

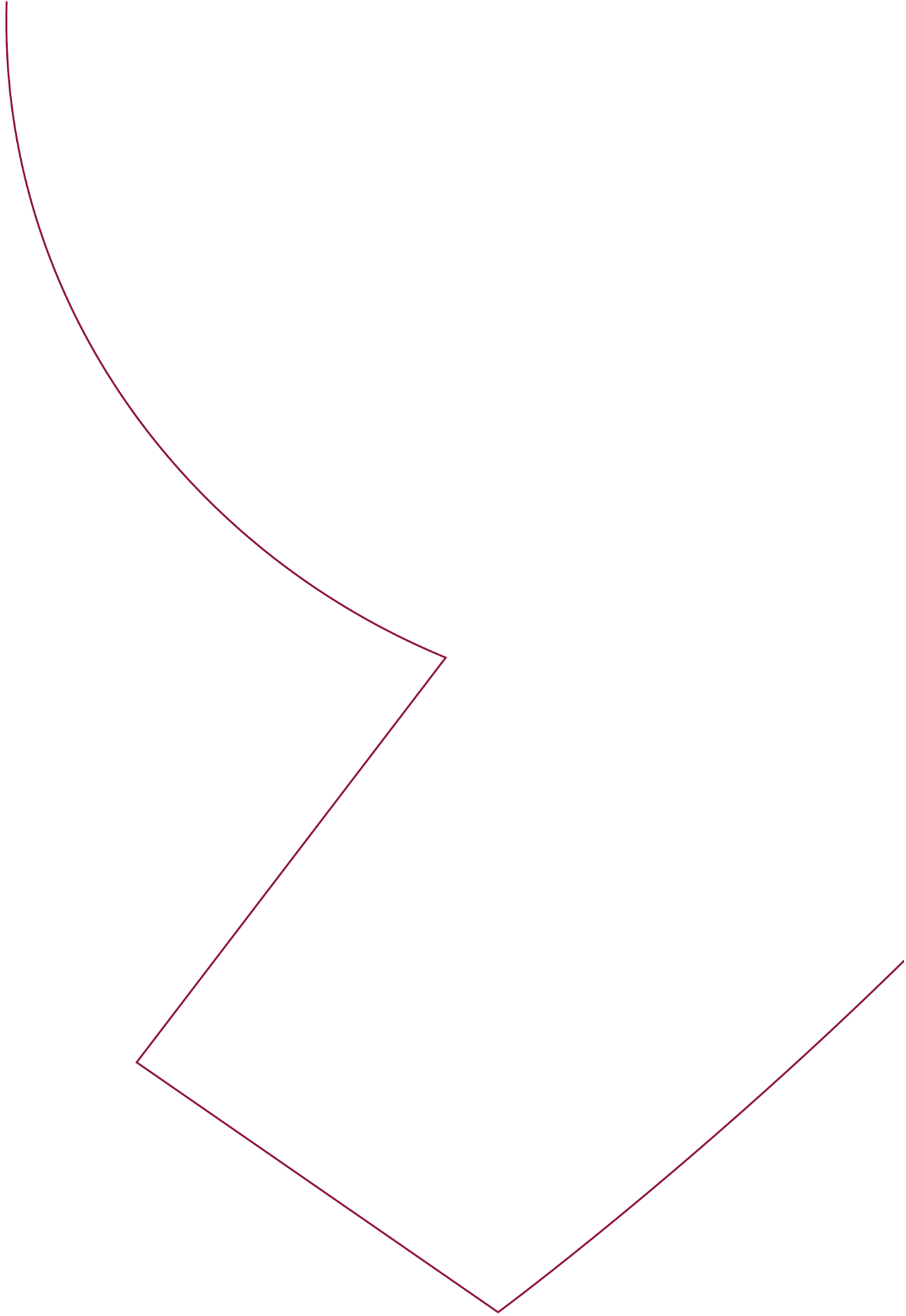
ASSESSMENT REPORT

'Assessment of conditional approval'

**hbo-bachelor programme
International Business**

full-time

Fontys University of Applied Sciences



ASSESSMENT REPORT

‘Assessment of conditional approval’

hbo-bachelor programme International Business

full-time

Fontys University of Applied Sciences

Hobéon Certificering

Date

22^h of November 2022

Auditpanel

Mr. D.J.N.M Rijnders

Mrs. R. Pereboom

Mr. L. Klienbannink

Mrs. L. vom Hof

Secretary

Mr. V. Bartelds

Table of Contents

1.	GENERAL AND QUANTITATIVE DATA	1
2.	INTRODUCTION	2
3.	ASSESSMENT CONDITIONS STANDARD 3	5
4.	OVERALL CONCLUSION	7
ANNEX I	Programme	8
ANNEX II	List of documents examined	10
ANNEX III	Composition of the audit panel	11

1. GENERAL AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

Name Institution	Fontys University of Applied Sciences
Status	Funded
Outcomes of Institutional Quality Assessment	Positive
Name of programme in Central Register of Higher Professional Education (CROHO)	International Business
ISAT code CROHO	30029
Domain/sector CROHO	Economics
Orientation	Higher Vocational Education (In Dutch: <i>hoger beroepsonderwijs</i>)
Level of the programme	Bachelor
Title, grade	Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)
Number of credits	240
Specialisations	n/a
Location	Eindhoven
Variant	Full-time
Joint programme	n/a
Language	English
Date site visit (online)	November 3rd 2022

2. INTRODUCTION

This assessment report shows the results of 'Assessment of conditional approval' of the bachelor programme International Business of Fontys UAS. The audit panel describes the findings, deliberations and conclusions regarding standard 3 (assessment) of the NVAO accreditation framework, limited assessment.

This report is an addition to the accreditation report of December 12th 2019 reporting on the visitation of October 8th 2019.

The NVAO decided on 25th of March 2021, dossier 009462 that the programme is accredited conditionally, granting the programme the opportunity to meet the conditions within a period of two years based upon the improvement plan of the programme of February 2020.

The audit panel assessing the conditions on November 3rd 2022 was identical to the panel of 2019 with exception of member Guyt, replaced by mr. L. Klienbannink. The supporting secretary of the original panel, mrs. B. Roemers, has been replaced by mr. V. Bartelds.

In this assessment report the audit panel describes the improvement plan, the re-assessment, the findings and the judgement of the conditions.

Short summary improvement plan

The programme has addressed the five conditions of the assessment report in the improvement plan as follows.

Condition 1:

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

Improvement:

Clarification of where the Programme Learning Outcomes (PLO) are assessed and reconsidering the number of PLO's assessed in the final semester.

Condition 2:

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

Improvement:

The assessment form will be adjusted so both the report and the oral defence will be graded separately. In addition, assessors will be instructed to make a clear distinction between the assessment of the report and the oral assessment and that both items need to be at least 5.5.

Condition 3:

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

Improvement:

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

Condition 4:

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

Improvement:

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

Condition 5:

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

Improvement:

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

Assessment improvement plan

The audit panel advised positively on the improvement plan. The improvements were feasible, seemed effective, timely and supported by the essential stakeholders in the programme.

In preparation to the visitation on the 3rd of November 2022 the audit panel studied the documentation and the reflection on the improvements of the programme. The audit panel compared notes previous to the visitation to identify informative and verification questions. The visitation was performed online via MS teams, the auditees were in the same room at the institution. The audit panel had a separate channel available for internal deliberation. The student member of the panel has participated in the study of documentation beforehand and the preliminary discussions within the audit panel. She was unable to participate in the discussions on the 3rd of November. The panel member participated in the process to the concept and final report.

3. ASSESSMENT CONDITIONS STANDARD 3

3. Student Assessment

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

Explanation NVAO: The student assessments are valid, reliable and sufficiently independent. The quality of interim and final examinations is sufficiently safeguarded and meets the statutory quality standards. The examining board exerts its legal authority. The tests support the students' own learning processes.

Findings

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

The programme has reconsidered the number of (mandatory and non-mandatory) programme learning outcomes and has reduced the number to 23 mandatory PLO's and the non-mandatory "Distinguish business IT and High Trends to enhance business success" to underline the importance of the role of the Eindhoven Brainport region.

According to the programme this leads to a more transparent and focused programme, both for staff and students. The audit panel shares this reflection.

The connection between the educational units of the programme and the specific PLO's is clearer, notwithstanding the complexity of the matrix. Especially the assessment of the graduation project could use further clarification. It took the audit panel some in-depth discussion and clarification in the talks with the programme to understand that all the indicated PLO's need to be touched upon in the graduation project, though a selection of the PLO's are specifically assessed at the end level in the graduation project report.

The audit panel concludes the appropriate PLO's are assessed during the graduation phase in the relevant products at the appropriate level. Depending on the perception of clarity of the students involved, the audit panel advises the programme to explain even clearer by making a distinction between PLOs that form the basis of assessment criteria of a specific module and the PLO's that need to be incorporated in the content of the deliverable of the module.

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

The programme has altered this procedure of assessment in the graduation. Compensation between Defence and Project Report is no issue, both need to be scored 5,5 minimal. Combined with other refinements the audit panel is fully satisfied with the way the programme has fulfilled this condition.

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

The programme has addressed this issue by a more safeguarding role of the graduation coordinator and a more hands-on approach of the Exam Board. The grading forms the audit

panel studied showed a clear explanation of the grading in the comment space of the form and providing useful feedback and feedforward for the graduate. The programme clearly shows and states that grading rubrics doesn't satisfy the needs of graduates for feedback. The audit panel suggests non-mandatory comment spaces for separate aspects of the form. But concludes the programme has met the requirements of this condition fully.

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

The programme has intensified the qualifications and training of the examiners. The audit panel was content to read this in the documentation. During the discussions on the visitation day the added value of the further professionalisation of the examiners was highlighted in multiple cases. The member of the staff participating in the EB for IB studied multiple case studies for the senior qualification assessment (SKE) and her findings have been of added value both to IB and the overall assessment policies of the institute of FHEC of Fontys UAS. The audit panel concludes decisively this condition has been met by the programme.

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

The programme of IB, the Institute of FHEC and Fontys UAS have all taken these comments to heart. The actors have instigated a substantial overhaul of the safeguarding boards, procedures and processes, at least partly before the final report of the assessment of IB in 2020. As these changes have been implemented immediately (early 2020) the improvements are already clearly visible for the audit panel.

It is unnecessary to highlight all small and substantial changes made, the audit panel likes to single out three aspects that fully convinced the audit panel that this condition was fulfilled.

1. The structure of the examination board of FHEC resulting in a policy chamber and three separate programme chambers. The programme of IB is participating in the chambers and the programme chamber has also calibrated with the programme of IB in Venlo. The number of dossiers studied by the EB has increased and this enables the EB to not only procedurally safeguard the required qualifications but also to keep an eye on the daily praxis of grading. The presence of EB-members to multiple defence sessions of IB-graduates is illustrative of this approach.
2. The calibration process of IB has been intensified and strengthened. The installation of the Review Board (lector, lecturers, researchers and a member of the EB) provides valuable feedback on the research aspects of graduation.
3. Most importantly all the adaptations have led to a vivid discourse within the institute FHEC and the programme IB on assessment and safeguarding the graduation level.

The audit panel highly appreciates this discourse and the way all stakeholders participate in the discourse wholeheartedly. The audit panel is confident that the programme and its context will benefit from the strengthened sense that assessment is an integral part of the learning process, instrumental in the development of tomorrows professionals.

4. OVERALL CONCLUSION

The audit panel concludes the programme internalized the feedback of the original assessment and sufficiently addressed the shortcomings. All conditions were met within the context of the programme. The transparency and rigor of the monitoring system of the graduation level has been significantly and sufficiently improved. The audit panel appreciates the vivid discourse the programme is exhibiting and is fully convinced the programme of IB lives up to the standard.

The programme has executed (and adapted) the improvement plan and the current situation the audit panel has observed satisfies the audit panel in judging the programme has met the conditions set in 2020.

The panel advises the NVAO to continue the accreditation of the Bachelor programme International Business of Fontys UAS.

The report has been finalized upon consultation of the members of the audit panel in on the 22th of November 2022.

ANNEX I Programme

Time	Partners	Theme's
10.15	Pre-consultation panel Hobéon	
10.30	Interview with programme management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General improvements, current status ▪ Connection graduation and PLO's
10.55	Break / Internal panel discussion	
11.05-11.30	Interview with teaching staff Graduation coordinator 3 graduation assessors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of new assessment forms, providing feedback, supporting the judgements given
11.30 – 11.40	Break / Internal panel discussion	
11.40 – 12.05	Interview with Examination Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PDCA and feedback to the programme ▪ Quality assurance
12.05-12.15	Preparation feedback Internal panel discussion	
12.15 – 12.45	Feedback from the audit panel concerning the conditional requirements	

Werkwijze

Het betreft hier een beoordeling na herstel. De algemene focus van deze beoordeling ligt op de voortgang na de vorige audit, meer specifiek op het gerealiseerd eindniveau ofwel standaard 3 'Toetsing.

Bij de beoordeling van de betreffende opleiding is uitgegaan van het door de NVAO vastgestelde "Beoordelingskader accreditatiestelsel hoger onderwijs". Hierin staat per standaard vermeld waarop een auditpanel zich moet richten en de criteria aan de hand waarvan het panel zijn oordeel per standaard moet bepalen.

Op basis van de door opleiding geleverde documentatie heeft het auditpanel zich een beeld kunnen vormen van de primaire en secundaire processen van de opleiding. De onderwijsinstelling heeft met name die aspecten toegelicht in haar Kritische Reflectie die voor een herstel beoordeling van toepassing zijn.

De visitatie was gericht op een verificatie van de bevindingen uit de documentenanalyse en het verkrijgen van aanvullende informatie over de opleiding. Dit geschiedde door gesprekken met vertegenwoordigers van de opleiding, die waren te kenschetsen als 'gesprekken tussen vakgenoten'.

De verificatie door het auditpanel geschiedde door verscheidene malen hetzelfde onderwerp met verschillende geledingen te bespreken en aan de hand van het bekijken van additionele documentatie.

Na overleg met de betreffende opleiding heeft het auditpanel met in achtneming van de daartoe strekkende regels van de NVAO en op basis van zijn documentanalyse en de daaruit voortvloeiende specifieke aandachtspunten de keuze van de gesprekspartners vastgesteld.

Het oordeel van het auditpanel vastgelegd in een conceptrapport werd aan de opleiding voorgelegd voor een toets op eventuele feitelijke onjuistheden.

ANNEX II List of documents examined

- Kritische reflectie opleiding.
- Herstelplan.
- Notulen examencommissie, kalibreersessies
- Onderwijsvisie
- Curriculum overzicht inclusief PLO's
- KLOTS
- Afstudeer analyses
- Verslagen bijgewoonde defence sessies
- Borgingsagenda
- Toets analyses
- Afstudeerformulieren
- Reviewboard-verslagen

ANNEX III Composition of the audit panel

Naam visitatiegroep:	Niet van toepassing
----------------------	---------------------

Succinct resumes of participating panel members

Naam	Korte functiebeschrijving van de panelleden
Mr. D.J.N.M. Rijnders MSc (chair)	Nies Rijnders studied Economics (Tilburg University). Nies is currently working as a senior policy advisor applied research at Avans University of Applied Sciences. From 2014 until September 2019 he has been working as manager of Avans Expertisecentrum Sustainable Business. From 2007 until 2014 he was dean of Avans School of International Studies. As (lead) auditor he audited education programmes in the economic field on behalf of NVAO and quality assurance agencies.
Mrs. R. Pereboom MSc.	Robin Pereboom studied Management & Organisation (TIAS/Tilburg University). Robin is currently working a lecturer-researcher at Avans University of Applied Sciences. She is currently working for IB Den Bosch as graduation coach and a leading project member for the redevelopment of the IB programme in line with Avans Ambition 2025. Next to this she is member of the research network International Business at Expertise Center Well-Being Economy and New Entrepreneurship (formerly ESB), working on different SIA-Raak projects focusing on developing circular value chains.
Mr. dr. L. Klienbannink	Leo Klienbannink is Applied Research Professor (Lector) Internationalisation at Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences.
L. vom Hof	Lola vom Hof studied International Business (HZ University of Applied Sciences) and is member of the Board of Studies (in Dutch "opleidingscommissie")

On 24-03-2022 the NVAO endorsed the composition of the panel to assess the Hbo-Bachelor programme International Business of Fontys UAS (PA-1199).

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



Hobéon

Lange Voorhout 14
2514 ED Den Haag
+31 (0)70 30 66 800
info@hobéon.nl
www.hobéon.nl