

The logo for AeQui, featuring the letters 'AeQui' in a purple, sans-serif font. A light blue, hand-drawn style line loops around the letters, starting from the 'A', passing under the 'e', looping around the 'Q', and ending under the 'i'.

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**Master International Supply Chain Management
Breda University of Applied Sciences**

*Report of the assessment after three years
16 January 2023*

Utrecht

January 2023

www.AeQui.nl

Assessment agency for higher education

Colophon

Breda University of Applied Sciences
Monseigneur Hopmansstraat 2
NL - 4817 JT Breda

Programme: Master International Supply Chain Management
Location: Breda
Mode of study: Fulltime
Croho-registration: 49307

Assessment committee

G.M. Klerks, chair
W. Dullaert, expert
R. Hendrix, expert
J. Kikkert, student-member
L. van der Grijspaarde, secretary
The committee was presented to the NVAO for approval.

The assessment was conducted under the responsibility of
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Summary

On 16 January 2023 an AeQui committee performed an Assessment 'after Three Years' of the master's programme in International Supply Chain Management of Breda University of Applied Sciences. The quality of the assessment and achieved learning outcomes of the programme were assessed. The overall judgement of the committee is that the quality of both standards is **positive**.

Assessment

The committee concludes that the programme has an adequate system of assessment in place, and that the programme meets this standard. The programme follows the academy's assessment plan with the design of the assessment. All examinations and papers are assessed individually, including the thesis. For the summative assessments, mixed methods are used, such as papers, written and oral exams, presentations, and a thesis report. In addition, several formative assessment tools are used throughout the programme. The committee finds that the system of assessment ensures that each student individually achieves the intended learning outcomes. According to the committee, assessments are carried out very carefully according to a four-eye or multi-eye principle and using assessment forms with Rubrics. The Board of Examiners perform thoroughly and pro-actively its tasks to control the quality of the assessments, the assessment procedures and theses.

Achieved learning outcomes

The committee concludes that graduates of the programme achieve the required master's level and the intended learning outcomes. The master aims to deliver supply chain managers who possess four competences. From studying students' final thesis and talking to various stakeholders, including alumni,

the committee concludes that the programme succeeds in this aim. The final works are of sufficient level and the alumni are successful in their work after the programme.

Suggestions

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

- The programme may consider to rebalance the types of assessment used during summative assessment moments on the one hand, and during formative assessment moments on the other, including a wider variety of assessment methods in the summative assessment programme too (e.g. group work, presentations, etc.).
- In a next improvement cycle, the quality of the rubric of the thesis assessment form could be further improved with respect to the formulations of the criteria (especially the last three) and the accompanying achievement levels and grades.
- Continuous attention needs to be paid to the written justifications on the assessment forms, especially to the link between the student's work and the criteria in the rubrics.
- The programme could look for a more fitting form of assessing mastery on the four professionally-oriented competencies than working with a "traditional" thesis.

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

On behalf of the entire assessment committee,
Utrecht, January 2023

Mariëlle Klerks
Chair

Linda van der Grijspaarde
Secretary

Introduction

In June 2020 the master's programme in International Supply Chain Management of Breda University of Applied Sciences (BUAs) was awarded accreditation by NVAO. The one year programme of 60 EC started in February 2021 with the first group of students. Currently, students from the first two cohorts have graduated. The third cohort has started. The programme aims to deliver supply chain leaders with specialist knowledge of the entire supply chain and understanding of the latest developments. The program aims to achieve this goal with an educational program of 60 EC divided into two semesters. In the first semester, five courses of 6 EC are offered. Two more courses of 6 EC and the thesis (18 EC) follow in the second semester. Throughout the program there are Learning Communities (in which there is collaboration with the professional field) and individual supervision.

The institute

The programme ties in with the mission of 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;
- Academy of Build Environment & Logistics.

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 world 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 International Supply Chain Management is part of the Academy of Build Environment & Logistics (ABEL).

The assessment

BUAs assigned AeQui VBI to perform a quality assessment 'Toets na drie jaar', three years after the initial accreditation with the extensive framework (2018). In close co-operation with AeQui, an independent and competent assessment committee was convened, mainly consisting of panel members that were involved in the initial assessment. A preparatory meeting with representatives from the programme has taken place.

The site-visit took place on 16 January 2023 in accordance with the programme in Appendix 2.

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.

Assessment

The committee concludes that an adequate system of assessment is in place, which contains several good measures to guarantee the quality of assessment. The programme follows the academy's assessment plan with the design of the assessment. All examinations and papers are assessed individually, including the thesis. The system of assessment ensures that each student individually achieves the intended learning outcomes. Assessments are carried out very carefully according to a four-eye or multi-eye principle and using assessment forms with rubrics. The committee appreciates the use of rubrics, as it contributes to the reliability and transparency of assessments. Students receive regular and good quality feedback. The Board of Examiners performs thoroughly and pro-actively its tasks to control the quality of the assessments, the assessment procedures and theses.

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

Findings

In line with BUAs' and ABEL's educational vision, a vision on assessment was formulated in the ABEL Assessment Policy Plan. The ABEL Assessment Policy Plan is available for staff on the employee portal. In general, assessment at ABEL can be seen as systematically collecting information about the student's competencies. The starting point is competency-based assessment which is set up from a holistic view. All modules contribute to the four competencies on which the curriculum is built (see standard 11 for a listing of the competences). In the end, these competencies are assessed during the completion of the thesis in a professional environment.

All examinations and papers are assessed individually, including the thesis. For the summative assessments, mixed methods are used, such as papers, written and oral exams, presentations, and a thesis report. All different results need to be sufficient, therefore there are no compensation possibilities within the curriculum. Credits can only be gained individually.

Formative assessment tools used are interactive discussions, feedback moments (also after the summative assessment), mock exams and quizzes in which potential examination questions and

exam cases are discussed, and peer and self-assessment.

In 2020 the panel of the initial accreditation advised to properly record the results of formative tests, in addition to results of summative tests. The necessity to implement this recommendation has diminished due to extra summative exams in the modules of Research Methods and Change & Innovation. Hence, the decision was made to focus on guidance and coaching instead of formalising the formative feedback. The program uses assessment blueprints when constructing exams. As of the third cohort the lecturers also started working with assessment blueprints when it concerned examination by delivering papers. According to the programme, these blueprints show the appropriate level of the students per competency and align learning objectives. They also ensure the quality of assessment and thereby delineate and hone the level of the students' work and assessment by lecturers.

Another recommendation in 2020 in the field of assessment was about leadership. Some changes were made to clarify the concept of leadership and the assessment criteria used: Lumina, as a part of the Leadership module, now has its own marking rubric and in addition, also more formative assessment moments were introduced for helping students improving their paper. The learning objectives formulated for the Leadership

module form the basis for the blueprint and rubric.

Every academy has its own Board of Examiners that carries out the duties set out in the legislation regarding the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (WHW). ABEL's Board of Examiners consists of a chair, a secretary, three lecturers (one of which is external to the academy), a student counsellor (for advice) and secretarial support. For the master's programme the Board of Examiners deals with tasks such as determining whether a student has passed their master's degree programme, ensuring the quality of (and the associated organisation and procedures around) examinations and assessments, granting exemptions, and deciding on the application of the Teaching and Examination Regulations.

The assessment committee is an academy-wide committee which has been mandated by the board of examiners to assure the quality of assessment and examinations. Some lecturers and the educationalists are members of this committee. Examinations and assignments always need approval upfront by the assessment committee. This also includes the thesis manual. New lecturers and lecturers of the master's programme are guided individually in the process of test construction and revision by an educationalist. These reviews focus on the master's level, on technical aspects of examination, on the presence of a well-constructed assessment blueprint and answer model/rubric, and on language.

Considerations

The panel appreciates the programme's thorough system of assessment, which contains several good measures to guarantee the quality of assessment. The panel is pleased with the multiple assessment types that are implemented in the programme. The assessment types are well-aligned with the learning outcomes, according to the committee. Furthermore, the panel is positive about the fact that the system of assessment ensures that each student individually achieves the

intended learning outcomes. Currently, the emphasis in the summative assessment is on delivering written work, but a wider variety of assessment methods is used during the formative assessment moments, such as giving a presentation or group work. The programme may consider to rebalance the types of assessment used during summative and during formative assessment moments. Including a wider variety of assessment methods in the summative assessment programme (e.g. group work, presentations, etc.), to the committee's opinion, may contribute to the students' preparation for the labour market. Because of the greater impact, the summative assessment of, for example, group work or presentations, challenges students more and therefore mimics real life work contexts even better (e.g. dealing with freeriding during groupwork). In addition, including students' performance in group work as part of the assessment also offers the opportunity to assess students' performance on professional skills (leadership). The programme may consider attaching a grade to this as well, rather than just working with pass/fail.

Although students experience a relatively high workload, the assessments are planned in such a way that students have sufficient time to prepare.

The committee speaks positively of following the previous committee's recommendations regarding formative feedback and incorporating leadership into the program. The committee appreciates the adjustments the program has made to address these recommendations in its own way.

The assessment committee is also positive about the introduction of the blueprints to increase transparency in the assessments and the expectations of students. The committee also finds it positive that a four-eye principle is applied when compiling the assessments. In addition, the committee highly appreciates the multi-eye principle in assessing summative tests. The thesis even involves assessment by three examiners, which increases reliability.

The committee notes that students receive regular, rich, oral feedback on their performance, including formative. During the site visit, students expressed their appreciation on the amount and quality of the feedback they receive from their lecturers. The assessment forms accompanying summative tests provide a rationale in rubrics and explanatory notes. The committee appreciates the use of rubrics, as it contributes to the reliability and transparency of assessments. In a next improvement cycle, the quality of the rubric for the thesis assessment form could be further improved with respect to the formulations of the criteria (especially the last three) and the accompanying achievement levels and grades. As to the use of the rubrics by the assessors, the committee recommends that continuous attention be paid to the written justifications, especially to the link between the student's work and the criteria in the rubrics. As for the thesis, the committee recommends in this regard looking for a form of written reporting that does not increase the examiners'

workload but does increase the followability for external co-readers, such as an assessment committee or the examination board.

The assessment procedures follow the assessment cycle and are adequately implemented in the programme, according to the committee. The Board of Examiners performs thoroughly and pro-actively its tasks to control the quality of the assessments, the assessment procedures and theses. The Board shows good knowledge of the programme and its assessment and has clearly been involved in the development of the assessment of the master, together with the assessment committee.

In summary, the committee has established that the master programme has adequate assessment systems and assessment procedures. Therefore, 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 aims to deliver supply chain leaders with specialist knowledge of the entire supply chain and understanding of the latest developments. This is translated in four competences, used as intended learning outcomes of the programme. From studying students' final papers and talking to various stakeholders, including alumni, the committee concludes that the programme succeeds in this aim. The final works are of sufficient level and the alumni are successful in their work after the programme.

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

Findings

The intended learning outcomes of the programme are described in the following four competencies:

Graduates are able to:

- analyse and evaluate supply chains from a strategic perspective.
- develop a supply chain improvement plan that supports a sustainable business model.
- create an approach for implementation of the supply chain improvement plan.
- demonstrate leadership skills by influencing the improvement process.

As an extension of acquiring these competencies, students will develop, during the master's period, a sound basis for autonomous personal growth and lifelong learning.

The programme judges the level of achievement of the intended learning outcomes by a thesis. During the thesis period students are challenged to demonstrate their impact on the organisation and possible external stakeholders such as suppliers and customers.

The committee discussed the extent to which the master's programme prepares for the professional field with a number of alumni. The management of the programme already indicated that the alumni generally find suitable jobs at master's level quickly after graduation. The alumni confirmed this. They indicated that the

programme prepares them very well for the work they will do. 'The master really taught me the value of leadership and integrated perspectives of disciplines,' said one of the students. They suggested that some professional/leadership skills such as delivering presentations should be more reflected in the programme's assessment. Learning research methods was valuable, although the students find writing an academic thesis less in line with the skills they need.

Considerations

The committee assessed fifteen theses: eleven of the first cohort and four of the second cohort of students. The committee appreciates the appropriate companies where the assignments are carried out and the type of graduation work done. The committee established that all theses met the programme's requirements for graduation. These outcomes illustrate that the students have achieved the intended learning outcomes as formulated by the programme. The assessment committee could relate to the grades awarded by the assessors. On average the research projects are of good quality. The theses of lower quality have accordingly been awarded with lower grades.

The committee noticed that theses are often very page-long and (partly as a result) could benefit from a sharper focus. This applies to the research part, but also to the chapters on the supply chain improvement plan and the implementation plan. Also, the connection between different parts, such as the theoretical framework and designs,

could be strengthened. The committee was pleased to learn that the programme had also observed this itself after the first cohort, and had taken measures on this for the next cohort. The committee recommends continuing to pay close attention to this and teaching students how to report concisely and provide focus.

The programme assesses students' final level on the four competences (the intended learning outcomes) with a 'classical' research thesis. The reflection on the mastery level on the competency Leadership is captured in an appendix to the thesis. The committee wonders whether this is the most optimal form and challenges the programme to look for a form of thesis work that is

more closely aligned with the four professionally-oriented competences of the master's programme. The approach of the thesis could e.g. be more design-oriented, or other forms of assessment could be used.

The final assessment is an aggregation of the assessment of the student's presentation of his final paper and the thesis. The quality of the written feedback on the theses on the assessment forms is discussed under standard 10.

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

Appendices

Appendix 1 Assessment committee

drs G.M. (Mariëlle) Klerks, voorzitter
Mariëlle Klerks is educational consultant.

Prof.dr. W.E.H. (Wout) Dullaert
Wout Dullaert is Full professor of Supply Chain Logistics at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

R. (Ralph) Hendrix
Ralph Hendrix is supply chain manager.

J. (Judith) Kikkert, student member
Judith Kikkert is a Student MSc Management, Economics & Consumer student at WUR.

The panel was supported by Linda van der Grijsparde, secretary.

Appendix 2 Programme site-visit

16 January 2023, Breda

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|-------------|--|
| 12.00-12.15 | Welcome (presentation) |
| 12.15-13.15 | Internal deliberations panel & Lunch |
| 13.15-14.00 | Board and Programme Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair Executive Board BUAS • Director Academy for Built Environment & Logistics • Coordinator Master International Supply Chain |
| 14.00-14.15 | Break |
| 14.15-15.00 | Board of Examiners and assessors graduation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretary/member board of examiners • Chair board of examiners • Thesis supervisor, module coordinator • Member board of examiners • Teacher • Educational advisor • Lector, teacher • Coordinator master |
| 15.00-15.15 | Break |
| 15.15-16.00 | Recent alumni and students in final phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 students cohort 3 • 2 alumni cohort 1 • 1 alumnus cohort 2 |
| 16.00-17.00 | Internal deliberations panel |
| 17.00-17.30 | Feedback |
| 17.30 | Drinks |

Appendix 3 Studied documents

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

- Graduation assignments: The rubric, the theses, and the corresponding assessment forms for 15 selected graduates. Assessment forms:
 - The admissibility assessment form
 - The traceability form
 - The final grade form
 - The assessment form containing the assessment by the BUAs chair
 - The assessment form containing the assessment by the BUAs supervisor
 - The assessment form containing the assessment by the external examiner
 - The assessment form containing the assessment of the thesis by the company advisor.
- Modules: sample in which all modules are represented, equally divided between cohort 1 and cohort 2. Per module:
 - assignments and exams—the assignment(s) and/or exam(s) as given to the students
 - exam or test analysis—an analysis made after running the exam or assignment
 - format rubric/exam key—format rubric (assessment) or key (exam)
 - individual assessments—graded rubrics and/or keys
 - individual work of students—assessment and exams
 - test blueprints
- Annual report BoE (including addendum MSCM)