

Master Tourism Destination Management Breda University of Applied Sciences

*Report of the extended programme assessment
18 and 19 December 2019*

Colophon

Breda University of Applied Sciences
Monseigneur Hopmansstraat 2
4817 JT Breda

Programme: Master Tourism Destination Management
Location: Breda
Mode of study: Fulltime
Croho-registration: 49287

Assessment committee

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The assessment was conducted under the responsibility of
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Summary

On 18 and 19 November an AeQui committee performed an assessment of the master's programme in Tourism Destination Management of Breda University of Applied Sciences. The overall judgement of the committee is that the quality of the programme is **positive**.

Intended learning outcomes

The committee assesses that the programme meets this standard. The intended learning outcomes have been concretised with regard to content, level and orientation and meet international requirements. They tie in with the level seven description of the European qualification framework. The programme has ample contacts in the (international) tourism industry, which contribute to the relevance and topicality of the intended learning outcomes and the programme. The committee values the explicit outlook on destination management and the three approaches from which destinations management is addressed. It is of the opinion that this matches the requirements of and developments in the tourism industry. Lecturers are actively involved in research projects in close cooperation with the professional field, guest lecturers are invited, as well as visiting scholars and professors and the advisory board is involved in the programme.

Programme

The committee assesses that the programme meets this standard. The programme enables students to realise the intended learning outcomes. In all three phases, students are provided with ample professional and international experience in the different courses, the field research project and the dissertation. Research skills are addressed throughout the programme, first in two courses dedicated to research and after that these skills are put into practice in the field research project and the dissertation. The programme succeeds in creating a truly international classroom with a diverse scope of international students and international lecturers who are capable of teaching an international classroom. In addition, the programme creates a learning environment that allows for interactive teaching methods. The committee notes however that further increasing the number of students can affect the small-scale, interactive and international learning environment.

Staff

The committee assesses that the programme meets this standard. The staff involved in the programme is very competent and approachable. The committee is of the opinion that the quality of the lecturers involved is a valuable asset of the programme. In addition, the composition of the staff reflects the international focus of the programme and lecturers have ample (international) professional experience. Lecturers meet on a regular bases to share knowledge and experience. The academy facilitates professional development and the realisation of personal ambitions.

Facilities

The committee assesses that the programme meets the standards regarding facilities and tutoring. A very proficient infrastructure is in place for realising the programme. In addition, the BUAs campus with proximity of all BUAs programmes facilitates the cooperation between programmes and the realisation of cross overs. The committee also concludes that the tutoring of students is tailored to the needs of the students and matches the independence expected of master's students.

Quality Assurance

The committee assesses that the programme meets this standard. The programme has an effective quality assurance system in place. BUAs's quality assurance system and planning and control cycle is translated within the academy and the programme. The committee notes that relevant stakeholders are involved in the quality assurance process. The courses are systematically evaluated and if needed improved. Lectures and course teams have an important role in collecting feedback about their course formally and informally and translating this into an improvement plan. The degree programme committee has an active role in the quality assurance system.

Assessment

The assessment committee concludes that the programme has an adequate system of assessment in place, and that the programme meets this standard. Effective measures are taken to guarantee the validity, reliability and transparency of the assessments, by using a yearly assessment plan, test blue prints, the four-eye-principle and rubrics. In addition, calibration sessions and blind marking by colleagues are frequently organised. Students are in general content with their assessments and the feedback from their lecturers. The board of examiners and assessment committee are pro-active in safeguarding the quality of the assessments.

Achieved learning outcomes

The committee assesses that the programme meets this standard. The committee concludes that graduates of the programme achieve the required master's level and the intended learning outcomes. The programme has an adequate graduation procedure in place, with options for more practice-based research or more theoretical research. The studied dissertations reflected an adequate level and this level was confirmed during the site-visit in the meetings with students and alumni. The committee noted that

the feedback on the assessments forms varies per examiner and is in general rather limited.

Suggestions

For further improvement of the programme, the committee suggests the following:

- Even though students are adequately prepared for the international field research project, the committee is of the opinion that in this phase of the programme intercultural competences could be more explicitly addressed.
- The committee agrees with the students that the programme is quite intense and that some time for processing the knowledge and skills learned would be beneficial to student's learning processes.
- The committee is of the opinion that the programme can be more attentive about informing students about the results of their feedback.
- The committee recommends the programme to organise calibration among examiners to stimulate that rubrics are interpreted the same and grades are more comparable.

Overview assessment

The following table shows the assessment for each standard.

Standard	Assessment
1. Intended learning outcomes	Meets the standard
2. Orientation	Meets the standard
3. Content	Meets the standard
4. Learning environment	Meets the standard
5. Intake	Meets the standard
6. Staff	Meets the standard
7. Facilities	Meets the standard
8. Tutoring	Meets the standard
9. Quality assurance	Meets the standard
10 Assessment	Meets the standard
11 Achieved learning outcomes	Meets the standard
Overall	Positive

All standards of the NVAO assessment framework are assessed positively, hence the committee awards a positive recommendation for the accreditation of the master's programme Tourism Destination Management. The committee concludes that the overall assessment of the programme is **positive**.

The committee also assessed whether the programme ties in with the criteria for the distinctive feature regarding Internationalisation. All standards / criteria are assessed positively, therefore the committee also awards a **positive** recommendation for awarding the distinctive feature.

On behalf of the entire assessment committee,
Utrecht, February 2020

Liesbeth Schöningh
Chair

Titia Busing
Secretary

Introduction

In the master's programme in Tourism Destination Management students learn to analyse destinations from a multi-stakeholder and a contextual perspective. Graduates are trained for positions at strategic level in management and consultancy for the private as well as the public sector engaged in tourist destination issues.

The institute

The programme ties in with the mission of Breda University of Applied Sciences (BUAS): 'to deliver graduates who are trained to develop and use their talents as well as their personal innovative capacity to the fullest potential in order to provide innovative solutions to the (international) professional field and be meaningful to our globalising society'. BUAS offers bachelor's and master's programmes within five academies:

- Academy of Digital Entertainment;
- Academy of Hotel & Facility;
- Academy for Leisure;
- Academy for Tourism and;
- Academy of Urban Development, Logistics & Mobility.

Internationalisation is an important aspect of BUAs's mission. Internationalisation is seen as a process of integrating an international and intercultural dimension into purpose, functions or delivery of our institution. Internationalisation is not a goal in itself, but is aimed at providing high quality educational and international work experiences, particularly work experiences, to prepare students for the globalizing job market. BUAs aims to be (in 2030) a leading internationally recognised institute with a strong focus on industry and society.

The master's programme in Tourism Destination Management is part of the Academy for Tourism, which also offers the associate degree Tourism Management, the bachelor of science Tourism Management, the bachelor Tourism Management and the pre-master Strategic Business Management and Marketing. The academy aims to contribute to society through the development of the international

tourism industry and by training professionals to work in this industry. Students are facilitated to acquire relevant, intercultural, creative, business-oriented, digital knowledge and skills about sustainability. Students learn to interpret the industry's various perspectives and to work in an international business environment.

The academy consists of 1,850 students. The academy's research focuses on green, social and digital impacts of tourism. For the first two topics a professor has been appointed, for the latter this is planned for the near future. Lecturers are actively involved in research projects for organisations / companies in the professional field.

The programme

The one-year master's programme in Tourism Destination Management is offered in English. Since 2017-2018, the programme has been subsidised by the Dutch government. This has led to a substantial increase of student numbers from the Netherlands and from European Economic Region (EER) countries.

The programme consist of three phases: the first phase containing different courses offered at the BUAs campus, the second phase consist of a field research project in Asia and the final phase comprises the dissertation (worldwide).

The assessment

Breda University assigned AeQui VBI to perform a quality assessment. In close co-operation with AeQui, an independent and competent assessment committee was convened. A preparatory meeting with representatives from the programme has taken place.

The committee also assessed whether the programme ties in with the criteria for the distinctive feature regarding Internationalisation. This is part of a separate report. Jessica Shinnick was added to the committee for the assessment of this distinctive feature. For the THE-ICE Accreditation, Thomas Bauer was part of the assessment committee. The results of this accreditation are as well reflected in a separate report.

The site-visit took place on 18 and 19 November 2019 in accordance with the programme in Appendix 2. The committee explicitly oriented itself on the cluster of which the programme is part. This took place during the preparatory meeting

and the last committee meeting in which the final assessment took place. Members of the committee have participated in other assessments part of this cluster.

The committee assessed in an independent manner. At the conclusion of the assessment, the results were presented to representatives of the programme. The draft version of this report was sent to the programme representatives; their reactions have led to this final version of the report.

Initiated by the programme, a developmental meeting will take place in the course of 2020. The results of this meeting will not influence the assessment written down in this report.

Intended learning outcomes

The committee concludes that the intended learning outcomes have been concretised with regard to content, level and orientation and meet international requirements. The intended learning outcomes tie in with the level seven description of the European qualification framework. The programme has ample contacts in the (international) tourism industry, which contribute to the relevance and topicality of the intended learning outcomes and the programme. The committee values the explicit outlook on destination management and the three approaches from which destination management is addressed. It is of the opinion that this matches the requirements of and developments in the tourism industry. Lecturers are actively involved in research projects in close cooperation with the professional field, guest lecturers are invited, as well as visiting scholars and professors and the advisory board is involved in the programme.

Standard 1: The intended learning outcomes of the programme have been concretised with regard to content, level and orientation; they meet international requirements.

Findings

The programme views tourism as a phenomenon, more than an industry. According to the programme, this phenomenon should be observed and analysed from multiple disciplines, such as social sciences, economic sciences, environmental sciences, but also arts (such as film and photography). In addition, the programme focuses on the specific concept of a destination. The programme states that knowledge of this concept is crucial to understanding tourism complexities. In the vision of the programme, a 'destination' in tourism not necessarily refers to a physical geographical area. From the moment a specific interest is expressed by a person in a specific place, this place may be defined as a destination. This might well be an existing or imaginary place. From the moment when the interest of a natural person translates into a desire to visit (or not visit) that place, its potential as a tourism destination is installed and destination management becomes an applied science in its own right.

The programme aims to provide students with a deeper theoretical insight in issues of design and development of tourism destination areas. It wants to enable students in developing analytical, proactive and problem-solving attitudes and

skills towards these issues. In addition, students develop knowledge and skills required to design and implement professional advice, as well as academic research in an international learning environment during the field research project. Next to this, the programme builds on student's expertise to innovate, participate and lead processes of collaboration, negotiation and change in tourism destination management. The focus on destination is translated into three interrelated approaches that are applied to education and research:

- contextual approach: tourism destination reality is defined as a context, enabling staff and students to incorporate all relevant academic elements and their complexities.
- stakeholder approach: students learn to analyse tourism destination complexities from a stakeholder perspective, the way in which destinations are embedded in an international tourism environment and networks at local, regional and global level.
- multidisciplinary approach: destination management is seen as a multidisciplinary field of academic research and education.

Intended learning outcomes

The intended learning outcomes of the programme are oriented towards achieving the generic qualifications at EQF level 7. Next to this, the generic standard for professional master's qualifications from the Dutch Association of Universities of Applied Sciences is leading. The intended

learning outcomes reflect the three approaches mentioned above and address for instance innovation, stakeholder management and sensitivity to diverse cultural realities and contextual settings, providing crucial professional skills and knowledge. The sixteen intended learning outcomes are organised in four categories: a) subject knowledge and understanding, b) intellectual skills, c) practical skills and d) transferrable skills.

Students learn, amongst other things, to:

- analyse and clarify the interdependency and complexity of the tourism branch;
- analyse, evaluate and strategically appraise the importance of the external environment and context for the tourism branch;
- cooperate, work and communicate effectively with people with different cultural, social, educational and business-like backgrounds;
- respond effectively to strategic and management issues of particular stakeholders;
- apply these skills and capabilities in any international setting.

Links with professional practice

Different ways are used to align the programme with the demands of and developments in the professional field. The programme keeps up to date through annual interviews with key industry stakeholders in Asia, and three advisory board meetings per year. The industry is involved as external assessors of students' final dissertations or as guest lecturers. In addition, visiting scholars and professors from partner universities ensure that the programme is connected to academic debates in the domain of destination management. Moreover, lecturers are present in conferences and debates within the Netherlands as well as at the global level.

During the site-visit, the committee met with several representatives from the professional field (and the strategic advisory board). It was confirmed that the professional field is involved in various ways. Members of the strategic advisory board sometimes provide guest lectures as well. The professional field is involved in research projects with lecturers and provides graduation

projects. The committee also learned that the composition and organisation of the Strategic Advisory Board will change. The goal is to create a board with a more holistic view and representing the different sectors BUAs is active in. The representatives of the professional field the committee met with, value the programme's ample contacts with the industry, the ambition of the programme in educating students for the future and the international character of the programme. Also, the focus on the programme in doing something for the destination rather than using the destination is valued by the professional field. Students and alumni are characterised as pro-active, curious, self-aware and entrepreneurial. The representatives of the professional field would appreciate to see some of the theses.

Considerations

Based on interviews and the examination of underlying documentation, the committee concludes that intended learning outcomes of the programme tie in with (inter)national requirements for (international) tourism and are in tune with the demands from the professional field. In addition, it concludes that the level seven description of the European qualification framework is reflected in the intended learning outcomes.

The committee values that the programme has a very explicit viewpoint on destination management and the three approaches from which destinations management is addressed. It is of the opinion that this matches the requirements of and developments in the tourism industry.

The committee notes that the programme staff has good contacts with the professional field, which contribute to the relevance and topicality of the programme. Lecturers have ample (international) professional experience and guest lecturers are invited on a regular base. The advisory board is involved in the programme and the committee appreciates the programme's focus on inviting visiting scholars and professors from partner universities.

Based on the above, the committee concludes that the programme **meets** this standard.

Programme

The committee concludes that the programme enables students to realise the intended learning outcomes. In every phase, the programme provides students with ample professional and international experience in the different courses, the field research project and the dissertation. Research skills are addressed throughout the programme, first in two courses dedicated to research and after that these skills are put into practice in the field research project and the dissertation. The committee is of the opinion that the programme succeeds in creating a truly international classroom with a diverse scope of international students and international lecturers who are capable of teaching an international classroom. In addition, the programmes creates a learning environment that allows for interactive teaching methods. The committee notes however that further increasing the number of students can affect the small-scale, interactive and international learning environment.

Orientation

Standard 2: The curriculum enables the students to master appropriate (professional or academic) research and professional skills.

Findings

As mentioned in standard 1, the professional field is actively involved in the programme. In the first phase of the programme, professionals provide guest lectures and lectures bring their own ample experience in and contacts with the professional field to the programme. The professional field is also involved as commissioner in several student projects and as external assessors in the graduation projects.

The programme has many contacts in the industry who share their business experience or research in topics related to business innovation, stakeholder management and interaction, organisational development, strategy and change. Next to this, industry professionals (for example from Booking.com, KLM as well as Organisational consultants) share their insights with the students on an annual basis.

In the second phase of the programme, students embark on their field research project in Asia. During this project, students travel to three different Asian / Pacific tourism destinations and are placed in a real-life international work

environment. Here students carry out consultancy work on behalf of or in cooperation with different tourism stakeholders and write research and consultancy reports for the stakeholders engaged. In each of the destinations three types of stakeholder perspectives are taken: medium sized and large tourism organisations, public organisations and micro and small-sized enterprises. For each destination selected, research assignments are prepared together with local stakeholders, through preparatory field visits and discussion on the relevant tourism issues for that area. During the field research project, education is linked to research, while at the same time theory is directly connected to professional practice.

The research projects address the development of current and future strategies for the different stakeholders involved. Students put the knowledge and skills learned in the first phase into practice and learn to:

- observe and analyse destination developments from different stakeholder's perspectives;
- interpret the research assignment, reflect upon outcomes and opinions based on a variety of (often incomplete) sets of information and design an appropriate research objective, research question and research methodology;
- undertake research tasks and document the results;

- report on their findings, conclusions and recommendations;
- prepare and present strategic advice to stakeholder groups, considering future changes that might influence the tourism destinations and the corresponding stakeholder's success. At the third destination students present their views and ideas for effective interventions for stakeholder groups from their research areas.

In 2018 – 2019 the students visited Melbourne, South & Central Sri Lanka and South Bali. During the field research project, students operate in teams (or research groups). The teams are composed by the lecturers and after the second destination, the composition of the teams changes.

The site-visit learned that students prepare the field research project in groups by for example analysing the political situation and current and future developments in the destination. All groups analyse a destination and present the results to each other.

The site-visit also learned that during the field research project, students visit three destinations with one week in between destinations. This creates some breaks for the students. The programme supports students in arranging cheap flights, that students can also use for their dissertation research as some students opt to conduct their dissertation also in Asia. Students are responsible for arranging their own accommodation during the field research project. At every destination, lecturers are present for guidance and tutoring during the first ten days of the field research project. During these days an introductory programme to the destination is organised with meetings with industry and government. During these days, lecturers meet twice with each group of students. At the end of the period in a destination, lecturers are also present and meet with the different student groups. Students present the results at each destination to their peers, lecturers and the stakeholders involved.

Research skills are addressed throughout the programme. In the first phase, research skills are part of the Research Process & Methods course and the Context Related Research course. In the first course students are introduced to techniques and principles of field research, with an emphasis on selecting techniques, assessing their relevance (both academically and applied) and critically discussing constraints during the execution of the technique in uncertain circumstances. In addition, students practice data collection and analysis techniques during workshops. The latter course aims to prepare students to start their individual thesis. In addition, it aims to make the actual field-work activities more context-relevant, valuable and applicable. and to reduce the potential uncertainty arising from time constraints and the limited availability of research resources. The course also prepares students for their field research project in phase 2. During the course, students work on their research proposal for their dissertation (as an assignment). This includes a literature survey and a research methodology.

As mentioned afore, research is also part of the field research project in phase two. And is part of phase three, the dissertation. This is further elaborated on in standard 11.

Alumni the committee met, very much valued the field research project in Asia Pacific. It provided them with perspective on organisations and stakeholders in the field and prepared them for their current work. Students the committee met noted that the two courses on research could be integrated into one.

Considerations

The committee notes that the programme has an explicit professional orientation. Students are thoroughly prepared for their role as future professionals in the field of tourism destination management. The guest lecturers, extensive field research project with real-life stakeholders, and the experience (guest) lecturers bring in all add to this. The committee values the extensive field research project in the programme. The field

research project in phase two provides a unique and intense learning process and enables students to really operate in the tourism destination management practice.

The committee also concludes that research skills are effectively addressed in each phase of the programme. In addition, the committee values the integrated approach in research, where students start with their dissertation in the first phase of the programme, in the courses dedicated to research. In the second phase and final phase students apply the learned knowledge on research in their field research project in Asia and in the dissertation in the final phase.

The committee ascertains that the programme has a clear and distinctive international character. The focus on internationalisation is integrated in all parts of the curriculum and is so to speak 'part of the programme's dna'. This is reflected in the international content discussed, the international experience students gain in the field research project in Asia, the international classroom and the international lecturers.

Even though students are adequately prepared for the international field research project, the committee is of the opinion that in this phase of the programme intercultural competences could be more explicitly addressed.

Based on the above, the committee concludes that the programme **meets** this standard.

Content

Standard 3: The content of the curriculum enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Findings

The programme is organised in three phases, to ensure a gradual integration of theory and practice. With this structure, the programme aims to achieve a higher level of complexity throughout the course. The phases of the programme are:

- theoretical phase (30 ECTS) in Breda where students get acquainted with relevant theoretical concepts of destination management, through literature, lectures and individual as well as group assignments;
- field research project in Asia (15 ECTS), during which students will put into practice their knowledge and insights, while located in diverse international tourism destination stakeholder settings. This is elaborated on in Standard 2.
- dissertation phase (15 ECTS), during which students have to bring together theory and practice in an individual academic research exercise, and relate professional insights to academic theory and production of knowledge. This is elaborated on in Standard 11.

Recently, the phases have become more integrated, for example by starting with the dissertation in the first phase of the programme.

Next to the research courses discussed in Standard 2, the first phase of the programme consists of courses on marketing, stakeholder management and finance & organisation. The Destination Development, Finance & Organisation course for example discusses how economic impacts can be achieved and measured, related to responsible and sustainable economic growth of a destination/ geographical region. This involves regional economic impact analysis, financing of tourism / capital flows, (financial) yield analysis and analysis, development and management of tourism projects. The Destination Stakeholder & Management course introduces students to the topic of destination management from a multi-stakeholder perspective: knowing, acknowledging and managing the different interests of tourism stakeholders.

The Team Performance & Creative Leadership course runs throughout the programme and challenges students to search for new forms of personal leadership, professional skills in the field of cooperation within culturally diverse teams,

interpersonal dialogue and creative leadership. This includes group dynamics, self-management, reflection skills and intercultural competences.

During the site-visit, alumni remarked that the programme provided them with a new perspective towards the tourism industry, society and the world beyond tourism. Alumni also value the attention for stakeholder management in the programme. Students the committee met, value the relation between theory and practice in the programme. The planning of the programme and the course descriptions are clear and helpful for the students.

The committee learned during the site-visit that the programme plans on introducing different tracks in the near future, for example on digital tourism and sustainability. With these tracks, students can pursue their own interest and specialise. In addition, the tracks would add to maintaining the small-scale of and interactive learning in the programme.

Considerations

The committee concludes that the content of the programme enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The committee appreciates the structure of the programme in three distinguishable yet very connected phases. The three phases are not strictly separated, allow for the integration of theory and practice and together create a challenging programme.

The handbooks for the different phases and course descriptions are thorough and provide students with an overview of the phase and a clear outline of the assignments and assessments. During the site-visit, the committee also noted that the literature used in the programme is up-to-date and relevant for a programme on tourist destination management.

Based on the above, the committee concludes that the programme **meets** this standard.

Learning environment

Standard 4: The structure of the curriculum encourages study and enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Findings

The programme's didactical approach combines the principles of international classroom with those of learning communities.

The programme encourages lecturers and students to discuss the relationship between lecturers and international students and to reconsider stereotypes in order to improve the daily interactions inside and outside the classroom. According to the programme, differences in backgrounds bring the local perspectives into the classroom in Breda.

Within the learning community, students design and direct their own plan of study. And lecturers are professional experts acting as role models, rather than being tutors who tell students what to do.

The first phase consists of different courses that are taught in the classroom through lectures, workshops, field trips and guest lectures. Students attend compulsory weekly classes.

The alumni the committee met, recognise and highly appreciate the international classroom. Even though this was also noted as quite challenging, alumni remarked that the international classroom prepared them for working with different cultures and flexibility and an open mind in this. Students also confirmed this during the site-visit. The current cohort of students consists of approximately seventeen nationalities. In addition, the differences in background and work experience are valued by the students. Students noted also that their lecturers are very capable of teaching in an international classroom. Lecturers are sensitive to the different backgrounds of students in for example interacting with peers and lecturers.

Even though the students are very positive about the programme, they also experience it as quite hectic, with a constant flow of deadlines. In their opinion, some more time for reflection and for the knowledge and skills learned to sink in would be welcome.

During the site-visit, the committee discussed the consequences of the government funding for the small-scale of the programme. It became clear that this was also a concern of the lecturers and that a small-scale and interactive learning setting is still being realised. Lecturers see themselves as facilitator of learning and students work in groups from three to five students. In addition, it was noted that the international composition of the classroom has not changed with the inflow of more students.

Considerations

The committee concludes that an adequate learning environment is in place. The principles of the international classroom and of learning communities allows for interactive contact between students and lecturers, a personal approach and add to student's cross-cultural awareness. The committee values that, according to the students, lecturers are very fit to teach an international classroom and have an open mind to students differences in background and expertise.

The committee agrees with the students that the programme is quite intense and that some time for processing the knowledge and skills learned would be beneficial to student's learning processes. The recently implemented integration of the phases as mentioned in standard 3 will be helpful in this.

The programme runs in English. The committee concurs with this choice, as the field is completely international: graduates have an international field in which they operate.

Based on the above, the committee concludes that the programme **meets** this standard.

Intake

Standard 5: The curriculum ties in with the qualifications of the incoming students.

Findings

The programme applies the legal enrolment criteria. Since the programme has been funded by the Dutch government, the number of students has increased to 39 students in 2019 – 2020. Due to the funding, the composition of the student body has changed. The programme identifies two types of students: subsidised (EER residents) students and non-subsidized (non-EER) students. The enrolment of students a Dutch bachelor's degree has grown from 25% (2014) to 40% (2018).

To inform candidates about the programme, open days, open evenings, orientation days, join-a-student days and a three-day international orientation event are organised. To enrol the programme, candidates have to hand in a portfolio including CV, diploma's, proof of English language proficiency, motivation letter, description of experience and a small essay. After a screening of the portfolio, students are invited for a first intake interview (in person or by Skype). A second interview with another lecturer is organised to confirm the observations of the first interview. After this, a non-binding recommendation is given to candidates that are eligible to enter the programme.

The programme attracts students with a different background such as leisure, tourism, events, communication, business administration, international relations, hotel management, facility management, design, industrial design, sociology, marketing, retail marketing, international trade, education, finance, economics, human resources management. Approximately 20 different nationalities have graduated from the programme. During the site-visit, it became clear that the programme aims for candidates with work experience in the tourism industry. Even though this is not a mandatory enrolment criterion, it is part of the information and orientation activities.

According to the programme, this ties in with the goals of the programme and enhances students learning from each other.

Considerations

The committee concludes that the legal enrolment criteria are applicable to the programme. In addition, adequate measures are taken to inform

candidates about the programme and an adequate application process is in place.

Based on the above, the committee concludes that the programme **meets** this standard.

Staff

Based on the site-visit and the documents studied, the committee concludes that the staff involved in the programme is very competent and approachable. In addition, the composition of the staff reflects the international focus of the programme and lecturers have ample (international) professional experience. Lecturers meet on a regular bases to share knowledge and experience. The academy facilitates professional development and the realisation of personal ambitions. The committee is of the opinion that the quality of the lecturers involved is a great strength of the programme.

Standard 6: The staff team is qualified for the realisation of the curriculum in terms of content and educational expertise. The team size is sufficient.

Findings

The academy and the programme tie in with BUAs's HRM policy. The HRM policy follows BUAs's strategic ambitions and multi-annual strategy. Important aspects of this policy are organisational and staff development and being a good employer.

The Academy for Tourism aims to have a small management team, for more staff with an international background, for a larger number of lecturers with a master's degree, to implement peer supervision and individual coaching for staff and to increase the number of lecturer internships.

Staff development focuses on the development of teaching skills, including blended learning, achieving basic examiner qualifications (BKE) or senior examiner qualifications (SKE). In addition, cross-cultural and English language skills are stimulated. A number of lecturers obtained the Google Garage Certificate and several lecturers have been on an internship. The academy also invested in the quality of research. For example, by implementing a 'professors competency development trajectory' in which five senior researchers participated and of which one was appointed in September 2019 as a new professor on social impacts in tourism.

The academy's management team consists of an academy director, two programme managers, a

Research & Business Innovation manager and an operations manager. Lecturers work in teams that are responsible for a specific course. In total, 143 lecturers (109 fte) are involved in the Academy for Tourism of which 88% hold a master's degree, 14% hold a PhD, one staff member is pursuing a PhD and three are pursuing a master's degree. The team of lecturers involved represents eleven different nationalities. In addition, 33% of the staff has work experience abroad of at least five years. Ample guest lecturers are involved. In 2018 – 2019 over 100 (international) guest lecturers were involved in the academy. 72% of the staff involved obtained a Basic Examiner Qualifications certificate. Remaining staff are currently undergoing the training. The student staff ratio is 1:23 (excluding guest lecturers).

The master's programme is taught by lecturers that also work in undergraduate programmes. In 2018-2019, almost 20 lecturers, guest lecturers and visiting professors are involved in delivering the programme. All staff are qualified at academic master's or PhD level in the topic they teach.

All lecturers have professional experience, through working in the field of tourism management, through participation in research projects for the professional field or through contacts with companies as a supervisor. In addition, lecturers are active in international networks and organisations, participate in international conferences, research projects and lecture exchange with partner universities. Lecturers for example collaborate with the Centre for Sustainability, Tourism and Transport. And contribute to research on

destination management, such as the Destination Data Lab, developed in cooperation with CELTH and NBTC/Visit Holland.

The academy aims for students to experience small-scale education and for lecturers to know students personally. During the site-visit, this was confirmed. Students value the quality and approachability of their lecturers. Students also value the international character of the team of lecturers. This ensures different perspectives and different examples during lectures.

Considerations

Based on the interviews conducted during the site-visit and the provided information about the lecturers, the committee concludes that lecturers are very involved and competent. The strength of the master's programme lies for a great part in the quality of the lecturers.

In addition, all lecturers are in close contact with the professional field. The composition of the staff is appropriately international, covering

eleven nationalities. In addition, the committee notes that the lecturers have extensive (international) professional experience. The committee appreciates this policy and establishes that the command of English among teachers is adequate. During the site-visit, the students and alumni confirmed this. Furthermore, it was understood from students during the visit that lecturers are easily accessible and approachable.

The committee notes that the definition of an international employee is extended: an employee is born outside the Netherlands and has lived abroad a minimum of ten years before his/her 20th birthday, or has an experience of at least 5 years in an international context: or has worked and lived outside the Netherlands for a minimum of 5 years.

Based on the above, the committee concludes that the programme **meets** this standard.

Facilities and tutoring

The committee concludes that a very proficient infrastructure is in place for realising the programme. In addition, the BUAs campus with proximity of all BUAs programmes facilitates the cooperation between programmes and the realisation of cross overs. The committee also concludes that the tutoring of students is tailored to the needs of the students and matches the independence expected of master's students. The online learning platform provides students with information about the programme, exams, overview of marks and their progress.

Facilities

Standard 7: The accommodation and material facilities (infrastructure) are sufficient for the realisation of the curriculum.

Findings

The programme is offered at the BUAs campus, where ample and different learning spaces for groups of different sizes (lecture halls, class rooms, project rooms, study landscapes and an academic lab) are available. As well as a variety of workplaces for staff and students, a library, catering facilities, the chapel and a service desk. The campus will be fully operational in 2020.

A Service Desk is available for students and staff. Here students and staff can go for facilities such as mail, merchandise, office supplies, questions regarding general information, information technology, help in reserving rooms and borrowing audio visual equipment.

The site-visit learned that students appreciate the facilities, the library and the atmosphere at the campus. Especially the lecture on the use of the library was valued by the students.

Considerations

The committee concludes that the facilities are fitting for a programme in tourism destination management. The committee is impressed by the good learning facilities the campus offers and the pleasant atmosphere. In addition, the campus facilitates learning communities and the realisation of cross-overs.

Based on the above, the committee concludes that the programme **meets** this standard.

Tutoring

Standard 8: The tutoring of and provision of information to students are conducive to study progress and tie in with the needs of students.

Findings

In the afore mentioned Team Performance & Creative Leadership course, students learn how to develop themselves in an authentic and professional way. Students gain insight into their individual personality and coaching and tutoring is then provided in a tailored manner.

In addition, lecturers are available for students on a daily basis and help to solve problems immediately. Moreover, students can contact one of the academy's student counsellors. A specific student counsellor for international students provides counselling services especially for students with a non-Dutch background. The student counsellor is also available for students with functional limitations or disabilities. Students can contact the student counsellor at their own request. The site-visit learned that recently, at BUAs level, a psychologist has been made available to students. This ties in with BUAs's assumption that student's wellbeing is an important factor in student's study success. In addition, for students who are abroad, an emergency point of contact is always available.

BUAs also offers training courses on study problems. These courses are available for all students

and if necessary students are advised to attend by their lecturer or student counsellor. The site-visit learned that BUAs plans on making more training programmes available for students, on for example handling fear of failure and stress.

For international students, the international admissions office and the master's admissions support officer of the academy have an important role in the admissions process and in supporting students in, for example, housing, healthcare, insurance and visa requirements. The programme starts with international orientation days, specifically for international students. After that, students join the regular introduction where they meet the Dutch students. Regarding housing, international students are assigned a buddy who can help with housing related issues. The International Student Organisation, for both non-Dutch and Dutch students, is active in organising activities. For example, for non-EU students a pick-up service from the airport is organised by the association.

Students are informed about the programme through BUAs's learning management system. This is a platform for all course-related materials, submission of assignments and to disperse feedback reports after round table evaluations. Exam registration, overviews of grades and monitoring student progress are also part of the online environment.

Considerations

The committee concludes that adequate tutoring is available for students, by means of the Team Performance & Creative Leadership course, the availability of lecturers and student counsellors. The tutoring and guidance matches the independence expected of master's students. In addition, separate student counselling and guidance is available for international students.

Based on the above, the committee concludes that the programme **meets** this standard.

Quality assurance

The committee concludes that the programme has an effective quality assurance system in place. BUAs's quality assurance system and planning and control cycle is translated within the academy and the programme. The committee notes that relevant stakeholders are involved in the quality assurance process. The courses are systematically evaluated and if needed improved. Lectures and course teams have an important role in collecting feedback about their course formally and informally and translating this into an improvement plan. The degree programme committee has an active role in the quality assurance system.

Standard 9: The programme has an explicit and widely supported quality assurance system in place. It promotes the quality culture and has a focus on development.

Findings

BUAs's quality assurance system for education is leading for the academy and the programme. This system consists of a planning and control cycle with performance agreements. Each academy director reports three times per year to the Executive Board. Based on these meetings, the academy formulates its own specific plans, in line with overall BUAs strategy.

Course evaluations and round table meetings, are held to check the quality of the programme. The annual quality assurance calendar states which courses will be evaluated each term. Round table meetings are organised at the end of each block with student class representatives and programme staff. These meetings provide qualitative information and offer students the opportunity to express their opinions and share their experiences of the overall quality of the programme.

The results of the course evaluations and the round table meetings are supplemented with the team's own experiences and the results of the screening of assessments by the assessment committee. This is discussed with students and within the team of lecturers involved. Based on this, the team of lecturers draws up a remedial plan, in consultation with the education manager and presents this to the curriculum committee. Subsequently, the curriculum committee advises

the management team who will either approve or disapprove the remedial plans.

Information about the quality of the programme is also collected from students who drop out, by means of an exit survey and by their contact with their coach during this process.

In addition to the above, each course in phase one, a 'hand over' is organised in which issues that came up during the course are addressed. And each year an annual staff meeting is held just before the summer break. During this meeting the current programme implementation is evaluated and changes for next year are agreed upon.

To stay in tune with industry developments, the programme invites visiting professors and industry CEOs to comment on the programme regularly. Each year ten to twelve external professional and academic experts present recent work during phase one. In the course of phase 2, individual interviews with senior staff members and industry leaders at the three destinations that are visited are conducted. The input is used to update and change the curriculum.

During the site-visit it became clear that new digital tools are used in evaluating the courses with students.

The degree programme committee's (or participation council) role has been strengthened and the committee has the right to prior consultation and the right of consent over some elements of the Teaching and Examination Regulations. The

council also advises the management team regarding education and the programme's quality improvements. In doing so, the council takes all the informally and formally obtained information into consideration.

The committee also met with student representatives of the degree programme committee. Students in the degree programme committee feel heard by their co-members, the lecturers. The meeting also confirmed that class representatives meet with their fellow students to gather feedback about the programme which will be discussed in the round table meetings. Class representatives also discuss this information directly with lecturers. Even though last year students were informed about the actions taken based on their feedback in a presentation by management,

students in general do not feel informed about the results of their feedback.

Considerations

The committee concludes that an effective quality assurance system is in place. The system contains checks and balances to ensure the quality of the programme. Relevant stakeholders such as students, lecturers and professional field are involved. The committee notes that the teams of lecturers work on systematically improving the courses based on the results of evaluations. The committee is of the opinion that the programme can be more attentive about informing students about the results of their feedback.

Based on the above, the committee concludes that the programme **meets** this standard.

Assessment

The committee concludes that an adequate system of assessment is in place. The intended learning outcomes are at the basis of this system. Effective measures are taken to guarantee the validity, reliability and transparency of the assessments, by using a yearly assessment plan, test blue prints, the four-eye-principle and rubrics. In addition, calibration sessions and blind marking by colleagues are frequently organised. The assessments studied by the committee reflect the expected level and match the learning goals of the course involved. In general students are content with their assessments and the feedback from their lecturers. The board of examiners and assessment committee are pro-active in safeguarding the quality of the assessments.

Standard 10: The programme has an adequate student assessment system in place.

Findings

The institution wide testing framework and the thereon based academy's testing policy are leading for the programme's assessment system. The academy's assessment policy is currently being reviewed. It defines the academy's choices regarding assessment, evaluation and organisation of assessments that are appropriate to its vision of learning. In addition, it comprises an assessment manual with guidelines and regulations regarding assessment criteria, test construction and marking. An important part of this policy are the yearly assessment plans for each programme. These plans describe, per study phase and per study element within a programme, the assessment methodology, timing and content as well as the weighting factors used.

Guiding principles of the assessment policy are that assessment is integrated into the courses as much as possible and that where possible, students deliver a professional product. In addition, there is one summative assessment for each course. Next to the summative assessment a formative component is part of the course. The formative assessment provides students with feedback regarding their learning process and encourages them to further develop themselves. Within a block a variety of assessment methods should be used. Even though the programme facilitates group work, the assessments are mostly individual.

Calibration sessions and blind/anonymous marking are used by course teams to ensure that examiners follow a uniform and consistent approach to the assessment criteria across the programme. During graduation periodic intervision sessions are organised to ensure that all assessors are using the assessment criteria in the uniform way. In addition, assessments (and assessment results) are evaluated as part of the course evaluation by the course team involved.

Varying assessment methods are used in the programme. In the first phase for example group assignments, general class participation, discussion leadership, critical reflection on articles, individual essay, presentation, reports and a creative leadership portfolio are used. In the second phase, during the field research project, the programme tries to find a balance between group assessment and individual performance. Students are informed about the assessments in the course descriptions and during the courses.

Students revealed that in general they are content with the level of assessment. They also value the feedback from their lecturers.

In their role as an external assessor, representatives from the professional field noted during the site-visit that their input is valued equally important. And that the assessment criteria are clear to them.

Board of examiners

The board of examiners is responsible for all programmes of the academy. The board performs random checks of graduation projects, assessment forms and procedures and appoints external examiners. With regard to appointing external examiners, their committee learned during the site-visit, that the English level and the seniority is deemed important. In addition, external examiners are expected to attend two graduation assessments before participating in one. The examinations board draws up a yearly report and meets on a regular basis. The members of the board of examiners and the assessment committee are in the process of obtaining a Senior Examiner Qualification or have already achieved it.

The task of controlling the quality of assessments has been delegated to the assessment committee. The assessment committee operates under the responsibility of the board of examiners, to which they are accountable. Each block, according to a yearly planning, the assessment committee checks the quality and monitors the extent to which the assessment form and content are consistent with the assessment policy requirements, the assessment blueprint and with the form and content of teaching. The assessment committee reports to the board and gives feedback to examiners where necessary. Currently, the assessment committee inspects the dissertations.

During the site-visit, the committee met with representatives of the board of examiners and the

assessment committee. It was confirmed that the assessment committee checks the quality of the assessments. The assessment committee screens the assessment blue print, the course manual, the assessment and the accompanying rubrics. The calendar of the assessment committee matches the programme's quality assurance calendar. It was also remarked that lecturers randomly mark each other's assessments to check whether the same grade would be given.

Considerations

The committee concludes that an effective system of assessment is in place. The quality assurance of the assessment system is solid and effective measures are taken to guarantee the validity, reliability and transparency of the assessments. These include the use of an assessment plan, assessment blue prints and the use of the four-eye principle (and six eyes in grading the final graduation project). The different assessments studied by the committee during the site-visit reflect the expected level and match the learning goals of the specific courses.

The board of examiners and assessment committee are active in safeguarding the quality of the assessments. The committee values the calibration sessions and the blind marking of assessments by colleagues.

Based on the above, the committee concludes that the programme **meets** this standard.

Achieved learning outcomes

Based on the documents studied and the interviews, the committee concludes that graduates of programme achieve the required master's level and the intended learning outcomes. The programme has an adequate graduation procedure in place, with options for more practice-based research or more theoretical research. The studied dissertations reflected an adequate level and this level was confirmed during the site-visit in the meetings with students and alumni. The committee noted that the feedback on the assessments forms varies per examiner and is in general rather limited.

Standard 11: The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Findings

In the third and final phase, the programme is completed with the design and implementation of an individual dissertation. The dissertation process starts when students enter the programme. During the first phase at BUAs, students start familiarising themselves with a topic of their preference and write their proposal. The proposal has to be submitted before leaving to the field research project (phase 2). And students meet with their supervisor before starting phase 2 of the programme.

The research proposal is expected to include a literature survey and a research methodology. As mentioned in Standard 2, students work on these assignments during the Context Related Research course. The site-visit learned that in this course, (guest) lecturers present different research topics, students form groups and each group gets assigned a supervisor. Students receive individual guidance on their dissertation. In addition, peer feedback sessions are held. The site-visit also learned that student's work can lead to publications.

Students can opt for writing a dissertation for an external commissioner or without an external commissioner, as an independent researcher. In the case of the latter, the dissertation is usually more theoretical oriented and students can opt for an internal commissioner, a lecturer with

expertise in the specific research topic. The (internal) commissioner is not the student's supervisor.

The students the committee met, are currently working on their research proposal. They feel well supported in this by their supervisor and the peer meetings. In addition, the trajectory of the dissertation is clear to them.

During the field research project, students discuss the methodology of primary data collection. After returning from the field research project, students proceed with the finalisation of the data collection and the writing of findings, summary and conclusions of the thesis.

The dissertation is presented in an oral exam to a committee of three members: the student's supervisor (in the role of 1st examiner), the internal examiner (a second lecturer of the programme) and the external examiner (an independent expert from the tourism industry or an academic). All examiners assess the dissertation and the students presentation. The commissioner can also attend the oral defence.

For the assessment of both written report and the oral exam, an assessment form is used. Students receive their final grade after the oral exam and the deliberation of the examiners about the grade. The graduation manual provides students with information about the procedures, criteria and assessment of the graduation project. The site-visit learned that the external examiner is the chair of the students final assessment committee.

The programme aims to stay in contact with alumni on a regular basis with social media and global network events and to support their life-long learning undertakings. The programme actively tries to facilitate alumni through job offers and consultancy projects. An example of this is the development of a tourism destination strategy for a national park in Mozambique, in which two alumni participated. The programme also collaborates with EU programmes such as "Mayors for Economic Growth". In this programme two alumni have been accepted as junior advisors. In addition, alumni are present during annual thesis colloquium meetings. The site-visit learned that in addition to these formal contacts, contacts with alumni are also informal; alumni stay in touch with their lecturers. Alumni host students during excursions and provide guest lectures.

The self-evaluation report shows that alumni are employed in strategic, business or societal positions in public, semi-public or private organisations. Some are entrepreneurs with their own companies or finalised a PhD.

Alumni the committee met, appreciate the dissertation and the research to be done for this. This provided them with research skills they use in their current profession.

Considerations

The committee concludes that the programme has an adequate graduation phase in place. The dissertation can have a practical orientation as well as a more theoretical focus, depending on students interests. In assessing the dissertation, three examiners are involved, of which one representing the tourism industry.

The committee reviewed fifteen dissertations. The committee concludes that the overall quality of the studied dissertations is adequate and that graduates achieve the required master's level. In general, the committee noted that there were quite some differences in grading between the examiners involved and that the assessment forms were not always appropriately used. In addition, the assessment forms showed differences in feedback provided to students. The committee recommends the programme to organise calibration among examiners to stimulate that rubrics are interpreted the same and grades are more comparable.

The meetings with students and alumni during the site-visit confirmed the adequate level of the thesis / the programme. The students the committee met, seem capable of creating their own professional career path and the alumni succeed in doing so.

Based on the above, the committee concludes that the programme **meets** this standard.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Assessment committee

Liesbeth Schöningh	Chair, and member of the board of COG
Dr. Thomas Bauer	The ICE auditor
Tineke Ras-Marees	Consultant at Bureau TRM
Claudio Milano PhD	Teacher and researcher at the University of Lleida
Jessica Shinnick MA	Teacher and researcher at Hogeschool Rotterdam; CeQuint certified
Hugo Triesscheijn	Student at Radboud University, Nijmegen

The panel was supported by Titia Busing, secretary.

Appendix 2 Programme site-visit

Day-0, Sunday, 17th November, 2019

Time	Activity
	Arrival of Assessment Panel
05:00 – 07:00	Kick off and Preparation session panel. Share initial findings, division of roles, run through the programme for the site visit.
07:00	Dinner

Day-1, Monday, 18th November, 2019

Time	Activity
8:30 – 9:00	Arrival panel
09:00 – 10:00	Board and Management Meeting with senior executives and key liaisons from Applicant Institution for Auditors to gain understanding on the overall strategic direction of the institution Short welcome presentation from Applicant Institution
10:15 – 11:15	Show case bachelor & master
11:30 – 12:00	Tour of campus & facilities in 30 minutes
12:15 – 1:15	Lunch (working lunch)
1:15 – 2:15	Observation of classes in session (unsupervised) NB: Time-table & class venues to be provided by Applicant Institution 'Open consultation' for all employees and students: Anyone who wishes to make use of this must register with the secretary of the panel via e-mail (at least 5 days in advance)
2:30 – 3:15	Meeting with internationalisation officers from Applicant Institution's
3:30 – 4:00	Meeting with administration support team such as Student Counsellor, Admission Officers
4:15 – 5:00	Meeting with Applicant Institution's industry partners of both bachelor and master to ascertain the level of industry engagement in the design and development of the curriculum, review process etc. (including members of SAR but also other industry partners)
5:15 – 6:00	Bachelor and master alumni : dialogue about differences in starting position for bachelor and master (including students who have done both the bachelor and master at BUAs but also students with only the bachelor or master at BUAs)
6:15 – 7:00	Short recap day 1
7:15 – 8:30	Dinner in hotel

Day-2, Tuesday, 19th November, 2019

Time	Activity
8:30 – 9:00	Arrival panel Preparation session Day 2
9:00 – 10:00	Meeting with faculty members/lecturers bachelor
10:00 – 11:00	Meeting with faculty members/lecturers master
11:15 – 12:00	Meeting with Board of Examiners & testing committee to verify the quality of testing.
12:00 – 1:30	Working lunch
1:30 – 2:15	Meeting with associate professors and researchers to verify the curriculum design and development, as well as the link between research and education.
2:30 – 3:30	Meeting with bachelor students including student-representatives from the participation council and student representatives from the programme committee
3:45 – 4:45	Meeting with master students including student-representatives from the participation council and student representatives from the programme committee
4:45 – 6:15	Deliberations panel and formulating preliminary findings and conclusions
6:15 – 6:45	Feedback of preliminary findings and conclusions (NVAO and THE ICE)
6:45 –	Drinks and chat, panel and BUAs participants

Appendix 3 Studied documents

In addition to the self-evaluation report the committee studied the following documents:

- Strategy 2018-2021
- Educational vision 2014-2024
- BUAS Internationalisation strategy 2018-2021
- National Educational Profile 2018
- Overview Staff
- National Student Survey, HBO Monitor 2018
- Regulations degree programme committee
- Quality assurance system for education / research
- Teaching and Examination Regulations 2018-2019
- Testing policy
- Study material and assessments
- Graduate work and graduation manual
- Overview of courses with international and intercultural learning outcomes
- Strategic advisory board
- BUAS Marketing and recruitment plan
- Mapping Internationalisation @NHTV 2017
- Mapping Internationalisation @BUAS 2018
- International Recruitment Activity plan 2015-16
- International student survey 2018
- Academy plan 2018-2021
- Personal and professional development vision document 2019
- Overview of guest lecturers and industry projects

