organised with an IB programme inside Fontys and an IB programme outside Fontys, the panel believes that these sessions should generate more output and more food for thought. Not only because this could be useful in the evaluation process of the single degree programme but also because it could add value to the annual meetings with the SeAMK where the double degree is discussed.

According to the panel the examiners, the TAC and the EB function on a high level and guarantee safeguarding the quality of the programme assessment today and in the future.

Judgment

The panel concludes ***the programme meets standard 3.***

4.4. Achieved learning outcomes

Standard 4: The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Explanation: The achievement of the intended learning outcomes is demonstrated by the results of tests, the final projects, and the performance of graduates in actual practice or in postgraduate programmes.

Findings

The student has completed the programme when he has passed all the summative exams of the programme. All PLOs in the TWM domain are assessed at end level in semester 7 with the exception of TWM 24 (i.e. 'analyse a complex business problem in an international business setting with use of adequate research design, resulting in an evidence-based, feasible solution', see standard 1). This PLO is assessed at end level in the graduation project.

The graduation project is assessed through a competency report, a research report and a defence of findings (for more information, see standard 3). The panel evaluated 15 final products: 6 IBMS products (year 2017/2018) and 9 IB products (year 2018/2019). For further information on the sample of these final products, see 'Considerations' below.

The alumni the panel has spoken to during the site visit were positive about the way they were prepared for the labour market. Looking back, they conclude that the programme made them focus on developing their practical skills, which they consider to be an USP compared to programmes offered by for instance a German *Fachhochschule*. This particularly applies to the soft skills. These skills turned out to be the most important ones in their daily work. According to the alumni practical skills, soft skills, group work and project work could be stressed even more, since theory can be found anywhere else outside school as well.

According to the employers the most important skill of the IB FIBS graduates is their ability to accept that they are still in a process of learning. They are not afraid, they don't avoid challenges and they are well prepared to deal with complex problems in new situations. In the eyes of the employers this makes them widely and easily employable graduates.

Considerations

The panel was impressed by the level of the 15 final products. Most final works were good to excellent and some perhaps even deserved a higher grade than given. All were showcases of bachelor level and demonstrated the intended learning outcomes had been achieved. Some of the theses dealt with subjects less obvious connected to the IB(MS) field. This was then reflected in the grades. Very well elaborated criteria are used and the grading forms completed by the examiners contained substantiated judgments.

The panel noticed that in recent years the programme moved exactly into the direction the alumni suggested; soft skills have been emphasised in the national framework and working in projects and groups is now more prominent in the curriculum than it was in the previous (IBMS) curriculum. According to the panel this shows that the programme is closely linked to the contemporary professional field. The connection is well organised through contact with employers and an Advisory Board in which employers are represented.

There is some room for intensifying the contact with alumni. Consulting them on a regular basis will preserve and further improve this close link between programme and professional field.

Judgment

The panel concludes ***the programme meets standard 4.***

5. OVERALL CONCLUSION

Standard	Assessment
<p>Standard 1 - Intended Learning outcomes</p> <p>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</p>	Meets the standard.
<p>Standard 2 - Teaching-learning environment</p> <p>The curriculum, the teaching-learning environment and the quality of the teaching staff enable the incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.</p>	Meets the standard.
<p>Standard 3 – Student assessment</p> <p>The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.</p>	Meets the standard.
<p>Standard 4 – Achieved learning outcomes</p> <p>The achievement of the intended learning outcomes is demonstrated by the results of tests, the final projects, and the performance of graduates in actual practice or in postgraduate programmes.</p>	Meets the standard.
Conclusion	Positive

The programme meets all four standards and the **panel advises the NVAO to extend the accreditation of the programme.**

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter only contains the *most important* recommendations, not all of them.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

Communication is a point of attention. With FIBS's huge numbers of incoming IB students from different countries every year, clear and unambiguous information is of vital importance.

The panel expects the newly installed lectorate Cross Borders Business Development will be encouraged to integrate its research outcomes into the IB curriculum.

FIBS could put more effort in advertising the double degree programme with SeAMK. Students from Finland could encounter problems when entering FIBS IB's fourth year, without the basis of FIBS IB's Business research I and II. This (possible) issue should be addressed before students from SeAMK come to FIBS IB.

Standard 3. Student assessment

Assessment information provided beforehand to students can be improved (see also the recommendation on communication under standard 2).

Calibration sessions inside and outside Fontys should generate more output and food for thought. Not only because this can be useful in the evaluation process of the single degree programme but also because it can add value to the annual meetings with the SeAMK where the double degree is discussed.

ANNEX I**Overview of judgements**

Overview of the panel's judgments Bachelor programme International Business, including the double degree programme served by Fontys (FIBS) in collaboration with Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences (SeAMK)	
Standard	Assessment
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	Meets the standard.
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.	Meets the standard.
Standard 3 – Student assessment The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.	Meets the standard.
Standard 4 – Achieved learning outcomes The achievement of the intended learning outcomes is demonstrated by the results of tests, the final projects, and the performance of graduates in actual practice or in postgraduate programmes.	Meets the standard.
Conclusion, overall judgment	Positive

ANNEX II Programme of the site visit

Programme: Bachelor International Business Fontys Hogescholen (FIBS Venlo)
Date: 8th of October 2019

2019-10-08	<i>Meetings</i>
0745-0900	Meeting panel (preparation site visit)
0900-0930	IB Venlo profile in our international region
0930-1015	Meeting with management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General manager FIBS - Programme manager IB
1015-1030	Break
1030-1130	Meeting with lecturers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinator semester 1 and lecturer - Senior lecturer financial subjects, thesis supervisor - Curriculum coordinator and lecturer - Coordinator semester 3 and SUF and lecturer - Lecturer research learning line - Coordinator personal + professional development and lecturer
1130-1230	Walk-in moment / visiting career day on campus / looking at teaching materials
1230-1330	Lunch
1330-1430	Meeting with students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student 1st semester - Two students 2nd semester - Student 3rd semester - Student 4th semester - Student 5th/6th semester - Student 7th semester - Student 8th semester
1430-1445	Break
1445-1530	Meeting with Exam Board (EB) and Programme Committee (DPC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair EB - Member EB - Member Test Audit Committee - Chair DPC (lecturer) - Member DPC (student)
1530-1545	Break
1545-1630	Meeting with work field and alumni <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managing director CCV Easy and CCV Deutschland - Managing director Teijin Aramid GmbH - DGA Sormac BV - Alumnus: Director Finance & HR NOFFZ Technologies - Alumnus: Co-founder at Nulap
1630-1730	Panel meeting, deliberation, pending issues
1730	Preliminary judgment and feedback

For privacy reasons ("*Algemene Verordening Gegevensbescherming*"), the names are not included in this report. The names of auditees are known to the secretary of the audit panel.

Working methods

Selection of the delegations / the auditees

In compliance with the NVAO regulations the audit panel decided prior to the audit on the composition of the delegations (auditees) in consultation with the programme management. An 'open consultation session' (walk-in moment) was scheduled as part of the site visit programme. The panel verified that the scheduled times of the consultation session had been made public to all parties involved in the school community in a correct and timely manner. No students or staff members attended the open consultation session.

Auditing process

The following procedure was adopted. The panel studied the documents regarding the programme (see Annex Documents reviewed) and 15 theses. The panel secretary organised individual input from the auditors, synthesized the input and distributed it among the panel members prior to the audit. This synthesized input was then rephrased into audit questions by the chair and the secretary and these questions were also distributed among the panel members prior to the audit. The individual input, synthesized input and suggested question for the site visit served as a starting point for the preparatory meeting of the panel. The preparatory meeting was held on the 8th of October 2019, at the location of the site visit, before the site visit took place.

The panel formulated its preliminary judgments per theme and standard immediately after the site visit on the 8th of October. These were based on the documentation and the 15 theses provided by the institute in advance and on the findings and considerations of the site visit. The panel concluded that additional information (written documents) about the double degree programme was needed to be able to reach a valid and carefully substantiated conclusion. The panel studied this additional information on the double degree provided by the institute and was then able to judge on all 4 standards (see Annex Overview of judgments).

A first version of the assessment report was drafted by the secretary and circulated among the panel members for review and comments. The final draft was subsequently forwarded to the institute to correct factual inaccuracies. The panel finalised the report on 12 December 2019.

Assessment rules

One cluster different panels

The site visits within the cluster 'Hbo IBMS Groep 3 Zuid (Bachelor International Business) (hand-in date 1 May 2020)' have been executed by the quality assurance agencies of Hobéon and NQA. To stimulate fair judging, all panel members received the same instruction on preparing the site visit. This instruction included the 'Assessment Framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands, dated September 2018'. Secondly, some panel members acted in more than one panel (overlapping) and panel chairs consulted each other as peers during the process regarding the focus of the audits. Special attention was paid to how to audit the double degree programmes. Thirdly, Hobéon used one secretary for all the advisory reports and so did NQA.

Judgments

According to the NVAO assessment rules a standard meets, partially meets or does not meet the score. Hobéon applied the decision rules, as listed in the 'Assessment Framework for higher education accreditation system Netherlands, September 2018'.

Limited framework

According to assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands, September 2018

Codeshare

Note that the Fontys programme International Business in Venlo (FIBS) shares a CROHO code (30029) with the Fontys programme International Business in Eindhoven (FHMM).

ANNEX III List of documents examined

List of documents examined

- Self-evaluation report bachelor programme International Business Fontys International Business School Venlo
- Fontys Focus 2020 "*instellingsplan*" (strategy and focus *Fontys Hogescholen*)
- Fontys Focus "*Personeel en organisatie*" (staff and organisation *Fontys Hogescholen*)
- *Kwaliteit volgens Fontys Hogescholen (kwaliteitsbeleid instelling)*
- Education policy plan: Educational vision and its justification Fontys International Business School Venlo 2018-2023
- "*Strategisch personeelsbeleidsplan*" (strategy regarding staff policy) 2018-2023 Fontys International Business School
- National Framework International Business: profile, programme learning outcomes and process background (version November 2017)
- Comparison old frameworks and the new IB framework (including level definitions AuCom):
 - IB old style (30029)
 - IBMS (International Business and Management Studies, 34936)
 - IBL (International Business and Languages, 34407)
 - TMA (Trade Management Asia, 34041)
- Alumni Survey IBMS 2018
- Current curriculum (2019-2020)
- Overview programme learning outcomes and module learning outcomes
- Alignment year 1-4 (matrix PLOs national framework and IB Venlo modules)
- NSE results 2018
- Test Policy Fontys International Business School
- Teaching and Examination Regulations IB Fontys International Business School
- Example of a grading form with rubrics
- Final Test Matrix (Strategic review of a company)
- Annual report Examination Board cohort 2017-2018
- Minutes Programme Committee ("*opleidingscommissie*") cohort 2018-2019
- Services and facilities for students (website)
- Fifteen recent final projects/papers, including the grading and evaluation forms completed by the examiners. For privacy reasons, the names of these graduates and their student numbers are not included in this report. The names of the graduates, their student numbers, as well as the titles of the final projects, are known to the secretary of the audit panel.
- Double degree documentation
 - Double degree agreement between Fontys International Business School Venlo and Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences Finland (SeAMK)
 - Equation of the FIBS and SeAMK curricula including an analysis of differences and similarities regarding intended learning outcomes, subjects, assessments and didactical models
 - Report of the latest annual meeting (2019) between programme representatives of the FIBS and SeAMK curricula
 - Report of the Examination Board regarding safeguarding the quality and level of the double degree programme.

ANNEX IV Composition of the audit panel

The programme is audited in a period in which similar programmes are being audited.

Group name (in Dutch: <i>visitatiegroep</i>)	Hbo IBMS Groep 3 Zuid (Bachelor International Business) (Hand-in date 1 May 2020)
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Succinct resumes of participating panel members:

Name	Succinct CVs
Mr. D.J.N.M. (Nies) Rijnders MSc (<i>chair</i>)	Nies Rijnders studied Economics (Tilburg University). Nies is currently working as a senior policy advisor applied research at Avans University of Applied Sciences. From 2014 until September 2019 he has been manager of Avans Expertisecentrum Sustainable Business. From 2007 until 2014 he was dean of Avans School of International Studies. As (lead) auditor he audited education programmes in the economic field on behalf of NVAO and quality assurance agencies.
Mrs. C.R. (Robin) Pereboom MMO (<i>panel member</i>)	Robin Pereboom studied Marketing Economics (The Hague University of Applied Sciences) and Management and Organisation (TIAS School for Business and Society). Robin is currently working as a project manager for Avans and is responsible for strategic relations and partnership development for the Associate Degree Academies in Den Bosch and Roosendaal. From 2012 until 2016 she worked as vice dean of Avans School of International Studies and from 2007 until 2012 as programme director of International Business and Management Studies.
Mr. V.J.M. Guyt B Eng (<i>panel member</i>)	Victor Guyt studied Chemical Technology (Zuyd University of Applied Sciences) and took courses in NIMA A, NIMA B and several languages (Spanish, French and German). Victor has over 30 years of experience as an international trade consultant. In this role he advised small and medium enterprises on internationalisation matters. Victor currently runs his own companies 'FINDINGYOURWAY' and 'FOUNDMYWAY'.
Mrs. L.C.C. (Lola) vom Hof (<i>student member</i>)	Lola vom Hof studies International Business (HZ University of Applied Sciences) and is member of the Board of Studies (in Dutch " <i>opleidingscommissie</i> ")
Mrs. B.E. (Barbara) Roemers MA (<i>certified secretary</i>)	Certified in 2016 by NVAO.

Prior to the audit all panel members undersigned declarations of independence and confidentiality which are in possession of the NVAO. This declaration certifies, among other things, that panel members do not currently maintain or have not maintained for the last five years any (family) connections or ties of a personal nature or as a researcher/teacher, professional or consultant with the institution in question, which could affect a fully independent judgement regarding the quality of the programme in either a positive or negative sense.

On the 3rd of October 2019 the NVAO endorsed the composition of the panel to assess the Programme of International Business of the University of Applied Sciences *Fontys Hogescholen* – Fontys International Business School, registration number 008660.

ANNEX V**List of abbreviations**

Abbreviation	Explanation
AB	Advisory Board (work field representatives)
AuCom	Autonomy and Complexity (framework defining competence levels)
DD	Double degree
EB	Examination Board (<i>examencommissie als bedoeld in WHW</i>)
FHMM	<i>Fontys Hogeschool Marketing en Management (Eindhoven)</i>
FIBS	Fontys International Business School (Venlo)
FIHE	<i>Fontys Internationale Hogeschool Economie</i>
IB	International Business
IBL	International Business and Languages
IBMS	International Business and Management Studies
ILO	Intended Learning Outcome
KSAVE	Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes, Values and Ethics (framework defining 21 st century skills)
LW	Living in the World (themes domain 3 national framework)
MLO	Module Learning Outcome
PPD	Personal and professional development
PLO	Programme Learning Outcome
SeAMK	<i>Seinäjoen ammattikorkeakoulu (Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences)</i>
SUF	Start-up factory
TAC	Test Audit Committee
TER	Teaching and Examination Regulations (<i>Onderwijs- en examenregeling, OER</i>)
TMA	Trade Management Asia
TW/TWM	Tools for Working and Management (themes domain 4 national framework)
WT	Ways of Thinking (themes domain 1 national framework)
WW	Ways of Working (themes domain 2 national framework)



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Fontys University of Applied Sciences
International Business Degree, Eindhoven
Improvement Plan

Richard Boon, Study Programme Manager IB

Fontys IB Eindhoven Improvement plan

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Introduction

This is the improvement plan for Fontys IB Eindhoven. The plan serves an addition to the final advisory report. It is made on the basis of feedback stemming from the accreditation of the IB degree. The final output of the accreditation, in where the Hobéon panel studied the IB self-evaluation report and visited the IB degree on October 10 2019, was that a conditional sufficient was issued on standard 3. We are confidently expect that when executing this improvement plan the conditions mentioned by Hobéon are successfully addressed and will contribute the an improvement of the overall IB degree.

This improvement plan has also been submitted for consultation to the IB Degree Programme Committee (DPC, Opleidingscommissie).

Overall project management of this improvement plan (planning, execution and evaluation) is in the hands of the IB study Programma manager. The project team furthermore consists of the chair of EB and the IB graduation coordinator.

We thank the Hobéon panel for the constructive feedback on our IB degree and organisation and look forward to tackle the mentioned conditions and to see all the improvement points be implemented.

2 The Conditions

In the Hobéon feedback report a useful reflection has been given on the IB degree. Feedback that enables us to further pursue our efforts to offer the best possible degree to our IB students. Besides feedback that confirms some positive aspects of our programme, there are also some elements that deserve our attention. Some of them are positioned as recommendations. We will disperse these into the IB teams relevant committees. In this improvement plan we will focus on the conditions. These are shortcomings that should be overcome. The conditions are related to standard 3. The conditions are quoted directly from the Hobéon feedback report at the start of each segment followed by the improvement proposals.

2a) Condition 1: The IB PLOs and the link with the graduation semester

“The graduation semester is not linked to any of the intended learning outcomes. This vision should be re-evaluated especially in view of the intended learning outcomes within the domain of Tools for Working and Management and in view of the feasibility of achieving 32 programme learning outcomes within 3.5 years. Either the absence of a link between semester 8 and the intended learning outcomes should be substantiated, or a new approach should be adopted”

Reflection on the condition;

At the moment in the graduation manual the description and the assessment forms state that all PLOs are related to the thesis project. However, in the KLOTS this was unfortunately not included. Currently all PLOs are dealt with and assessed in a 3,5 years' time frame from semester 1 till semester 7 and are clearly described in the course module descriptions, but the link to the graduation semester is unclear. We understand the concern of the panel of the feasibility of covering all 32 PLOs. Next to that, the unique profile of IB Eindhoven might not be clear enough with the current set of PLOs.

What will be done; Two things will be taken up:

1. A revision process will be initiated to learn and decide if the non-mandatory PLOs are of strategic value or if we should minimize our set of PLOs. A probable outcome will be to have a curriculum composed of 25 PLOs. These would be the 24 mandatory PLOs and in addition one PLO connecting the IB Eindhoven specific educational vision. Think for example about the link of IB with the Brainport region and PLOs related to (new) technology and innovation. The 2020/2021 KLOTS will be altered and the course module descriptions updated to reflect any changes.
2. The graduation documents will include which PLOs of the domain “Tools for Working and Management” a student will focus on, next to the Business Research PLOs. The PLOs in the domains Ways of Working, Living in the World and Ways of Thinking are assessed in the Professional Profile, a deliverable of the Graduation Project.

Who will do this;

1. Based on the input of the Curriculum Committee (CC), the External Advisory Board (EAB), the Departmental Programme Committee (DPC) and management will determine which set of PLOs we will use.
2. The graduation semester coordinator will adjust the assessment forms for academic year 2020-2021.

When will this be done;

1. Currently the Curriculum Committee has already been given the assignment to re-evaluate the current set of PLOs. In February we have a session with the EAB to discuss the current set of PLOs and ask them for advice. We have sessions in March with the DPC and management, after which in April 2020 we will make a final decision.
2. The new documents will be ready as of the start of the academic year 2020-2021.

How and when will the result be measured;

1. The result, a new KLOTS and a revised curriculum, will need to be approved by the DPC and the IMR as a part of the TER process. Spring 2020. A selected group of National Platform members will be asked to see if they recognize the IB Eindhoven profile in the set of PLOs.
2. During internal and external calibration sessions in the fall of 2020 we will evaluate the use of the new forms.

2b) Condition 2: The IB thesis assessment and the oral assessment

“The weighting of the two parts of graduation should be reconsidered. Allowing the defence grade being compensated with the thesis grade might be less defensible since different skills are being assessed in these two assessment parts. The existing policy should either be substantiated or be changed””

Reflection on the condition;

We recognize the possibility of compensation in this assessment, which is not desired. IB Eindhoven does not want to assess the two assessment parts separately considering that the thesis and the oral defence/presentation have different learning objectives.

What will be done; the assessment form will be adjusted so both the report and the oral defence will be marked separately. Both elements need to be sufficient in order to graduate. In addition thesis assessors will be instructed to make a clear distinction between the assessment of the report and the oral assessment and that both items need to be at least 5.5.

Who will do this; The IB graduation coordinator.

When will this be done; The assessment form will be adjusted in the spring 2020 semester and will be effectively used as from the 2020/2021 academic year.

How and when will the result be measured; The first round of graduation projects from academic year 2020/2021 will be assessed in December 2020. After this round we will evaluate the efficiency of the changed assessment format during internal and external calibration sessions.

2c) Condition 3: The thesis assessment form and substantiated judgement

“The use of the grading forms should be harmonised and the EB should monitor closely that the comment field always contains a sufficiently substantiated judgment.”

Reflection on the condition;

Until academic year 2018/2019 grading forms were used in where assessors could fill out comments per criteria. As from academic year 2018/2019 we have used a format with one single comment/feedback box. We have noticed that this leads to less substantiated feedback from the assessors, because some assessors are less inclined to fill something in about all criteria.

We realize that these comment fields should contain a sufficiently substantiated judgment. We see the need for all assessors to be aligned and have a common approach on how to fill out the comment fields.

What will be done;

The assessment forms will be adjusted in a way where assessors are better instructed to fill out the form. The graduation assessors will be informed in how to constructively and meaningfully fill out the comment boxes on the assessment form, based on all the criteria. This subject will be put on the agenda of the information sessions for assessors at the beginning of each graduation round.

Who will do this; The IB graduation coordinator

When will this be done; The assessment forms will be altered in the spring of 2020 and will become effective as per academic year 2020/2021. Before the assessment forms are introduced they will be calibrated with IB Venlo (FIBS). As part of the monitoring process the exam board will randomly select the filled out assessment forms (see condition 5) after round 1 of academic year 2020/2021. This will be in December 2020.

How and when will the result be measured; Measurement will be part of the PDCA cycle of the examination board.

2d) Condition 4 BKE training for all IB staff

“The percentage of holders of the formal BKE certificate is rather low. There might be a relation between the issues identified in the use of the grading forms and the low percentage of holders of the BKE certificate. Making the BKE training and the exam compulsory for all examiners might solve this. Either the BKE training and the exam should be compulsory for all examiners or another (preferably measurable) indicator should be introduced to ensure all examiners are qualified. This will also be of added value addressing the other issues identified.”

Reflection on the condition;

The mandatory BKE training for all IB staff was held in the fall of 2018. For all IB staff members employed after 1-1-2017 it was also mandatory to do and pass the BKE certification. All, except one, of these new colleagues employed at the time of accreditation have passed the BKE certification. For the colleagues already employed before 1-1-2017 the BKE was an integral part of the BKO at Fontys. This way all IB staff members are trained and certified with regards to assessment. With IB we have the policy that all new staff members are trained and certified in BKO and BKE. For an employee to obtain a permanent contract both BKO and BKE are essential to have. The assessors for the graduation project are assigned and approved by the Examination Board.

What will be done; For every IB employee it is mandatory to be a certified in BKO and BKE. New colleagues will be facilitated to receive the training and do the certification.

Who will do this; all new IB staff members.

When will this be done; within one year after being employed.

How and when will the result be measured; During the annual Talent Interview (as a part of the contracting and appraisal cycle) the BKO and BKE and SKE assessment will be discussed with all (new) staff.

2e) Condition 5; The Exam board and monitoring the end level and the PDCA cycle

The EB doesn't get hold of enough data and sufficiently detailed information to thoroughly monitor the end level of the programme (1). The samples of IB graduation products taken by the EB to evaluate the end level are not representative. Either larger samples of IB final works should be taken and evaluated or another valid system of monitoring the end level of the programme should be implemented (2). This includes closing the PDCA cycle; the EB should document findings and considerations, communicate conclusions and recommendations and evaluate their influence on safeguarding the programme's end level (3).

Prior to discussing the above mentioned condition we would like to emphasise the importance the institute has placed on ensuring that a high quality control system is in place. The institute has undertaken four additional Process Quality Control sessions with all stakeholders (Board of Examiners, Assessment Committee, Director and Management) to ensure we collectively strive for optimal results above the normal requirements. In these training sessions the stakeholders reflected on the various processes within the institute to ensure the quality of the degrees. The output of the sessions not only is input for the quality monitoring of the graduation process but also strengthens the foundation of the quality monitoring process of the degrees as a whole.

The Board of Examiners (EB), together with the Assessment Committee has analysed the graduation process, under the supervision of the Fontys Teaching & Research (O&O) Department. The system for monitoring the end level, in which the activities of the line and the activities of the Board Examiners interact with one another, was subsequently adjusted. In addition, a choice was made to take a larger sample (4 per semester per degree) of final works (2).

Within this system, qualitative and quantitative information is collected at various moments (1). The results of the various evaluations are then itemised and discussed at a meeting of the EB. If necessary, the EB adjusts the guidelines for securing the end level, and discusses these adjustments in a structural consultation with the study Programme Manager of IB.

The assessment manual/graduation manual is also screened in advance of a graduation hearing period by members of the EB in order to check that all necessary alterations from the previous round have been included. In this way, the PDCA cycle relating to the end level is adequately implemented and completed (3).

Documentation and communication is a vital aspect of the PDCA cycle. In the improved system of monitoring various data and decisions are documented (such as qualitative data per graduation round and external experts). In a meeting with external experts, graduation assessors and examboard after every graduation round the above mentioned data is discussed and documented. This will be discussed and documented in the minutes of the examboard meeting. The conclusions and recommendations are documented and given back in a structural meeting with the study programme manager and the graduation coordinator. This should serve as input for the next graduation round.

During the graduation process and in each graduation hearing round, the following information is collected: (1):

- a) In the current situation, final works are assessed by two examiners from the study programme IB, in alternating pairs.

In the future situation, in addition, the study programme will switch examiners more often with the IB programme at another Fontys school (Fontys International Business School in Venlo) and with those from other study programmes within the FHEC school. The changing composition of the assessing pairs will generate more information about interpretation of evaluation criteria by examiners from other study programmes and during the course of the process will result in calibration.

- b) Each graduation round includes a quantitative analysis of the assessment of graduation proposals and graduation products. Among others this generates the following information:
- % discrepancy in assessment between examiners and between examiners and external experts (discrepancy pass-fail; discrepancy of two points or more);
 - completeness of filled in forms.
- c) During each graduation hearing, at present, an external expert from the professional field is present, who has an advisory role. The recommendations of the expert are recorded on the assessment form. In the new process, the findings of all external experts in each round of graduation hearings will be collected.
- d) At present, theses are exchanged with related study programmes outside Fontys. This system of peer reviews with external experts will be made more structural. With that in mind, a number of theses (2 per semester) will be selected (stratified) and specific areas for attention will be highlighted. The findings will be collected by our graduation coordinator.

At the end of each second round of hearings, the graduation coordinator will organise a meeting with examiners and representatives of the external experts to evaluate and simultaneously calibrate the graduation processes. Members of the EB will also be invited. The quantitative analysis (b), findings of external experts (c) and of experts (d) will serve as input for this meeting. NB. Minutes will be made of all evaluation meetings.

During each round of hearings, members of the EB will attend at least two graduation hearings on a random basis. Well in advance of the hearing both the student and the assessors will be asked for consent about the attendance of the EB member. The EB will discuss its findings in a meeting, together with the findings from the above referred to meeting and from the above described evaluation process. If necessary, the EB will adjust the guidelines for safeguarding the end level, and will discuss these adjustments in the structural consultation meeting with the study programme manager IB. If necessary, the study programme will implement improvement actions in the graduation process, during the next round of graduation hearings. The improvement actions will be submitted to the departmental programme committee.

Implementation

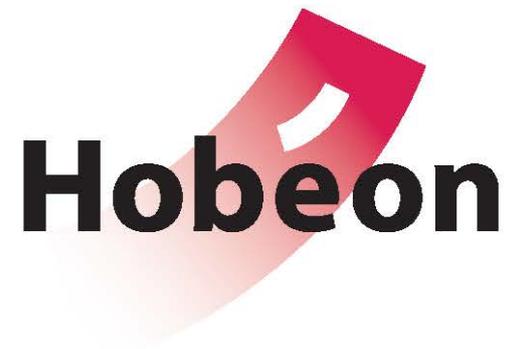
The above measures will be/have been implemented in the spring of 2020. The graduation coordinator will be instructed to elaborate the system/process described above in detail, together with the examination committee, and to duly revise the assessment manual/graduation manual. Before the new round of graduation hearings, a professionalization meeting will be organised for

members of the Board of Examiners and the lecturers and staff involved in the graduation process, which will be supervised by experts from the Teaching & Research service . This means that in June 2020, the new procedure will be implemented. Evaluation will take place immediately following completion of the 'round' in June-July 2020, at which point the process may be further adjusted.

3 Overall Time planning

	1 st quarter Jan/March 2020	2 nd quarter April/June 2020	3 rd quarter July/Sept 2020	4 th quarter Oct/ Dec 2020	1 st Quarter Jan/March 2021
Condition 1					
Revision process PLOs	X	X			
Revising KLOTS		X			
EAB session	X				
DPC session	X				
NP IB consult		X			
Revision graduation documents and assessment forms			X		
Evaluation new forms				X	
Condition 2					
Revision of the assessment form		X			
Evaluation new form				X	
Condition 3					
Revision of the assessment form		X	X		
Assessment form Calibration with IB Venlo		X			
Info session supervisors		X		X	
Condition 4					
BKE/SKE inventory during Talent Interview	X				X
Condition 5					
Process Quality Control sessions	X				
Professionalization meeting supervised by experts from the O&O department		X			
quantitative analysis of the assessment of graduation proposals and graduation products		X			

Session with various stakeholder to discuss the above		X			
Two theses are peer reviewed with external experts		X			
Evaluation of the improved monitoring system			X		



ASSESSMENT REPORT

Limited programme assessment

Bachelor International Business
Full-time

Fontys Hogescholen

(Fontys Hogeschool Marketing en Management Eindhoven)

**De kracht van
kennis.**

ASSESSMENT REPORT

Limited programme assessment

Bachelor International Business
Full-time

Fontys Hogescholen
(Fontys Hogeschool Marketing en Management Eindhoven)

Croho registration: 30029

Hobéon Certificering

Dated: 24/02/20

Audit Committee:

Mr. D.J.N.M. (Nies) Rijnders MSc (chair)
Mrs. C.R. (Robin) Pereboom MMO (panel member)
Mr. V.J.M. (Victor) Guyt B Eng (panel member)
Mrs. L.C.C. (Lola) vom Hof (student member)

Coordinators and secretary:

Mr. G.W. (Ger) Broers MA (process coordinator)
Mrs. J. (José) Koot BA (panel composer)
Mrs. B.E. (Barbara) Roemers MA (secretary)

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1. GENERAL AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

Name Institution	Fontys Hogescholen
Status	Funded
Outcomes of Institutional Quality Assessment	Positive (August 30 th 2019, valid until September 4 th 2025)
Name of programme in Central Register of Higher Professional Education (CROHO)	International Business
ISAT code CROHO	30029
Domain/sector CROHO	Economics
Orientation	Higher Vocational Education (In Dutch: <i>hoger beroepsonderwijs</i>)
Level of the programme	Bachelor
Title, grade	Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)
Number of credits	240
Specialisations	n/a
Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eindhoven (Fontys Hogeschool Marketing en Management) covered in this advisory report ▪ Venlo (Fontys International Business School) covered in a separate advisory report
Variants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Single degree 4 year full-time FHMM programme ▪ Dual degree in collaboration with the Oulu University of Applied Sciences (Finland)
Joint programme	n/a
Language(s)	English
Date site visit	October 10 th 2019

2. SUMMARY

The programme of International Business (IB from now on) aims to deliver graduates in international business who are young business professionals, trained to be as dynamic as the global business environment around them. They are multilingual, interculturally competent and globally oriented. They have acquired a solid generalist understanding of business in the 21st century which has been experienced in practical business contexts, both in the Netherlands and abroad, making them adaptable, flexible and solution oriented.

Graduates are able to evaluate and apply information in order to solve business problems. This fosters skills which are sustainable across multiple environments and contexts. The IB graduate is prepared for jobs in the future which may not yet have been defined today. Their careers typically begin with entry-level positions requiring broad business knowledge, soft skills and a hands-on attitude. An open and flexible attitude plus key skills make them well positioned for strong professional development and lifelong learning. The knowledge acquired and the attitude developed mean that any organisation can benefit from their contribution through innovative thinking, creative problem solving and quickly grasping the core issues of the business.

This profile was translated into the IB National Framework, composed in 2017. Four former programmes (i.e. International Business and Languages, International Business and Management Studies, Trade Management for Asia and an older "version" of International Business) merged into a new IB programme in accordance with the general tendency towards fewer but simultaneously broader programmes.

The National Platform IB (*Landelijk Opleidingsoverleg*) in which all universities of applied sciences offering an IB programme are represented, provided a transition matrix which demonstrates how previous competencies of these four former programmes match the new intended learning outcomes in the national framework.

For Fontys Hogeschool Marketing en Management in Eindhoven, this meant a transition from IBMS to IB. The transition was made through a "fade-in curriculum" (instead of closing the old IBMS programme altogether and opening a completely new IB programme). Graduates up to and including cohort 2017-2018 received an IBMS diploma, graduates from cohort 2018-2019 onwards receive an IB diploma.

Standard 1. Intended Learning Outcomes

The panel found the national framework to be the outcome of a careful and well organised research process. The national framework describes intended learning outcomes (called programme learning outcomes) for a new generation of IB professionals who will be flexible, well equipped to do business research, internationally and interculturally aware and oriented and well prepared for many more changes in business and society to come. The link with the HEO Standard and the Dublin descriptors is transparent as is the choice for using KSAVE and AuCom.

IB Eindhoven added 8 extra intended learning outcomes to the set of the 24 intended learning outcomes of the national framework. These 8 programme learning outcomes make the IB Eindhoven profile different from other IB profiles across the country but do not demonstrably reflect the connection to the Brainport region. The national profile meets the standard in terms of bachelor level and qualifications for a starting professional but a specific Brainport region element would make it better identifiable as the IB Eindhoven profile.

The programme meets standard 1.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

The translation from national programme learning outcomes into FHMM IB's module learning outcomes is adequate. The module learning outcomes make it possible for the student to grow towards an IB graduate in terms of a starting professional.

The programme is coherently built around 6 learning lines (projects, business environment, business domains, business research, business communication and personal development).

The panel has seen a hard-working enthusiastic team of lecturers. Most of them have a background in IB. They all have their students' interests at heart and will go the extra mile for them when necessary. Lecturers have not only created a safe and inspiring learning environment for their students, but also for themselves. Learning from each other by sharing best practices and attending each other's classes is common practice.

The various teaching styles, the brand-new facilities, the extensive range of electives, the two extra options in the graduation phase and the dual degree with OAMK reflect a truly student-centred programme which optimally facilitates professional and personal development through personal learning paths.

The complete programme is taught in English which is the only logical option regarding the jobs the graduates will apply for, regarding the profile of the programme and regarding the diversity of nationalities of staff and students.

The connection between research and education could still grow but is obviously there thanks to the effort made by the researcher within the research group Smart Marketing and Strategy.

The programme meets standard 2.

Standard 3. Student assessment

The test programme is described in detail and a matrix demonstrates clearly how every programme learning outcome is connected to one or more module learning outcomes and subsequently connected to a description of the assessment of the module. The various assessment types used within the programme reflect a clear connection to the learning objective(s) of the module or project.

Relevant changes have been made regarding the examination panel of the graduation assignments which now includes the supervisor as a second assessor.

All assignments conducted by a group also contain an individual component which assures prevention of freeriding and make the outcomes of an exam more reliable.

The EB has a valid and transparent system in place for appointing examiners.

The EB and the TAC both have their own distinctive task and role. These roles and tasks are transparent to everyone involved.

The EB maintains valuable relationships with other EBs within and outside Fontys but could benefit more from this.

The panel also identified shortcomings that should be overcome within a period of two years. These recommendations are therefore qualified as **conditions** that should be met. Most of them require an extra effort of the EB. See the paragraph 'Recommendations and conditions' on the next page. (For more detailed information see chapter 4, paragraph 4.3.)

The programme partially meets standard 3.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

All final products represented bachelor level and demonstrated that the intended learning outcomes were achieved. Regarding research skills, some of the theses demonstrated more of an academic approach than a practical approach.

The programme is closely linked to the contemporary professional field. The programme aims to further intensify the connection to the field and the alumni which the panel supports.

The programme meets standard 4.

Recommendations and conditions

Recommendations

The most important recommendations of the panel include re-evaluating the 8 added programme learning outcomes against the background of the Brainport region (standard 1), improving communication with students (standard 2), intensifying relations with other Examination Boards inside and outside Fontys and benefit more from these relations (standard 3) and intensify the connection to the field and the alumni (standard 4).

Conditions

The panel identified shortcomings that should be overcome. Recommendations on these matters are therefore qualified as conditions that should be met. Most of them require an extra effort of the Examination Board.

The graduation semester is not linked to any of the intended learning outcomes. This vision should be re-evaluated especially in view of the intended learning outcomes within the domain of Tools for Working and Management and in view of the feasibility of achieving 32 programme learning outcomes within 3.5 years. Either the absence of a link between semester 8 and the intended learning outcomes should be substantiated, or a new approach should be adopted.

The weighting of the two parts of the graduation exam (the thesis and the defence) should perhaps be reconsidered. Although the weighting in itself is defensible, allowing one grade to be compensated with another might be less defensible since different skills are being assessed in these two assessment parts. The choice for this policy should either be substantiated, or the policy should be revised.

The use of the grading forms should be harmonised and the EB should monitor closely that the comment field always contains a sufficiently substantiated judgment.

The percentage of holders of the formal BKE certificate is a subject of debate. Either the BKE training *and* the exam should be compulsory for all examiners or another (preferably measurable) indicator should be introduced to ensure all examiners are qualified. This will also be of added value addressing the other issues identified.

The EB doesn't get hold of enough data and sufficiently detailed information to thoroughly monitor the end level of the programme. The samples of IB graduation products taken by the EB to evaluate the end level are not representative. Either larger samples of IB final works should be taken and evaluated or another valid system of monitoring the end level of the programme should be implemented. This includes closing the PDCA cycle; the EB should document findings and considerations, communicate conclusions and recommendations and evaluate their influence on safeguarding the programme's end level.

Overall conclusion:

The programme meets standard 1, 2 and 4. The programme partially meets standard 3. According to the panel the shortcomings identified can be remedied within a period of two years. Therefore, the panel advises the NVAO to award **conditional accreditation** of the programme.

Upon agreement with the panel members the chair adopted this report on February 24th 2020.

3. INTRODUCTION

The *Fontys Hogeschool Marketing en Management* (FHMM) faculty is part of *Fontys Hogescholen*. The FHMM offers four full-time bachelor programmes: International Business (fully taught in English), Commercial Economics, Commercial Economics Leisure Management and Entrepreneurship & Retail management (all three mainly taught in Dutch). FHMM also offers several associate degrees related to the field of Business and Economics.

The decentralised character of the Institute of *Fontys Hogescholen* means that most strategic and programme related decisions are made at faculty level. In the last academic year, an organisational change was arranged within the Economic Domain in *Fontys Rachelsmolen* location. Four different institutes offering economic programmes (i.e. *Fontys Hogeschool Communicatie*, *Fontys Hogeschool Financieel Management*, *Fontys Hogeschool Marketing en Management* and *Fontys Hogeschool Management Economie en Recht*) have recently been merged together in a new institute. As a result, IB will be part of this new institute called *Fontys School of Business and Communication* (FSBC).

The IB degrees offered in Venlo and Eindhoven stem from the same set of national programme learning outcomes as defined by the National Platform IB, but IB Eindhoven and IB Venlo serve different regions and use different didactical approaches. IB Eindhoven is located in the Brainport region, a region known for its entrepreneurship and strong technology sector. IB Venlo is located at the border between Germany and The Netherlands and is a unique location between the "Randstad" and the "Ruhgebiet", focused on logistics and sustainability and therefore called the Greenport region. Differences between the regions led to differences between the programmes. This advisory report only concerns the IB Eindhoven programme. A separate report is drafted on the IB Venlo programme.

Since 2018 International Business and Management Studies was merged into the IB Croho 30029. In 2013 a Hobéon panel audited the IBMS programme. The panel recommended to focus on a specific profile for the Brainport region, to work on improving the command of English of both students and staff and to provide the option of a second language. According to the panel a lot has been done to intensify the connection with the Brainport region on a practical level: students find their way to the companies and lecturers stimulate and support them as much as possible. The programme is now ready to take it to the next level and focus on a more strategic partnership with the Brainport region. Involving Brainport representatives in evaluating and possibly redrafting the intended learning outcomes will make the profile of the programme better identifiable as the IB Eindhoven programme. The level of English of both students and lecturers has been improved and choosing a second language (Dutch, Spanish, French or Chinese) is now possible. In 2013 the panel strongly recommended the Examination Board to scrutinise and monitor the entire graduation process and its outcomes. In this perspective there is still some work to be done and the panel believes that the Examination Board should now grow in its role as defined in the *Wet op het Hoger onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk onderzoek*.

4. FINDINGS AND JUDGMENTS

4.1. Intended learning outcomes

Standard 1: 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.

Explanation: The intended learning outcomes demonstrably describe the level of the programme (Associate Degree, Bachelor's, or Master's) as defined in the Dutch Qualifications Framework, as well as its orientation (professional or academic). In addition, they tie in with the regional, national or international perspective of the requirements currently set by the professional field and the discipline with regard to the contents of the programme. Insofar as is applicable, the intended learning outcomes are in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations.

Findings

The programme of International Business (IB) aims to deliver graduates in international business who are young business professionals, trained to be as dynamic as the global business environment around them. They are multilingual, interculturally competent and globally oriented. They have acquired a solid generalist understanding of business in the 21st century which has been experienced in practical business contexts, both in the Netherlands and abroad, making them adaptable, flexible and solution oriented.

Graduates are able to evaluate and apply information in order to solve business problems. This fosters skills which are sustainable across multiple environments and contexts. The IB graduate is prepared for jobs in the future which may not yet have been defined today. Their careers typically begin with entry-level positions requiring broad business knowledge, soft skills and a hands-on attitude. An open and flexible attitude plus key skills make them well positioned for strong professional development and lifelong learning. The knowledge acquired and the attitude developed mean that any organisation can benefit from their contribution through innovative thinking, creative problem solving and quickly grasping the core issues of the business.

This profile was translated into the IB National Framework, composed in 2017. Four former programmes, International Business and Languages (IBL), International Business and Management Studies (IBMS), Trade Management for Asia (TMA) and an older "version" of International Business (IB) merged into a new IB programme in accordance with the general tendency towards fewer but simultaneously broader programmes. For *Fontys Hogeschool Marketing en Management* in Eindhoven, this meant a transition from IBMS to IB.

The new framework for the IB programmes has been developed with input from more than 140 international companies, 11 partner universities, professors from 4 universities of applied sciences and more than 60 lecturers to assure that current international business practices as well as recent insights from research were represented. An important change in the new framework is that the requirements for an IB graduate are more than before geared towards so-called 21st century skills; generic skills that add value in a broad range of jobs.

The national consultative body (*Landelijk Opleidingsoverleg*) in which all universities of applied sciences offering an IB programme are represented, provided a transition matrix which demonstrates how previous competencies of former programmes (i.e. IBL, IBMS, TMA and the former IB programme) match the new intended learning outcomes in the national framework.

The new framework is derived from Binkley's KSAVE structure (Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes, Values and Ethics) and consists of 4 domains. The 4 domains are divided into 14 themes and each theme is outlined in at least one programme learning outcome (PLO):

Themes in domain 1 Ways of thinking	Nr	PLOs
Critical thinking	WT1	Use the process of thoughtful evaluation to deliberately formulate a reasonable conclusion.
Innovation and creativity	WT2	Create innovative ideas in a changing business environment in a systematic fashion.
International Business Awareness	WT3	Analyse patterns in global macroeconomic factors and policies that drive international trade and business development.
International Business Communication	WW4	Communicate (business) messages effectively and persuasively using advanced English to an (un)informed audience.
	WW5	Optional: Use one or two additional languages to facilitate international business.
Themes in domain 2 Ways of working	Nr	PLOs
Collaboration	WW6	Collaborate effectively with different kinds of stakeholders in different cultural, organisational and political landscapes to contribute to achieving agreed goals.
Management of information as digital citizen	WW7	Produce management information from various data sources in an international business environment.
Themes in domain 3 Living in the world	Nr	PLOs
Personal and professional development	LW8	Express reflections on one's personal development with the aim of personal growth.
	LW9	Respond appropriately to an unfamiliar, or unexpectedly changing, business environment.
Ethical and societal responsibility	LW10	Formulate one's own position concerning ethical and social responsibility in a professional environment.
Intercultural proficiency	LW11	Mitigate the pitfalls of cultural differences in business and social contexts
	LW12	Display willingness to work with people from other cultures and to work in countries with different cultural backgrounds.
	LW13	Use appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication in an intercultural setting.
	LW14	Assess the effect of cultural differences on organisational behaviour and strategic choices.
Themes in domain 4 Tools for working and management	Nr	PLOs
Marketing and sales	TW15	Develop a well-founded marketing plan to support the creation of value for international customers.
	TW16	Use appropriate sales techniques in support of durable customer relationships.
	TW17	Incorporate developments of the digital landscape in a marketing strategy.
Finance and accounting	TW18	Evaluate financial performance of the organisation from different stakeholders' perspectives.
	TW19	Recommend financing possibilities in a dynamic international environment.
Operations and supply chain management	TW20	Evaluate operations processes within and between organisations.
	TW21	Manage operations processes within and between organisations.
Organisation and people	TW22	Draft the strategic cycle of part(s) of the organisation (process and content).
	TW23	Assess the impact of change on the organisation.
Business research	TW24	Analyse a complex business problem in an international business setting with use of adequate research design, resulting in an evidence-based, feasible solution.

Domains and themes in the national framework are linked to the HEO Standard and the Dublin descriptors. The framework uses Bulthuis's AuCom model (AuCom stands for Autonomy and Complexity) to distinguish three competence levels determined by a combination of complexity and autonomy.

IB FHMM adopted the full national framework except for the optional PLO WW5 (second language) *and* added 8 extra PLOs, derived from the former programme:

Themes in domain 1 Ways of thinking	Nr	PLOs
International Business Awareness	WTX1	The ability to make legal statements supported by legal arguments and to be familiar with the different aspects regarding European and International Law
Themes in domain 2 Ways of working	Nr	PLOs
Collaboration	WWX2	Coordinate the activities in a project, focussing on its goals, while maintaining effective and balanced relationships
Management of information as digital citizen	WWX3	Distinguish business IT and high tech trends to enhance business success
Themes in domain 3 Living in the world	Nr	PLOs
Personal and professional development	LWX4	Manage his tasks, even in stressful situations, and modify his behaviour or professional product by valuing feedback while maintaining focus on goals
Ethical and social responsibility	LWX5	Assess the effect of changes in society's ecological and social needs on sustainability of the organisation's business model
Themes in domain 4 Tools for Working and Management	Nr	PLOs
Finance and accounting	TWMX6	Develop forecasts to support strategic and operational financial decision making
Operation and supply chain management	TWMX7	Analyse value change and assess and develop innovative value chain approaches
Organisation and people	TWMX8	Evaluate relevant HR policies and practices for the further development of organisations

IB Fontys Eindhoven serves a region known for its entrepreneurship and technology sector, the Brainport region. The Advisory Board, consisting of seven members, representing companies in the region, i.e. Crowd Capital Brabant, VD HR Consultancy, QarQuest, Brabantse Ontwikkelings Maatschappij (BOM) ERGO Group AGSUMAA College and Connect to Experience. The AB endeavours to strengthen the connection between the programme and companies in the region. AB meetings with FHMM take place two or three times per year. In these meetings the main topic is how to improve the connection between the programme and the companies.

In the institute's strategic plan 'Fontys Focus 2020' three focus areas are described: focus will be put on student-centred learning, on intensifying the connection with the professional field on several levels, including stimulating cross-fertilisation and on innovating the organisation.

Considerations

The panel found the national framework to be the outcome of a careful and well organised research process. The national framework describes intended learning outcomes (called programme learning outcomes) for a new generation of IB professionals who will be flexible, well equipped to do business research, internationally and interculturally aware and oriented and well prepared for many more changes in business and society to come. The link with the HEO Standard and the Dublin descriptors is transparent as is the choice for using KSAVE and AuCom.

IB Eindhoven decided to extend the set of 24 PLOs derived from national framework and included 8 extra PLOs. The panel is very much in favour of differentiation which makes it possible to link the profile to the special identity and needs of the region. But taking a closer look at the 8 extra PLOs the panel was not convinced that they actually do reflect a specific connection to the Brainport region. Some of the extra PLOs do, like WWX3. But other PLOs seem to be derived from the former IBMS profile and do not hold a Brainport-specific element.

This by no means implies that there is not a demonstrable connection between the programme and the region, on the contrary. But the discussions with the programme management and the AB (in which both employers and alumni are represented) and the minutes of the AB meetings gave the panel the impression that the connection between the Brainport region and the programme was more prominently monitored on a practical level than on a strategic level. A lot of effort has been put in intensifying the connection with Brainport on an operational level, for instance by bringing students and companies together (see standard 2). This in itself is very valuable according to the panel but does not necessarily generate input concerning the profile and the possible needs to update the profile.

The panel thinks that the AB should be able to operate on a more strategic level and should brainstorm with the programme management about how the profile can stay tied in with the contemporary and future needs in the IB work field. In other words, the AB should focus more on *intended* learning outcomes and perhaps less on the process of making it possible for students to work on and eventually achieve these intended learning outcomes.

According to the panel the national profile meets the standard in terms of bachelor level and qualifications for a starting professional but there is still some room for improvement when it comes to a specific Brainport region element to make it identifiable as the IB Eindhoven profile.

The intended learning outcomes of the national framework correspond with the focus of *Fontys Hogescholen* described in the strategic plan 'Fontys Focus 2020'. According to the panel the connection with the professional field is good, although somewhat limited to a practical level. The way the programme incorporates the other focus areas mentioned in the strategic plan is described under standard 2.

Judgment

The panel concludes ***the programme meets standard 1.***

4.2. Teaching-learning environment

Standard 2: The curriculum, the teaching-learning environment and the quality of the teaching staff enable the incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Explanation: The intended learning outcomes have been adequately translated into educational objectives of (components of) the curriculum. The diversity of the students admitted is taken into account in this respect. The teachers have sufficient expertise in terms of both subject matter and teaching methods to teach the curriculum and provide appropriate guidance. The teaching-learning environment encourages students to play an active role in the design of their own learning process (student-centred approach). If the programme is taught in a language other than Dutch, the programme must justify its choice. This also applies if the programme bears a foreign language name. The teaching staff must have a sufficient command of the language in which they are teaching. Services and facilities are not assessed, unless they have been set up specifically for the programme concerned.

Findings

In designing the new IB curriculum the following principles were used by FHMM:

- Embedding in the Brainport Area (collaboration with companies in the Brainport region, including the 170 companies located in the High Tech Campus)
- Variety in educational approaches to serve different types of students with different backgrounds and different learning styles.
 - Flipping the classroom
 - Real life projects
 - Subject-based modules
 - Dragon's den
- Focus on Business research (business research in every semester)
- Talent oriented student approach including a Talent Academy for students
- Internationalisation
 - Teaching and assessing in English
 - International staff
 - International student population
 - Students spend at least one year in an international environment, i.e. abroad or in an international company in the Netherlands
 - Opportunity to follow a dual degree programme
- Orientation towards the KSAVE model.
- Orientation towards the AuCom model:
 - Year 1 – foundation year, level 1
 - Year 2 – main phase, level 2
 - Year 3 – minor and internship, level 2
 - Year 4 – specialisation and graduation, end level, level 3
- Curriculum structure: each semester is divided in 6 blocks:
 - Block 1: projects
 - Block 2: business environment
 - Block 3: business domains
 - Block 4: business research
 - Block 5: business communication
 - Block 6: personal development
- Translation of all PLOs into learning objectives on the level of the modules (MLOs).
- Module learning Outcomes (MLOs) build up to PLO level in consecutive steps.
- All PLOs in all 4 domains are to be assessed at end level in semester 7 or earlier.
- Connection with the Research Group Smart Marketing and Strategy.

These principles resulted into the following curriculum:

1	<i>Projects</i> Marketing and management (4EC) <i>Business Environment</i> Macro (6EC) Intercultural Proficiency (2EC) <i>Business Domains</i> Marketing and sales (6EC) Management and Business Model (2EC) <i>Business Research</i> Introduction (2EC) <i>Business Communication</i> Business Communication (4EC) <i>Personal leadership</i> Study and IT skills (4EC)	2	<i>Projects</i> Business planning (4EC) <i>Business Environment</i> Law and ethics (4EC) <i>Business Domains</i> Finance and accounting (6EC) Process logistics (6EC) <i>Business Research</i> Business Intelligence (2EC) Business Research (2EC) <i>Business Communication</i> Business Communication (4EC) <i>Personal leadership</i> Career and IT skills (2EC)
3	<i>Projects</i> Marketing/Process (4EC) <i>Business Environment</i> Intercultural Proficiency (2EC) Law and ethics (3EC) Business IT Development (2EC) Elective (2EC) <i>Business Domains</i> Business Process Management (3EC) Finance and accounting (3EC) International marketing and sales (4EC) <i>Business Research</i> Qualitative Research (3EC) <i>Business Communication</i> Business Communication (2EC) <i>Personal leadership</i> Consultancy skills (2EC)	4	<i>Projects</i> Consultancy project (6EC) <i>Business Environment</i> Economics (3EC) <i>Business Domains</i> Supply chain Management (3EC) Financial management (3EC) E-marketing and sales (6EC) Organisational change/HR (3EC) <i>Business Research</i> Quantitative Research (3EC) <i>Business Communication</i> Business Communication (2EC) <i>Personal leadership</i> Career skills (1EC)
5	Work placement or minor	6	Work Placement or minor
7	<i>Graduation preparation</i> Bus Res, English, Pers. Leadership (5EC) Bus Ethics and sustainability (5EC) Business development management (5EC) <i>Business Domains</i> Elective 1 Marketing (15EC) Elective 2 Finance (15EC) Elective 3 HR/Lean (15EC) <i>Business Research</i> In project preparation <i>Business Communication</i> In project preparation <i>Personal leadership</i> In project preparation	8	Graduation Execution (26EC) Personal behaviour (4EC)

The complete programme is taught in English. The main reason for this is to prepare students for the international labour market where English is the most commonly used language. Besides the demands of the professional field, English is the language in which students have to communicate with each other and with their lecturers since only two thirds of the students speak Dutch and mixing nationalities in groupwork assignments is compulsory.

The IB teaching staff consists of 27 lecturers, 25 with a master's degree, 2 with a PhD. 18 of them obtained a BKO certificate, 2 are in the process of obtaining this certificate and the other 7 have an exemption based on another certificate in the educational field or on didactical experience. Almost all of them speak English on at least level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and 30% is native speaker English (level C2). Lecturers visit each other's lectures sometimes to learn from each other and share best practices during meetings. Every two or three weeks there is a meeting for all lecturers. In these meetings curriculum topics are discussed and this sometimes leads to changes in the programme. Overall the contemporary curriculum puts more stress on IT skills, career skills and soft skills and is more focused on projects than on reports. Other changes that have been made as a result of these lecturer meetings are an improved balance between quantitative and qualitative research and the implementation of a wider range of in-depth electives in semester 7 serving as steppingstones for the graduation project. The graduation project itself has been changed as well. In the new curriculum they have two extra options besides the business research thesis: a consultancy project or an operational project. For the future the lecturers expect Artificial Intelligence to gain importance in its broadest sense. The lecturers stated that the programme will have to keep up with this fast-developing field of expertise.

FHMM has its own Research Group. There are four active participants from IB in the Research Group Smart Marketing and Strategy. The agenda of the Research Group (called 'Smart Marketing and Strategy') is concentrated in two layers: an ethical layer and a circular layer. Researchers from IB are active in giving body to both layers. According to the lecturers the relation between the programme and the research group is growing. Smart Marketing and Strategy hosts one of the electives of the programme and one of the lecturers is also supervisor in graduation projects.

Students are very positive about the programme, the atmosphere, the lecturers and the facilities. They emphasise that there is a friendly non-hierarchical environment and that the programme offers a lot of choices (especially regarding projects) and stimulates developing one's own professional and personal identity. As one of the students stated: "Becoming a young entrepreneur is really facilitated and actively stimulated here."

Another distinctive feature the students mention is the variety of didactical styles. According to students the lecturers are qualified in terms of using these different didactical styles and in terms of preserving their knowledge of and connection to the professional field, including the Brainport region. Furthermore, they characterise their lecturers as approachable, engaged and genuinely interested in their students. They tend to go out of their way to help students find a truly internationally oriented company for their work placement, which can be difficult sometimes for a foreign student coming from a country with a culture that is very different from the western European cultures.

Freeriding in group projects is not possible according to the students. A strict protocol is followed (first trying to solve the problem within the group, then involve a superior) when a group member doesn't participate appropriately. Sometimes this ends up in kicking out someone.

Students mention they feel their voice is being heard, for instance regarding changing the didactical approach of a difficult subject. Other examples they mention is the study skills course which has been adjusted after their feedback and the implementation of the optional course Dutch. (A second language is not compulsory, see the not-adopted PLO WW5, standard 1.)

Facilities are brand-new and very good according to the students, especially according to the foreign students. The library offers a good selection of books and technical equipment and there is ample space to work together on a project or to study solo in a quiet area.

Students have some recommendations too. According to them there's still room for improving the communication. Sometimes information about courses is not correct or published rather late. Furthermore, they hope that efforts to intensify the Brainport connection will include inviting employers to the FHMM more often.

Guest lectures given by (future) employers are considered to be very inspiring. The programme management and the FHMM lecturers agree and identified this as one of the main focus points for the near future.

FHMM fosters a long relationship with *Oulun ammattikorkeakoulu* (OAMK, in English: Oulu University of Applied Sciences in Finland) and since August 2018 IB FHMM offers a dual degree programme with this partner in Finland.

Students from FHMM will get the chance to experience a highly multidisciplinary environment at the OAMK “labs” in their third year. The third-year lab at OAMK is a start-up factory in which the students design their own company. The lab environment is challenging and demands a proactive attitude from students. Therefore, it is considered to be a suitable replacement for the work placement in the Netherlands according to management and lecturers.

The programme management of both programmes meet annually and compare their intended learning outcomes, subjects, didactical systems and ways of assessing. One of the differences between OAMK and IB FHMM relates to the didactical approach; FHMM uses various didactical approaches whereas OAMK is more focussed on project and problem-based learning. Another difference is related to the assessment policy; at OAMK it is possible – under certain conditions – to take an alternative exam (for instance an oral exam instead of a written exam) when such an alternative exam is more suitable to one’s individual needs and learning path. According to management and lecturers both of these differences do not negatively affect the achievability of the intended learning outcomes of the Dutch programme.

Summarising the DD programme, FHMM students go to Finland in their third year, OAMK students come to the Netherlands in their fourth year:

	FHMM Eindhoven (The Netherlands)		OAMK Oulu (Finland)	
	Single degree	Dual degree	Single degree	Dual degree
Year 1	Regular year 1 60 EC	Regular year 1 60 EC	Regular year 1 60 EC	Regular year 1 60 EC
Year 2	Regular year 2 60 EC	Regular year 2 60 EC	Regular year 2 60 EC	Regular year 2 60 EC
Year 3	Regular year 3 60 EC	1 year OAMK “labs” 60 EC	Regular year 3 60 EC	Regular year 3 60 EC
Year 4	Regular year 4 60 EC	Regular year 4 60 EC	Regular year 4 30 EC	1 year at FHMM 60 EC
Total duration	4 years	4 years	3.5 years	4 years

Up to now 5 students from FHMM went to OAMK. They just started at OAMK and will return for their graduation year at FHMM in September 2020. One student from OAMK is now studying at FHMM and is expected to graduate in July 2020.

In the institute’s strategic plan ‘Fontys Focus 2020’ three focus areas are described: focus will be put on student-centred learning, on intensifying the connection with the professional field on several levels, including stimulating cross-fertilisation and on innovating the organisation.

Considerations

According to the panel the translation from national PLOs into FHMM IB’s MLOs is adequate. The panel has seen a detailed document containing a matrix in which PLOs, AuCom levels and MLOs are interconnected. The MLOs make it possible for the student to grow – in steps – from level 1 to level 3 (AuCom) and develop their knowledge, skills, attitude, values and ethics (KSAVE) towards an IB graduate in terms of a starting professional. The connection to modules, subjects and projects and the ways of teaching (and assessing) are transparently described in the same matrix.

The programme is coherently built around 6 learning lines (projects, business environment, business domains, business research, business communication and personal development).

The panel has seen a hard-working enthusiastic team of lecturers still in the middle of a transition process, not avoiding discussions. Most of the lecturers have a background in IB. All lecturers have their students' interests at heart and will go the extra mile for them. Lecturers have not only created a safe and inspiring learning environment for their students, but also for themselves. Learning from each other by sharing best practices and attending each other's classes is common practice.

The various didactical approaches are very much appreciated by the students. This indicates that favouring one singular didactical model is not necessarily preferable to working with different teaching styles. The panel believes that the various teaching styles, the extensive range of electives, the two extra options in the graduation phase and the dual degree with OAMK reflect a truly student-centred programme. A programme which offers as many different options as possible within the limitation of working towards the intended learning outcomes.

The complete programme is taught in English. According to the panel this is the only logical choice regarding the jobs the graduates will apply for and regarding the diversity of nationalities of the lecturers and students.

Facilities are above average and well designed to serve different teaching and learning styles.

The connection between research and education could still grow but is obviously there thanks to the effort made by the researcher within the research group Smart Marketing and Strategy who uses outcomes of his research in his lectures in law and ethics.

The three focus areas described in the institute's strategic plan are all three addressed properly. Firstly, the programme of IB Eindhoven with all its choices, options and different didactical approaches is a showcase of a student-centred programme. Secondly, intensifying the connection with the professional field is a main priority of programme management, advisory board and lecturers. And thirdly, the organisation has recently significantly been restructured and innovated.

The panel has some recommendations which are aimed at reinforcement of the programme and do by no means detract from the panels' positive opinion on the learning environment. According to the panel communication with students should be improved. With so many students from different countries, unambiguous information is of vital importance. Furthermore, the panel encourages the programme to continue strengthening the connection to the Brainport region.

According to the panel investigating the need for implementing more content and/or projects concerning artificial intelligence (as one of the lecturers suggested) is advisable and should also thoroughly be discussed with the AB.

Finally, the panel advises to enhance the visibility of the dual degree. A dual degree obtained in two different countries can be of great added value for an IB graduate and should therefore be advertised more prominently.

Judgment

The panel concludes ***the programme meets standard 2.***

4.3. Student assessment

Standard 3: The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.

Explanation: The student assessments are valid, reliable and sufficiently independent. The requirements are transparent to the students. The quality of interim and final examinations is sufficiently safeguarded and meets the statutory quality standards. The tests support the students' own learning processes.

Findings

For IB a test programme has been developed in accordance with FHMM's assessment policy. This test programme is described in detail in the same document in which the connection between PLOs and MLOs is demonstrated (see the paragraph 'Considerations' under standard 2 for more information about this matrix). In this matrix the PLOs and MLOs are described for semester 1 up to and including 7, not for the graduation semester (semester 8). The EB explained that all PLOs and MLOs are covered in the semesters prior to semester 8. The test programme has been formalised in the Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER).

A varied set of assessment types is being used, consisting of reports, exams, coursework, presentations, defending assessments etc. Some assessments are individually executed, other assessments are group assignments. Every group assignment also includes an individually assessed component.

Information about the assessments includes details on the MLOs and on timing, structure and grading criteria of the exam. This information is published on FHMM's IB student portal.

The graduation semester has been redesigned. Nowadays the IB students are offered three options for their graduation project: consultancy, operational or business research. The final grade for the graduation is based on the grade given for the thesis (90%) and the grade given for the defence (10%).

Several changes have been made in the graduation examination panel. The most significant change was the inclusion of the academic supervisor as the second assessor (the former protocol excluded the supervisor entirely from the assessment), and an appointed chair to be the first assessor. An external expert is appointed to observe the defence session.

Other changes were related to process procedures, assessment forms and rubrics and to proposal and report specifications. A roadmap is designed to harmonise the process, guidelines and templates have been adjusted and reports and grades are all being automated archived today using two specialised computer applications – EIFFEL and GradeWork.

The panel saw grading forms for graduation projects used in year 2017/2018 and forms used in 2018/2019. The forms used in 2017/2018 all contained detailed information in the 'comment field'. Some of the 2018/2019 forms lacked this information. Students mentioned that not all lecturers judged and graded in the same way and that using the rubrics does not demonstrably lead to more consistency.

Four lecturers hold a BKE certificate. Completing the BKE trajectory is mandatory for new lecturers. Other lecturers follow BKE workshops but are not obliged to take the CITO exam.

The Test and Assessment Committee (TAC) has the task of monitoring the quality of the assessments. All TAC members hold a BKE certificate. The TAC checks and evaluates tests, rubrics, grading criteria and forms before and after examination. The TAC operates under the authority of the programme director.

The Examination Board (EB) monitors the process of formulating the TER content, formulates policy (for example to prevent fraud and plagiarism) and monitors the end level of the programme by taking samples of graduation products. Every six months a sample of one or two graduation products including the grading forms is examined by the EB. This thesis is not necessarily an IB thesis.

The sample can also consist of one or two theses of one of the other FHMM bachelor programmes (Commercial Economics, Commercial Economics Leisure Management or Entrepreneurship & Retail management). Up to now one IB thesis ended up in a sample to be evaluated by the EB.

Twice a year the EB draws up a list of qualified examiners. They then take part in an examination schedule in accordance with their expertise. New examiners get the role of second assessor for one year. They are qualified as 'examiner in training'. During this year they have to obtain their BKE certificate.

The EB maintains relationships with other EBs within and outside Fontys in order to share best practices. The FHMM EB attends calibration sessions with representatives of the IB programme in Venlo (Fontys International Business School). In this peer review sessions thesis scripts have been analysed and graduation processes have been compared. Every six months the FHMM EB has a meeting which is attended by the chair of one of Avans' EBs and every six months the chair of FHMM EB attends such a meeting at Avans. The EB and the programme management are also planning on exchanging examiners with HAN and Avans in the future.

The assessment of the dual degree programme is monitored by the programme management and the EB. At OAMK it is possible – under certain conditions including assuring coverage of the same learning objectives – to take an alternative exam (for instance an oral exam instead of a written exam) when such an alternative exam is more suitable to one's individual needs and learning path. According to the EB this does not negatively affect the achievability of the intended learning outcomes of the Dutch programme but demands clear communication on both sides to prevent students from disappointments.

Considerations

The test programme is described in detail and a matrix demonstrates clearly how every PLO is connected to one or more MLOs and subsequently connected to a description of an assessment. The various assessment types used within the programme reflect a clear connection to the learning objective(s) of the module or project. Written assessments are used for assessing writing skills, oral exams for oral skills, group assignments for skills in communicating and collaborating, research assignments for research skills, assignments in an authentic learning environment for professional skills etc. The panel therefore concludes the assessments are valid.

The panel is positive about the changes that have been made in the examination panel of the graduation assignments which now includes the supervisor as a second assessor.

All assignments conducted by a group (mostly used for testing the intended learning outcomes of projects) also contain an individual component which assures prevention of freeriding and make the outcomes of an exam more reliable. (The panel indicates this as an extra safeguarding procedure on top of "kicking-out system" initiated by students themselves, see standard 2.)

The EB has a valid and transparent system in place for appointing examiners. The EB and the TAC both have their own distinctive task and role. The panel noticed that this distribution of roles and tasks was clear to everyone involved.

The panel is enthusiastic about the relationships the EB maintains with other EBs within and outside Fontys. The panel thinks the EB should be able to benefit more from these calibration sessions and encourages the EB to intensify these relationships and to document the outcomes. This will facilitate communication with IB stakeholders within FHMM and contribute to sessions during which comprehensive and thoughtful decisions are taken.

The panel has some recommendations regarding shortcomings that should be overcome. These recommendations are therefore qualified as **conditions** that should be met. The panel believes that it is possible to overcome these shortcomings within a period of two years. Most of the conditions are related to the EB.

Panel members were surprised to find out that semester 8 is not linked to any of the PLOs or MLOs. This vision should be re-evaluated especially in view of the intended learning outcomes within the domain of Tools for Working and Management and in view of the feasibility of achieving 32 programme learning outcomes within 3.5 years. Either the absence of a link between semester 8 and the intended learning outcomes should be substantiated, or a new approach should be adopted.

The weighting of the two parts of the graduation exam (the thesis and the defence) should perhaps be reconsidered. Although the weighting in itself is defensible, allowing one grade to be compensated with another might be less defensible since different skills are being assessed in these two assessment parts. The choice for this policy should either be substantiated, or the policy should be revised.

Grading forms used for graduation projects in 2017/2018 contained more elaborate information than the grading forms used since 2018/2019. The use of the grading forms should be harmonised and the EB should monitor closely that the comment field always contains a sufficiently substantiated judgment.

The percentage of holders of the formal BKE certificate is a subject of debate. There might be a relation between the issues identified in the use of the grading forms and the percentage of holders of the BKE certificate. Making the BKE training and the exam compulsory for all examiners might solve this. Either the BKE training *and* the exam should be compulsory for all examiners or another (preferably measurable) indicator should be introduced to ensure all examiners are qualified. This will also be of added value addressing the other issues identified.

The EB doesn't get hold of enough data and sufficiently detailed information to thoroughly monitor the end level of the programme. The samples of IB graduation products taken by the EB to evaluate the end level are not representative. Either larger samples of IB final works should be taken and evaluated or another valid system of monitoring the end level of the programme should be implemented. This includes closing the PDCA cycle; the EB should document findings and considerations, communicate conclusions and recommendations and evaluate their influence on safeguarding the programme's end level. (In this perspective the panel wishes to emphasise that it is enthusiastic about the relationships the EB maintains with other EBs within and outside Fontys. The panel thinks the EB should be able to benefit more from these relations.)

Judgment

The panel concludes ***the programme partially meets standard 3***. This judgment has been communicated to the FHMM IB stakeholders on the day of the site visit. The programme management has drawn up an improvement plan in Q1 of 2020 which has been added to this advisory report. The improvement plan has been submitted for consultation to the Programme Committee ("*opleidingscommissie*"). The Programme Committee's advisory report on the improvement plan has been added to this report as well.

The panel believes that it is possible to overcome the identified shortcomings and to meet the conditions within a period of two years.

4.4. Achieved learning outcomes

Standard 4: The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Explanation: The achievement of the intended learning outcomes is demonstrated by the results of tests, the final projects, and the performance of graduates in actual practice or in postgraduate programmes.

Findings

The student has completed the programme when he has passed all the summative exams of the programme.

The graduation project is assessed through a graduation assignment in semester 8. The assessment consists of a thesis and a defence. The "new style" thesis (IB, cohort 2018/2019) showed more variety than the old style because IB students can now choose a topic on consultancy research, operational research or business research. The panel evaluated 15 final products: 6 IBMS products (year 2017/2018, old style) and 9 IB products (year 2018/2019, new style). For further information on the sample of these final products, see 'Considerations' below.

Work field representatives the panel spoke to were positive about the alumni and their skills. They described them as enthusiastic and highly motivated. However, they also mentioned that the transition from an educational environment to a work environment can be a bit hard for some alumni when it comes to getting used to a working routine. "Writing academic papers doesn't get one through a working day" as one of the employers mentioned.

The alumni were positive about the way they were prepared for the labour market. Looking back, they conclude that the programme indeed made them develop their theoretical research skills. This in fact they value very much because it has stimulated them to adopt an attitude of asking-why questions instead of switching to easily to asking-how questions. Developing an academic attitude in a working environment *after* graduation will be difficult. "Better do it while you still can" as one of the alumni stated.

Considerations

All 15 final products represented bachelor level and demonstrated that the intended learning outcomes were achieved.

According to the panel the observations of the employers and alumni regarding the academic attitude of the graduates were reflected in some of the theses. The alumni advocated convincingly that this theoretical approach can be very valuable and that young professionals will quickly get used to more practical approaches as soon as they get a job. The other way around would be much more difficult.

According to the panel the programme is closely linked to the contemporary professional field. The programme aims to further intensify the connection to the field and the alumni which the panel supports.

Judgment

The panel concludes ***the programme meets standard 4.***

5. OVERALL CONCLUSION

Standard	Assessment
<p>Standard 1 - Intended Learning outcomes</p> <p>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</p>	Meets the standard.
<p>Standard 2 - Teaching-learning environment</p> <p>The curriculum, the teaching-learning environment and the quality of the teaching staff enable the incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.</p>	Meets the standard.
<p>Standard 3 – Student assessment</p> <p>The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.</p>	Partially meets the standard.
<p>Standard 4 – Achieved learning outcomes</p> <p>The achievement of the intended learning outcomes is demonstrated by the results of tests, the final projects, and the performance of graduates in actual practice or in postgraduate programmes.</p>	Meets the standard.
<p>Conclusion</p>	Conditionally positive

The programme meets standard 1, 2 and 4. The programme partially meets standard 3. According to the panel the shortcomings identified can be remedied within a period of two years. Therefore, the panel advises the NVAO to award **conditional accreditation** of the programme.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter only contains the *most important recommendations*, not all recommendations. **Conditions to be met within two years are addressed in the next chapter, chapter 7.**

Standard 1. Intended Learning Outcomes

A lot has been done to intensify the connection with the Brainport region on a practical level: students find their way to the companies and lecturers stimulate and support them as much as possible. The programme is now ready to take it to the next level and work on a more strategic partnership with the Brainport region. Involving Brainport representatives in evaluating and possibly redrafting the intended learning outcomes will make the profile of the programme better identifiable as the IB Eindhoven programme.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

Communication is a point of attention. With so many students from different countries, clear and unambiguous information is of vital importance.

Standard 3. Student assessment

The panel is enthusiastic about the relationships the EB maintains with other EBs within and outside Fontys. However, the panel thinks the EB should be able to benefit more from these calibration sessions and encourages the EB to intensify these relationships and to document the outcomes. This will facilitate communication with IB stakeholders within FHMM and contribute to sessions during which comprehensive and thoughtful decisions are taken.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

The programme aims to further intensify the connection to the field and the alumni which the panel supports.

7. CONDITIONS

This chapter only includes the *conditions* that should be met within two years, therefore serving as a basis for the improvement plan the programme provided.

Recommendations that do not necessarily need to be addressed in the improvement plan are covered in the previous chapter, chapter 6.

The panel identified shortcomings that should be overcome. Recommendations on these matters are therefore qualified as conditions that should be met. All of the conditions are related to standard 3, most of them require an extra effort of the Examination Board.

The graduation semester is not linked to any of the intended learning outcomes. This vision should be re-evaluated especially in view of the intended learning outcomes within the domain of Tools for Working and Management and in view of the feasibility of achieving 32 programme learning outcomes within 3.5 years. Either the absence of a link between semester 8 and the intended learning outcomes should be substantiated, or a new approach should be adopted.

The weighting of the two parts of the graduation exam (the thesis and the defence) should perhaps be reconsidered. Although the weighting in itself is defensible, allowing one grade to be compensated with another might be less defensible since different skills are being assessed in these two assessment parts. The choice for this policy should either be substantiated, or the policy should be revised.

The use of the grading forms should be harmonised and the EB should monitor closely that the comment field always contains a sufficiently substantiated judgment.

The percentage of holders of the formal BKE certificate is a subject of debate. There might be a relation between the issues identified in the use of the grading forms and the percentage of holders of the BKE certificate. Making the BKE training and the exam compulsory for all examiners might solve this. Either the BKE training *and* the exam should be compulsory for all examiners or another (preferably measurable) indicator should be introduced to ensure all examiners are qualified. This will also be of added value addressing the other issues identified.

The EB doesn't get hold of enough data and sufficiently detailed information to thoroughly monitor the end level of the programme. The samples of IB graduation products taken by the EB to evaluate the end level are not representative. Either larger samples of IB final works should be taken and evaluated or another valid system of monitoring the end level of the programme should be implemented. This includes closing the PDCA cycle; the EB should document findings and considerations, communicate conclusions and recommendations and evaluate their influence on safeguarding the programme's end level.

ANNEX I**Overview of judgements**

Overview of the panel's judgments Bachelor programme International Business, including the dual degree programme served by Fontys (FHMM) in collaboration with Oulu University of Applied Sciences (OAMK)	
Standard	Assessment
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	Meets the standard.
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.	Meets the standard.
Standard 3 – Student assessment The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.	Partially meets the standard.
Standard 4 – Achieved learning outcomes The achievement of the intended learning outcomes is demonstrated by the results of tests, the final projects, and the performance of graduates in actual practice or in postgraduate programmes.	Meets the standard.
Conclusion, overall judgment	Conditionally positive

ANNEX II Programme of the site visit

Programme: Bachelor International Business Fontys Hogescholen (FHMM Eindhoven)

Date: October 10th 2019

Time	Auditees
0815-0900	Meeting panel (preparation site visit)
0900-0930	Opening by FHMM / IB Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Director Fontys School of Business and Communication - IB Head of Department
0930-1015	Meeting with Examination Board / Testing Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair EB - Member EB - Member Testing Committee
1015-1030	Break
1030-1230	A "taste of IB" An IB colleague and a student takes the panel to various sessions, meetings and classes to experience IB in action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check representative sets and material in the Gradework system - Class on Macro Economics by a senior lecturer - Student project Customer Journey Mapping group meeting with senior lecturer - Pitch by a graduation student and an international student - Winning pitch student group "No Cut securities"
1230-1330	Lunch, walk-in moment, looking at study materials
1330-1415	Meeting with students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student year 1, semester 1 - Student year 1, semester 1 - Student year 2, semester 3 - Student year 2, semester 3 - Student year 3, semester 5 (internship) - Student year 4, semester 7 - Student year 4, semester 7 - Student year 4, semester 8
1415-1500	Meeting with work field and alumni <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marketing Coordinator at MAG45 - Sr. Project Manager International Trade at BOM - Sales Manager at Brainbox Consulting BV (alumna) - Supply Chain Management Trainee and Senior Team leader at Mars (alumnus) - Intern at ASML
1500-1515	Break
1515-1600	Meeting with Teachers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair of the Curriculum Committee - Foundation year coordinator - DPC chair and member of the 'lectorate' - Junior lecturer - Brainport liaison - Senior lecturer and coordinator internationalisation - Senior lecturer and coordinator graduation semester
1600-1700	Reflection and deliberation panel, pending issues
1700	Preliminary judgment and feedback

For privacy reasons ("*Algemene Verordening Gegevensbescherming*"), the names are not included in this report. The names of auditees are known to the secretary of the audit panel.

Working methods

Selection of the delegations / the auditees

In compliance with the NVAO regulations the audit panel decided prior to the audit on the composition of the delegations (auditees) in consultation with the programme management. An 'open consultation session' (walk-in moment) was scheduled as part of the site-visit programme. The panel verified that the scheduled times of the consultation session had been made public to all parties involved in the school community in a correct and timely manner. No students or staff members attended the open consultation session.

Auditing process

The following procedure was adopted. The panel studied the documents regarding the programme (see Annex Documents reviewed) and 15 theses. The panel secretary organised individual input from the auditors, synthesized the input and distributed it among the panel members prior to the audit. This synthesized input was then rephrased into audit questions by the chair and the secretary and these questions were also distributed among the panel members prior to the audit. The individual input, synthesized input and suggested question for the site visit served as a starting point for the preparatory meeting of the panel. The preparatory meeting was held on the 10th of October 2019, at the location of the site visit, before the site visit took place.

The panel formulated its preliminary judgments per theme and standard immediately after the site visit on the 10th of October. These were based on the documentation and the 15 theses provided by the institute in advance and on the findings and considerations of the site visit. The panel concluded that additional information (written documents) about the dual degree programme was needed to be able to reach a valid and carefully substantiated conclusion. The panel studied this additional information on the dual degree provided by the institute and was then able to judge on all 4 standards (see Annex Overview of judgments).

A first version of the assessment report was drafted by the secretary and circulated among the panel members for review and comments. The final draft was subsequently forwarded to the institute to correct factual inaccuracies. The panel finalised the report on February 24th 2020.

Assessment rules

One cluster different panels

The site visits within the cluster 'Hbo IBMS Groep 3 Zuid (Bachelor International Business) (hand-in date 1 May 2020)' have been executed by the quality assurance agencies of Hobéon and NQA. To stimulate fair judging, all panel members received the same instruction on preparing the site visit. This instruction included the 'Assessment Framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands, dated September 2018'. Secondly, some panel members acted in more than one panel (overlapping) and panel chairs consulted each other as peers during the process regarding the focus of the audits. Special attention was paid to how to audit the dual degree programmes. Thirdly, Hobéon used one secretary for all the advisory reports and so did NQA.

Judgments

According to the NVAO assessment rules a standard meets, partially meets or does not meet the score. Hobéon applied the decision rules, as listed in the 'Assessment Framework for higher education accreditation system Netherlands, September 2018'.

Limited framework

According to assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands, September 2018

Codeshare

Note that the Fontys programme International Business in Eindhoven (FHMM) shares a CROHO code (30029) with the Fontys programme International Business in Venlo (FIBS).

ANNEX III List of documents examined

List of documents examined

- Self-evaluation report bachelor programme International Business *Fontys Hogeschool Marketing en Management* Eindhoven
- Organogram FHMM
- Fontys Focus 2020 "*instellingsplan*" (strategy and focus *Fontys Hogescholen*)
- Fontys Focus "*Personeel en organisatie*" (staff and organisation *Fontys Hogescholen*)
- *Kwaliteit volgens Fontys Hogescholen (kwaliteitsbeleid instelling)*
- FHMM *Kwaliteitszorgbeleid* 2015
- National Framework International Business: profile, programme learning outcomes and process background (version November 2017)
- FHMM International Business BBA Framework (graduate profile, programme learning outcomes, educational vision and curriculum structure)
- Minutes External Advisory Board 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019
- Comparison old frameworks and the new IB framework (including level definitions AuCom):
 - IB old style (30029)
 - IBMS (International Business and Management Studies, 34936)
 - IBL (International Business and Languages, 34407)
 - TMA (Trade Management Asia, 34041)
- Current curriculum (2019-2020)
- Overview programme ("KLOTS": semester/subject/ECs/PLOs/levels/MLOs/teaching methods/type of testing)
- NSE results 2018
- *Toetsbeleid* FHMM 2016-2020
- Examination and Assessment Guide for lecturers FHMM
- Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER) IB 2018-2019 and 2019-2020
- Example of a grading form with rubrics
- *Profielschets examencommissieleden* FHMM 2018
- Annual report Examination Board cohort 2017-2018
- Minutes Programme Committee ("*opleidingscommissie*") 2019
- Services and facilities for students (website)
- Internship study guide 2019 including internship agreement form
- Documents research group smart marketing and strategy
 - *Lectoraatsaanvraag* smart marketing
 - *Promotietrajecten Fontys Hogescholen Marketing*
- Management report Talent Academy
- Manual and templates graduation projects, including specifications concerning consultancy projects, operational projects and business research projects
- Fifteen recent final projects/papers, including the grading and evaluation forms completed by the examiners. For privacy reasons, the names of these graduates and their student numbers are not included in this report. The names of the graduates, student numbers, as well as the titles of the final projects, are known to the secretary of the audit panel.
- Dual degree documentation:
 - Dual degree agreement between *Fontys Hogeschool Marketing en Management* and Oulu University of Applied Sciences Finland (OAMK)
 - Equation of the FHMM and OAMK curricula including an analysis of differences and similarities regarding intended learning outcomes, subjects, assessments and didactics
 - Report of the latest annual meeting (2019) between programme representatives of the FHMM and OAMK curricula
 - Report of the Examination Board regarding safeguarding the quality and level of the dual degree programme.

ANNEX IV Composition of the audit panel

The programme is audited in a period in which similar programmes are being audited.

Group name (in Dutch: <i>visitatiegroep</i>)	Hbo IBMS Groep 3 Zuid (Bachelor International Business) (Hand-in date May 1 st 2020)
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Succinct resumes of participating panel members:

Name	Succinct CVs
Mr. D.J.N.M. (Nies) Rijnders MSc (<i>chair</i>)	Nies Rijnders studied Economics (Tilburg University). Nies is currently working as a senior policy advisor applied research at Avans University of Applied Sciences. From 2014 until September 2019 he has been working as manager of Avans Expertisecentrum Sustainable Business. From 2007 until 2014 he was dean of Avans School of International Studies. As (lead) auditor he audited education programmes in the economic field on behalf of NVAO and quality assurance agencies.
Mrs. C.R. (Robin) Pereboom MMO (<i>panel member</i>)	Robin Pereboom studied Marketing Economics (The Hague University of Applied Sciences) and Management and Organisation (TIAS School for Business and Society). Robin is currently working as a project manager for Avans and is responsible for strategic relations and partnership development for the Associate Degree Academies in Den Bosch and Roosendaal. From 2012 until 2016 she worked as vice dean of Avans School of International Studies and from 2007 until 2012 as programme director of International Business and Management Studies.
Mr. V.J.M. Guyt B Eng (<i>panel member</i>)	Victor Guyt studied Chemical Technology (Zuyd University of Applied Sciences) and took courses in NIMA A, NIMA B and several languages (Spanish, French and German). Victor has over 30 years of experience as an international trade consultant. In this role he advised small and medium enterprises on internationalisation matters. Victor currently runs his own companies 'FINDINGYOURWAY' and 'FOUNDMYWAY'.
Mrs. L.C.C. (Lola) vom Hof (<i>student member</i>)	Lola vom Hof studies International Business (HZ University of Applied Sciences) and is member of the Board of Studies (in Dutch " <i>opleidingscommissie</i> ")
Mrs. B.E. (Barbara) Roemers MA (<i>certified secretary</i>)	Certified in 2016 by NVAO.

Prior to the audit all panel members undersigned declarations of independence and confidentiality which are in possession of the NVAO. This declaration certifies, among other things, that panel members do not currently maintain or have not maintained for the last five years any (family) connections or ties of a personal nature or as a researcher/teacher, professional or consultant with the institution in question, which could affect a fully independent judgement regarding the quality of the programme in either a positive or negative sense.

On the 3rd of October 2019 the NVAO endorsed the composition of the panel to assess the Programme of International Business of the University of Applied Sciences *Fontys Hogescholen – Fontys Hogeschool Marketing en Management (008660)*.

ANNEX V**List of abbreviations**

Abbreviation	Explanation
AB (EAB)	Advisory Board (External Advisory Board)
AuCom	Autonomy and Complexity (framework defining competence levels)
EB	Examination Board (<i>examencommissie als bedoeld in WHW</i>)
FSBC	Fontys School of Business and Communication
FHMM	<i>Fontys Hogeschool Marketing en Management (Eindhoven)</i>
FIBS	Fontys International Business School (Venlo)
IB	International Business
IBL	International Business and Languages
IBMS	International Business and Management Studies
ILO	Intended Learning Outcome
KSAVE	Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes, Values and Ethics (framework defining 21 st century skills)
LW	Living in the World (themes domain 3 national framework)
MLO	Module Learning Outcome
OAMK	<i>Oulun ammattikorkeakoulu (In English: Oulu University of Applied Sciences in Finland)</i>
PLO	Programme Learning Outcome
TAC	Test and Assessment Committee
TER	Teaching and Examination Regulations (<i>Onderwijs- en examenregeling, OER</i>)
TMA	Trade Management Asia
TW/TWM	Tools for Working and Management (themes domain 4 national framework)
WT	Ways of Thinking (themes domain 1 national framework)
WW	Ways of Working (themes domain 2 national framework)



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