



NVAO  THE NETHERLANDS

# INITIAL ACCREDITATION

HBO-MASTER

APPLIED SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT

Stichting Global School for

Entrepreneurship University of Applied

Sciences

FULL REPORT



## Content

<b>1</b>	Peer review .....	3
<b>2</b>	New programme .....	4
2.1	General data .....	4
2.2	Profile.....	4
2.3	Panel.....	4
<b>3</b>	Outcome.....	5
<b>4</b>	Commendations.....	7
<b>5</b>	Recommendations.....	8
<b>6</b>	Assessment.....	9
6.1	Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes.....	9
6.2	Standaard 2: Curriculum; orientation .....	10
6.3	Standaard 3: Curriculum; content .....	10
6.4	Standaard 4: Curriculum; learning environment .....	11
6.5	Standaard 5: Intake .....	12
6.6	Standaard 6: Staff.....	13
6.7	Standaard 7: Facilities.....	15
6.8	Standaard 8: Tutoring .....	15
6.9	Standaard 9: Quality assurance .....	16
6.10	Standard 10: Student assessment.....	17
6.11	Degree and field of study .....	18

# 1 Peer review

The Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) determines the quality of a new programme on the basis of a peer review. This initial accreditation procedure is required when an institution wishes to award a recognised degree after the successful completion of a study programme.

The procedure for new programmes differs slightly from the approach to existing programmes that have already been accredited. Initial accreditation is in fact an ex ante assessment of a programme. Once accredited the new programme becomes subject to the regular review process.

The quality of a new programme is assessed by means of peer review. A panel of independent peers including a student reviews the plans during a site visit to the institution. A discussion amongst peer experts is the basis for the panel's final judgement and the advisory report. The agenda for the panel visit and the documents reviewed are available from the NVAO office, upon request.

The outcome of this peer review is based on the standards described and published in the extensive NVAO Assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands (Stcrt. 2019, nr. 3198). Each standard is judged on a three-point scale: meets, does not meet or partially meets the standard. The panel will reach a conclusion about the quality of the programme, also on a three-point scale: positive, conditionally positive or negative.

This report contains the findings, analysis and judgements of the panel resulting from the peer review. It also details the commendations as well as recommendations for follow-up actions. A summary report with the main outcomes of the peer review is also available.

NVAO takes its accreditation decision on the basis of a full report. The NVAO decision can be positive, conditionally positive or negative. Following a positive NVAO decision with or without conditions the institution can proceed to offer the new programme.

Both the full and summary reports of each peer review are published on NVAO's website [www.nvao.net](http://www.nvao.net). There you can also find more information on NVAO and peer reviews of new programmes.

## 2 New programme

### 2.1 General data

Institution	: Global School for Entrepreneurship
Programme	: Applied Sustainability Management
Mode of study	: Full-time and part-time
Degree	: Master of Science Applied Sustainability Management
Tracks	: not applicable
Location	: Haarlem
Study load	: 60 EC <sup>1</sup>
Field of study	: Economics

### 2.2 Profile

The Master Applied Sustainability Management aims to prepare students to become experts in sustainable business development. Students who have completed the programme can start working in positions such as sustainability analyst, sustainability project manager or sustainability program manager.

The Master's program is offered in a part-time and full-time variant and has a study load of 60 EC. The programme was developed in close consultation with the field, and focuses on three pillars: business development, sustainability and transformation management. The programme will be offered in the Haarlem Koepel Campus, the former prison of Haarlem.

### 2.3 Panel

#### Peer experts

- Drs. Nies Rijnders (chair), Education Consultant, Rijnders Onderwijs Advies;
- Dr. Lonneke Roza PhD, Manager Community Investment NN Group and freelance coach Rotterdam School of Management;
- Dr. Gilbert Silvius MSc, MBA. Lecturer and researcher Sustainability in Project Management Hogeschool Utrecht, LOI and Wittenborg;
- Marijn Nijssen MSc (student), student Science Business & Innovation, Vrije Universiteit.

#### Assisting staff

Jeroen van der Spek (secretary)

Yvonne Overdevest (NVAO policy advisor and process coordinator)

#### Site visit

Haarlem, 30 maart 2023

---

<sup>1</sup> European Credits

### 3 Outcome

The NVAO approved panel reaches a positive conclusion regarding the quality of the HBO-Master Applied Sustainability Management offered by Stichting Global School for Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences (GSE). The programme complies with 9 standards of the extensive NVAO framework and partially complies with 1 standard.

The Master Applied Sustainability Management aims to prepare students to become experts in sustainable business development. The programme meets a rapidly growing need. Sustainability is an important social issue that affects almost all organisations. As a result, the labour market is in great need of professionals who can contribute to the transition to more sustainable operations or working methods.

The panel notes that the programme was designed in close consultation with the professional field. The GSE had several meetings with the so-called Board of Inspiration, in which local companies, not-for-profit organisations and network organisations are represented. The Board of Inspiration provided the GSE with many ideas and tips that have been incorporated into the programme, and plays an active role in the further development of the programme.

The master's programme is offered in part-time and full-time variants and has a study load of 60 EC. The programme consists of 10 modules spread over two semesters. In the first semester, students focus mainly on the three core areas of study: business development, sustainability and transformation management. In the second semester, the focus is mainly on processing the knowledge taught in assignments and life-case studies.

The panel notes that the GSE has realised a multifaceted programme, covering specialist knowledge in sustainability as well as personal and social competences. The panel does note that research remains somewhat underexposed in the programme. The panel therefore asks the GSE to give research methodology a more prominent place in the curriculum. The Master's programme is offered in Haarlem's former domed prison, the Dome. In recent years, the dome and surrounding buildings have been converted into a Campus of Science, which includes many local companies. The panel notes that the Campus is an inspiring and vibrant learning environment, and the presence of companies provides a natural link between education and professional practice.

The panel got to know an enthusiastic team of teachers with extensive international experience. Teaching is delivered by pairs of lecturers and learning coaches, so that the imparting of knowledge and the support of the learning process go hand in hand. In summary, the panel is of the opinion that the GSE has realised an attractive programme, which meets a great need and is elaborated in a varied curriculum.

The condition to be met before the start of the programme is as follows:  
Delineate research more clearly in the programme and ensure that students have sufficient time to develop research skills.

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
1 Intended learning outcomes	meets the standard
2 Curriculum; orientation	partially meets the standard
3 Curriculum; content	meets the standard
4 Curriculum; 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 Student assessment	meets the standard
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>positive</b>

## 4 Commendations

The programme is commended for the following features of good practice.

1. **Co-teaching** - Co-teaching by pairs of lecturers or learning coaches allows for the optimal offering of combined educational content and student support.
2. **Professional field** - The Board of Inspiration, consisting of representatives from the professional field, contributed many ideas and is closely involved in the programme.
3. **CORE** - The program is designed according to the Competence Oriented Research and Education (CORE), a proven didactic model that ensures a high degree of programme consistency.
4. **Haarlem Campus** - The education programme takes place in the former dome prison of Haarlem: a unique learning and working environment with many opportunities for cooperation between education and the business community.
5. **Team** - The programme is provided by a teaching team with extensive international teaching and working experience

## 5 Recommendations

For further improvement to the programme, the panel recommends a number of follow-up actions.

1. **Programme** - Make a clear choice in each module which learning outcomes get more or less emphasis.
2. **Intake** - Describe more clearly how the intake process works and what will be the status of the intake assessment and interview.
3. **Professionalisation** - Draw up a professionalisation plan that clarifies how the teaching team can continue to develop, especially in the area of teaching and testing competencies.
4. **Quality assurance** - Clearly define quality processes and ensure that students are also involved in the programme in a formal sense.
5. **Examination board** - Ensure that knowledge and responsibilities are better distributed among the members of the examination board so that the board is not dependent on one member.



## 6 Assessment

### 6.1 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.*

#### **Judgement**

Meets the standard.

#### **Findings, analysis and considerations**

The Master Applied Sustainability Management aims to prepare students to become experts in sustainable business development. Students who have completed the programme can start working in positions such as sustainability analyst, sustainability project Manager or sustainability program manager.

The Master's program is part of the academic program that the Global School for Entrepreneurship (GSE) and SRH Higher Education GMBH are seeking to offer at the Haarlem Campus. The programme meets an important public need. Making the living environment sustainable is one of the biggest challenges in today's society. Large companies and organisations, but also medium-sized SMEs, are increasingly dealing with sustainability in their operations. As a result, the labour market is in great need of professionals who can contribute to the transformation towards sustainable business operations, and a broadly-based awareness of sustainability.

The programme was developed in close consultation with the professional field. The GSE had several brainstorming sessions with the Board of Inspiration, which also thought along about other GSE courses. During these discussions, a number of clear wishes emerged, which were incorporated into the programme. On the advice of the Board of Inspiration, the programme pays a lot of attention to digitalisation and transformation processes. The decision to offer the programme in a part-time variant was also mainly driven by the field.

The GSE has formulated 14 learning outcomes that focus on the acquisition of specialist, methodological, social and personal competencies. The learning outcomes are defined according to the Competence Based Research and Learning (CORE) principle of the SRH Group, but are also aligned with the expected level 7 European EQF knowledge and skills levels and with the level 7 standards of the Dutch NLQF and Professional Master Vereniging Hogescholen.

The panel finds that the programme meets a clear need. The programme profile is socially highly relevant and well aligned with international developments and demands from the field. The intended learning outcomes are well-founded. The panel concludes that the GSE has aligned its programme profile to a number of recognised standards, such as the Master's level of de Vereniging van Hogescholen, NLQF and the Dublin Descriptors.

The panel does note that the programme is less broad than the term sustainability would suggest. The programme has a strong focus on circular value chains and economics. Social aspects of sustainability, such as inclusion, diversity, social entrepreneurship and participation remain relatively underexposed in the curriculum. The panel can agree with this choice but recommends GSE to define more clearly in the programme what it means by sustainability. The panel also advises GSE to critically reconsider whether the name of the programme covers the load.

Finally, the panel notes that the Board of Inspiration is an important interlocutor that has provided many valuable insights and ideas. The members of the Board are closely involved in

the programme, are highly motivated to contribute to the student's learning process and are eager to hire graduates. The panel's discussions with the board also revealed that members frequently visit the campus, making the exchange of ideas or possible areas for improvement low-threshold.

In summary, the panel is of the opinion that the GSE has realised an attractive programme that is in line with current social developments and responds well to the needs of the labour market. The panel, therefore, considers that the programme meets standard 1.

## 6.2 **Standaard 2: Curriculum; orientation**

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

### **Judgement**

Partially meets the standard.

### **Findings, analysis and considerations**

The Master in Applied Sustainability Management is offered in a part-time and full-time variant and has a study load of 60 EC. The programme aims to provide the students with relevant knowledge, professional skills and academic skills. Students learn to develop and implement sustainable development solutions, but the programme also pays close attention to designing and conducting research. Research is part of the methodological learning line, one of the four pillars of the CORE methodology. Students engage in research right from the first module, and research is also an important component in modules such as Sustainable Business and Governance and Case Studies Sustainability.

The panel notes that the curriculum has built in the necessary space for research. The compulsory reading list is also quite ambitious when it comes to qualitative and quantitative research.

Nevertheless, the panel questions whether students acquire sufficient methodological knowledge during the programme. The conversation with the GSE reveals that research methodology is not offered as a separate course component, but is mostly integrated into content modules. In addition, some of the incoming students will start the programme with little or no research experience. As a result, the panel sees no real guarantees that students will be able to conduct research at Master's level by the end of their programme.

In summary, the panel considers that the development of research competencies is underexposed in the programme. The panel, therefore, considers that standard 2 is partially satisfactory. The panel asks the GSE to delineate research more clearly in the programme before the start of the course and make clear where research methodology is addressed in the curriculum. The panel also asks the GSE to ensure that students have sufficient time to develop research skills.

## 6.3 **Standaard 3: Curriculum; content**

*The contents of the curriculum enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.*

### **Judgement**

Meets the standard.

### **Findings, analysis and considerations**

The learning outcomes of the master's programme are translated into 10 study modules spread over two semesters. In the first three modules, students are comprehensively introduced to each of the three core concepts of the programme: business development, sustainability and transformation management. This approach allows students to delve into the theory and application of one aspect. In subsequent modules, students focus mainly on deepening the methodological and practical aspects of each of the three areas of knowledge. In addition, the programme focuses on developing personal and social skills, which are fully integrated into the modules.

The second semester is largely dedicated to applying acquired knowledge and skills. During this period, students will apply their competencies to a second case study in a chosen Dutch Top Sector. Students will also participate in a group-based live-case study in a company or organisation where they are responsible for the design, implementation and coordination of a sustainable transformation process.

The programme concludes with an Applied Research Project, which consists of three parts: an individual research report in the field of sustainability, the development and implementation of a sustainability project in a company or institution and a reflective interview about the professional and personal development.

The panel believes that the GSE has realised a multifaceted programme with many interesting themes. The curriculum offers students plenty of room for content profiling, contains a nice mix of substantive, social and personal competencies and provides a good connection between theory and practice

The intended learning outcomes are worked out in detail in a module handbook, which shows well how module objectives, learning outcomes and assessments are related. The panel does note that the programme is very ambitious, with many different subjects, assignments, forms of work and testing. The panel appreciates this ambition but wonders whether the GSE does not want too much for a one-year programme. According to the matrix, which shows how the different learning outcomes are translated into modules, almost every module covers all the intended learning outcomes. This makes it difficult to distinguish properly between main issues and topics of more secondary importance. The panel also questions whether all students can complete the required topics and activities within the target time.

The panel, therefore, recommends the GSE to further tighten the choices in the curriculum, striking a balance between the number of activities in the programme and the number of credits. The panel also advises the GSE to indicate more clearly what the key learning outcomes are in each module, making the vertical alignment and continuity through the learning outcomes more visible.

In summary, the panel is of the opinion that the GSE has realised an interesting and ambitious programme, but should define more sharply where the different topics in the programme are covered. Despite this comment, the panel believes that standard 3 is satisfactory.

#### 6.4 Standaard 4: Curriculum; learning environment

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

### **Judgement**

Meets the standard.

### **Findings, analysis and considerations**

The programme is designed according to the Competence Oriented Research and Education (CORE). This didactic concept, developed by parent organisation SRH Heidelberg, is currently applied at six universities of Applied Sciences and one Research University in Germany. The CORE concept seeks to provide an answer to the development of the student's needs for 21st Century Skills and is characterised by a highly student-centred approach, which encourages students to take an active role in the learning process.

The didactic concept is typified by small groups of students (maximum 20 students), a high number of contact hours and a wide variety of working methods. During the contact hours, students will have a combination of lectures, guided group assignments, workshops, debates and presentations by external experts.

The classes are based on highly interactive didactic methods with a combination of lectures on theory and concepts and regular practical assignments. Where possible the programs will make use of life-case studies. These case studies will be developed in close consultation with local companies or not-for-profit organisations. This puts the programme close to practice and enables students to test newly acquired knowledge in professional practice.

Another important element of the didactic model is the involvement of lecturers and learning coaches, who complement each other seamlessly. Lecturers focus on contributing specialist and methodological knowledge and experience. The learning coach focuses on combined teaching content and student support and contributes to the development of personal and social competencies. In addition, field experts can complement modules by bringing in their practical professional experience in the form of seminars, case studies and live-case studies.

The panel is positive about the way the GSE has designed the learning environment. The programme includes many different working forms and assessment methods that encourage active learning, both alone and in groups. The combination of teaching and co-teaching has a clear added value. Students are intensively guided in their learning process, and the programme constantly monitors their study progress.

The panel is also positive about the way the programme cooperates with companies and network organisations. The presence of companies in the Haarlem Campus gives students the opportunity to get acquainted with professional practice in a low-threshold way and ensures a nice interaction between theory and practice. The programme also has plenty of room for current cases, bringing together different disciplines. This allows students to become familiar with the multidisciplinary context they will have to deal with in their future profession.

The panel is very enthusiastic about the CORE concept. This didactic model has already proven itself at many educational institutions. CORE ensures that the different parts of the programme are well connected and is a great way to integrate the development of specialist competencies and 21st Century Skills in one programme.

## **6.5 Standaard 5: Intake**

*The curriculum ties in with the qualifications of the incoming students.*

### **Judgement**

Meets the standard.

## Findings, analysis and considerations

The full-time variant of the master's degree in Applied Sustainability Management is accessible to students with a business-oriented Bachelor's study level. Students with another bachelor's degree must have at least one year of relevant working experience. Students wishing to pursue the part-time programme are required to have a completed Bachelor's degree and have at least three years of professional experience in a company, public or semi-public or not-for-profit organisation.

Furthermore, the programme expects students from the Eu to have a professional level of English language. Non-EU students are required to have an English language IELTS certificate with a minimum level of 6.5 or an equivalent English language certificate.

To determine whether the programme really suits a student, all students complete an intake assessment and interview. During the intake interview, the GSE examines the student's motivation and expectations. Conversely, the interview helps the student to get a realistic picture of the content, level and educational forms of the programme.

The GSE expects the programme to attract an international student population. Experience with other courses shows that the programme attracts many students from India and Africa. Recently, many students from the Netherlands have also been interested in the programme.

The panel finds that the GSE has thought carefully about its intake. The GSE has a good idea of where its potential students come from, and clearly knows the required level of knowledge and experience of incoming students. The panel does feel that the intake process itself could be organised more transparently. According to the panel, it is not yet clear to students what the status of the assessment and resulting advice is.

The panel, therefore, recommends the GSE to describe more clearly how the intake process works exactly. The panel also advises the programme to tighten additional criteria such as work experience, research experience and content knowledge, so that students know clearly where they stand in advance.

The panel also notes that the part-time and full-time programmes target very different audiences, with different starting competencies. The panel also observes that the full-time programme mainly targets non-European students. This means that the starting competencies of the incoming students may vary greatly, especially in the areas of research competencies and English language skills. The panel, therefore, advises the programme to keep a close eye on whether the level of prior education is sufficient to enter a professional master's programme.

In summary, the panel believes that the intake requirements are realistic and transparent, but the GSE could define the intake process more clearly. Despite this comment, the panel believes that standard 5 is satisfactory.

## 6.6 Standaard 6: Staff

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

### Judgement

Meets the standard.

## Findings, analysis and considerations

Teaching is provided by an international team of lecturers from professional practice and academia. Most lecturers come from SRH's network. In addition to their work for GSE, they are usually involved in other international educational institutions and companies. The panel initially wondered whether this would come at the expense of their involvement in the programme. However, the interviews clearly showed that the international lecturers feel strongly involved in the programme, and are very motivated to contribute to its success. Moreover, the programme is organised in such a way that international lecturers spend four to five consecutive weeks on a course component, so they do not have to fly back and forth.

The lecturers have rich teaching and working experience. The team has 5 senior lecturers with a PhD study at universities in the Netherlands and in other countries. All lecturers have over 13 years of professional experience. Three lecturers have 10 or more years of lecturing and/or coaching experience. Three team members are qualified in BKE or have equivalent international certifications in didactics and assessment methods.

To make all teachers familiar with the programme and the Dutch education system, all new teachers first complete an onboarding programme. In addition, the programme organises a number of activities to keep the knowledge and skills of the teaching team up-to-date. Every year, lecturers attend a training in the CORE approach and innovations in the didactic approach and methods. In addition, every semester the GSE organises a learning and exchange workshop with the faculty teams to learn from teaching and learning experiences during the last semester and to define recommendations for improvement in content, didactic methods and assessment forms.

To shape the further professionalisation of the teaching team, GSE expects that each year at least one lecturer or learning coach will acquire a Basic Teaching Qualification (BKE) and Basic Examination Qualification (BKO).

The panel met an enthusiastic and internationally oriented team with a good command of the English language. The team members clearly demonstrated reflective capacity, bring a lot of work and teaching experience, and are able to contribute to the programme from very different perspectives.

The panel does note that the vast majority of teachers come from Western countries. As a result, the composition of the teaching team does not reflect very well the composition of the expected student population, which will largely come from Africa and India. The panel, therefore, asks the programme to take diversity into account as much as possible in future teacher recruitment.

The panel notes that the programme deploys various instruments to increase the knowledge and skills of its lecturers, but does not yet have a structured professionalisation plan. The panel, therefore, asks the GSE to draw up a professionalisation plan specifying how it will increase the didactic and testing competencies (BKO/BKE) of lecturers over the next few years. The panel also thinks that the programme could work out more clearly how it will organise educational innovation in the coming years.

In summary, the panel is positive about the quality of the teaching team. The lecturers are competent, internationally experienced and enthusiastic. The programme focuses on increasing professional skills but could organise its activities more systematically. With this comment, the panel is positive about standard 6.

## 6.7 Standaard 7: Facilities

*The accommodation and material facilities are sufficient for the realisation of the curriculum.*

### **Judgement**

Meets the standard.

### **Findings, analysis and considerations**

The programme is housed in Haarlem's former domed prison, known as the Koepel. In recent years, the dome and surrounding buildings have been developed into a state-of-the-art campus for higher education, providing space for educational activities, small businesses and student accommodation.

In the coming years, the dome will develop into an international learning environment and community which also includes entrepreneurs, managers and employees of SMEs. The presence of companies and network organisations such as ROM Inwest, Cupola XS, Endeavour Group, I.AMDIGITAL, Circle Economy and Dura Vermeer ensures that students have easy access to practical situations and internship assignments and provides a good interaction between education and practice.

The Dome building provides access to 12 classrooms, studios, design-thinking rooms and learning cafés, but also includes business and recreational facilities, such as a cinema, a hotel and a restaurant. The programme features a hybrid learning environment and a hybrid classroom concept. GSE has implemented CANVAS as its electronic learning system. This online platform provides access to academic and learning information, such as exam guides, curriculum, study planning, study materials, submission of learning assignments, exams, study grades and evaluation forms. CANVAS also supports videoconferencing for lectures, interactive lessons and one-to-one conversations with learning coaches, lecturers and practitioners.

The panel is impressed by the accommodation and facilities. The dome provides a lively, inspiring and dynamic working and learning environment, where students are also encouraged to make contacts outside the educational institution. The presence of companies provides a natural link between education and professional practice and gives students the opportunity to get acquainted with some aspects of their future profession on the work floor.

The panel finds it positive that the programme also takes care of student accommodation. The housing options on the surrounding campus make students feel at home easily and lowers the threshold for foreign students in particular to start their studies.

As a final point, the panel notes that the programme has modern state-of-the-art facilities. The electronic learning environment is well laid out, and is clear and user-friendly. The panel believes that standard 7 is satisfactory.

## 6.8 Standaard 8: Tutoring

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

### **Judgement**

Meets the standard.

### **Findings, analysis and considerations**

The programme is characterised by intensive supervision, with many contact hours and much personal attention to the learning process of individual students. The learning coach plays a prominent role in this guidance. The learning coach does not only support the students in their learning process but also contributes to the student's well-being, cohesiveness and sense of belonging in the larger school setting.

Students can also contact a confidential advisor. This advisor is available to help students with issues concerning relations, communication and management that have hurt or offended them and led to feel unsafe at the campus. Possible issues may be bullying, intimidation, sexual harassment, aggression, violence or discrimination.

Students who have special needs due to a disability or chronic illness are entitled to tailored, suitable or necessary adjustments. The panel did signal that the programme makes an exception for 'adjustments that would place a disproportionate burden on the GSE'. However, interviews with management and lecturers made it clear that the GSE makes every effort to provide access to students with a disability.

The panel is positive about the way the GSE has organised the tutoring. The co-teacher offers students a lot of individual support and keeps a close eye on how they develop. There is a lot of focus on well-being and inclusiveness, and the programme is committed to inclusive education. The panel did get the impression that the confidential advisors sometimes are wearing two hats, as they also have other roles in the programme. The panel asks the GSE to specify how the independence of the confidential advisers will be ensured, and how it will avoid double roles. The panel judges positively on standard 8.

## 6.9 **Standaard 9: Quality assurance**

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

### **Judgement**

Meets the standard.

### **Findings, analysis and considerations**

The GSE sees quality assurance as a joint responsibility of management, faculty staff and students. The programme aims to facilitate a climate where students, educators and the professional field feel free to address issues 'as soon as they arise'. To make this possible, the programme uses several short- and long-term quality cycles, which are interconnected. Quality assurance is set up on the basis of the improved Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle, the so-called Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle (PDSA).

The short evaluation cycle is predominantly done by for example surveying students' opinions on the content (learning materials & assessment), methodology, delivery (lecturers, learning coaches and field experts) and organisation at the end of every module. The faculty team discusses and analyses the results of the surveys together with the Education Board and makes improvements where necessary.

The long evaluation cycle includes meetings of the Education Board. This board meets at least six times a year to comment on requests, academic processes, teaching materials, the learning environment, didactic approaches and reflect on best practices. The Board of Inspiration is also regularly invited to provide feedback on the programme with regard to validating the relevance of the curriculum to current practice.



The panel notes that there is a broad-based awareness of quality in the organisation. The programme evaluates key processes after each module and works in interconnected cycles to improve quality. Management and teachers have a well-developed capacity for self-reflection. They are motivated to achieve a programme in which the various components are optimally connected but also know where there is room for possible improvements.

The panel does note that quality assurance ideas and processes are still rather implicit. The panel, therefore, advises the programme to clearly define the various processes and roles in the field of quality assurance. The panel also advises the programme to ensure that students can also participate in a formal sense. The GSE does not yet have a programme committee in which students can join in the discussion on programme-wide issues. The panel, therefore, advises the programme to strengthen the role of student involvement in the evaluation cycle and to indicate more explicitly what happens to student feedback. The panel judges positively on standard 9.

### 6.10 Standard 10: Student assessment

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

#### **Judgement**

Meets the standard.

#### **Findings, analysis and considerations**

The assessment programme is characterised by a variety of assessment methods, both formative and summative. The method of assessment is closely related to the specific type of learning outcomes and competencies to be assessed. The assessment programme includes term papers, oral presentations, group work, debates, learning diaries and reflective interviews. Testing is fully integrated into the modules and evenly spread throughout the programme. This way of working ensures that students keep a good picture of their study results throughout the program, but also ensures that large peaks in the study load are avoided.

Assessment and assurance of the final level quality are the responsibility of a joint Examination Board, which is also responsible for GSE's Bachelor's programs. The responsibilities of the Examination Board include establishing guidelines for the quality of assessment, granting exemptions and taking action in cases of fraud. The Examination Board is also responsible for the appointment of assessors and examiners. The Examination Board hereby applies a number of quality criteria. Lecturers who also want to work as assessors or examiners must have a BKE or BKO or intend to obtain this qualification within the near future. To ensure that this actually happens, the Examination Board appoints assessors and examiners for a limited time, which can range from 1 to 5 years. If an assessor or examiner has not achieved the intended qualification, the appointment will not be renewed.

The Examination Board is committed to a culture in which teachers continually seek to improve the quality of their tests. To make this happen, new tests and exam papers are assessed according to the four-eye principle, with an examiner conducting a quality check on his or her colleague's work. Tests are also subject to a quality check by an examiner afterwards, on a random basis.

The panel is positive about the way testing is organized. The program has a wide variety of testing formats. Testing and rubrics are detailed in the module guide. The four-eye principle is well designed, both in developing the tests and the quality check afterwards. The appointment of assessors and examiners is clearly regulated, and the Examination Board

employs an adequate mechanism to monitor quality. The panel does feel that the program could look more critically at how the quality of the final project is assured.

The panel also had an interesting conversation with the Examination Board. During this conversation, the panel noted that the Examination Board provided critical input on securing the Master's level and the development of the testing program. The panel noted that the Examination Board has a clear idea of how it wants to guarantee the quality of testing and examination.

The panel did also notice that the majority of the questions were answered by the chair of the Examination Board, giving the impression that the other members of the committee were perhaps less versed in the dossiers in detail. The panel was therefore pleased to learn that the Examination Board will soon be further expanded and will include at least one professor from SRH's network. When further expanding the Examination Board, the panel asks the GSE to also consider strengthening testing expertise.

In summary, the panel believes that the program has thought the testing through well. The testing program is varied and fits well with the rest of the program, and the Examination Board has clear ideas about quality assurance. The panel is of the opinion that standard 10 is adequate.

### 6.11 Degree and field of study

The panel advises awarding the following degree to the new programme: Master of Science  
The panel supports the programme's preference for the following field of study: Economics

## Abbreviations

BKE	Basiskwalificatie Examinering (Basic Examination Qualification)
BKO	Basis Kwalificatie Onderwijs (Basic Teaching Qualification)
CORE	Competence Based Research and Learning
CROHO	Centraal Register Opleidingen Hoger Onderwijs
EC	European Credits
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
GSE	Global School for Entrepreneurship
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
NLQF	Netherlands Qualification Framework
NVAO	Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie
PDSA	Plan Do Study Act
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprises

The full report was written at the request of NVAO and is the outcome of the peer review of the new programme  
Master Applied Sustainability Management of  
Stichting Global School for Entrepreneurship University of Applied  
Sciences

Application no: AV-1525



Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie  
Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders

Parkstraat 83 • 2514 JG Den Haag  
P.O. Box 85498 • 2508 CD The Hague  
The Netherlands

T +31 (0)70 312 23 00  
E [info@nvaio.net](mailto:info@nvaio.net)  
[www.nvaio.net](http://www.nvaio.net)