Assessment report

# Bachelor of Business Administration in International Business and Management Studies (IBMS)

Stenden University of Applied Sciences NHL University of Applied Sciences Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences



Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation



european consortium for accreditation

Assessment report

# - Programme

Copyright © 2018 ECA OCCASIONAL PAPER

## **European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education**



All rights reserved. This information may be shared, copied and redistributed for non-commercial purposes, provided that the source is duly acknowledged. Derivatives of this material are however not allowed.

Additional copies of this publication are available via www.ecahe.eu.

Cover art: David Goehring (CC. by)



# **Table of content**

Glo	ssary		7
1.	Executive	e summary	8
2.	The asses	ssment procedure	11
3.	Basic info	ormation	12
4.	Assessme	ent scale	13
5.	Assessme	ent criteria	14
6.	Overview	of assessments	29
Anr	nex 1.	Composition of the panel	30
Anr	nex 2.	Documents reviewed	32
Anr	nex 3.	Site visit programme	33



# Glossary

CeQuInt Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation

EHEA European Higher Education Area

HE Higher education

IBC International Branch Campus

IBMS International Business and Management Studies

ISAs International Student Activities

PBL Problem Based Learning

PDP Personal Development Programme

QA Quality assurance

UAS University of Applied Sciences

# 1. Executive summary

The Bachelor of Business Administration in International Business and Management Studies (IBMS) is provided in partnership by Stenden, NHL and Van Hall Larenstein Universities of Applied Sciences. The programme was assessed by NVAO, the Accreditation of The Netherlands and Flanders. NVAO convened an assessment panel which studied the self-evaluation report and undertook a site visit on 12 December 2017 in Leeuwarden, The Netherlands.

The panel expresses its gratitude for the openness and warm reception by the programme, for the meticulous provision of the relevant documents and materials, and for the excellent showcases by the students of the programme.

#### Standard 1. Intended internationalisation - Excellent

IBMS has actively and enthusiastically worked very hard in the past years to devise coherent and verifiable internationalisation goals, in line with the institution's goals and supported by internal and external stakeholders. The international branch campuses and the Grand Tour are exemplary practices that stand out as unique opportunities for students to gain international experience and intercultural competences. The panel recommends that these unique selling points are highlighted in the programme's internationalisation goals with full exploitation of the possibilities for mobility across the IBCs.

#### Standard 2. International and intercultural learning - Excellent

The programme's internationalisation goals are well reflected in its intended international and intercultural learning outcomes, the student assessment methods are most suitable and the programme has demonstrated that these learning outcomes are achieved. The major accomplishment to bridge the gap from competencies to international and intercultural learning outcomes, the continued efforts to improve the difficult task of testing intercultural learning outcomes, and the excellent preparation of students to acquire intercultural skills can be regarded as international examples.

## Standard 3: Teaching and Learning - Excellent

The curriculum, teaching methods and learning environment are most suitable for achieving the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. The panel commends the programme's pioneering role and innovative sprit in providing multiple options for gaining



international and intercultural experiences, and making every effort to let the international students feel at home. Identifying key partner institutions for exchanges and involving more international guest speakers from industry would further benefit the teaching and learning process.

#### Standard 4: Staff - Good

The staff composition with 20 per cent international teaching staff is adequate but could be even more international. The panel recommends that the programme drafts a recruitment plan with specific actions to attract more international staff members. The staff members have sufficient internationalisation experience, intercultural competences and language skills, and are facilitated by the services provided to them. The panel commends the programme on its very committed and enthusiastic staff.

#### Standard 5: Students - Good

The student composition meets the programme's objective of 50 per cent international students with 15 nationalities. To ensure that this objective will also be met in the coming years the panel recommends that the declining proportion of international students is turned around by devising a recruitment and marketing plan that includes measures such as engaging the international branch campuses, visiting secondary schools in target countries and turning alumni into ambassadors for the programme in their home country. The programme is to be commended on the achievement that all students gain several international and intercultural experiences during their study.

The 2018 merger of Stenden and NHL into NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences and the national restructuring leading to a new International Business (IB) programme, also comprising both the Stenden and NHL International Business and Languages programmes, poses both challenges and opportunities. As NHL and Stenden are already cooperating in providing the IBMS programme the opportunities are far greater than the challenges. The panel is confident that the strong international profile and coherence of IBMS will be transferred to the IB programme.

To conclude, the panel has encountered an IBMS programme that presents a true richness in its international and intercultural goals, learning outcomes, and student experiences. The engaged and enthusiastic staff provide a programme that is valued by its students and that offers unique mobility opportunities with its international branch campuses. The award of the

ECA Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation is well-deserved and therefore strongly proposed by the panel.



# 2. The assessment procedure

The assessment procedure was organised as laid down in the Frameworks for the Assessment of Quality in Internationalisation (Frameworks) published by the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA).

A panel of experts was convened and consisted of the following members:

- Dr. Rolf Heusser, panel chair and CeQuInt trained, director of National Institute for Cancer Epidemiology and Registration (Switzerland)
- Griet Naeyaert MA, expert, International Coordinator, Artevelde University College (Belgium/Flanders)
- Dennis Righters MBA, lecturer Organisational Behavior & Marketing, Rotterdam Business School, Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences (The Netherlands).
- Lara Schu B.Sc., student expert and CeQuInt trained, student Computer Science (M.Sc.) at the University of Kaiserslautern (Germany).

The composition of the panel reflects the expertise deemed necessary by the Frameworks. The individual panel members' expertise and experience can be found in <u>Annex 1:</u> <u>Composition of the assessment panel</u>. All panel members signed a statement of independence and confidentiality. These signed statements are available from NVAO upon simple request. The procedure was coordinated by Dr Mark Frederiks at NVAO who also acted as secretary of the panel.

The assessment panel studied the self-evaluation report and annexed documentation provided by the programme before the site visit. (<u>Annex 2: Documents reviewed</u>) The panel organised a preparatory skype meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017. The site visit took place on 12 December 2017 at Stenden University of Applied Sciences in Leeuwarden. (<u>Annex 3: Site visit programme</u>)

The panel formulated its preliminary assessments per standards immediately after the site visit. These were based on the findings of the site visit which built upon the review of the self-evaluation report and annexed documentation.

The draft panel report was then sent to the programme to review the report for factual mistakes. The panel amended the report where necessary. The panel approved the final version of the report on 25 April 2018.

# 3. Basic information

Qualification:	Bachelor of Business Administration in International Business and Management Studies (IBMS)
Number of credits:	240 ECTS
Specialisations (if any):	Business to Business (B2B) Innovation & Leadership (I&L) Retail Management (Retail) International Sustainability Management (ISM)
ISCED field(s) of study:	34: Business and Administration
Institution:	Stenden University of Applied Sciences in partnership with NHL University of Applied Sciences and Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences
Type of institution:	University of Applied Sciences
Status:	NVAO accredited, 30 April 2014
QA / accreditation agency:	NVAO
Status period:	From 30 April 2014 until 31 December 2020 (the accreditation has been extended due to a national restructuring of the sector)



# 4. Assessment scale

The assessment-scale relates to the conclusions of the assessment panel at the level of the standards and is based on the definitions given below. Through the underlying criteria, each of the standards describes the level of quality or attainment required for a satisfactory assessment. The starting point of the assessment scale is however not threshold quality but generic quality. Generic quality is defined as the quality that can reasonably be expected from an international perspective.

Unsatisfactory	The programme does not meet the current generic quality for this standard.
	The programme does not attain an acceptable level across the standard's entire spectrum. One or more of the underlying criteria shows a meaningful shortcoming.
Satisfactory	The programme meets the current generic quality for this standard.  The programme shows an acceptable level of attainment across the
	standard's entire spectrum. If any of the underlying criteria show a shortcoming, that shortcoming is not meaningful.
Good	The programme surpasses the current generic quality for this standard.  The programme clearly goes beyond the acceptable level of attainment across the standard's entire spectrum. None of the underlying criteria have any shortcomings.
Excellent	The programme systematically and substantially surpasses the current generic quality for this standard.  The programme excels across the standard's entire spectrum. This extraordinary level of attainment is explicitly demonstrated through exemplary or good practices in all the underlying criteria. The
	programme can be regarded as an international example for this standard.

# 5. Assessment criteria

#### Standard 1: Intended internationalisation

#### Criterion 1a: Supported goals

The internationalisation goals for the programme are documented and these are shared and supported by stakeholders within and outside the programme.

### Findings and considerations

The programme's internationalisation goals are included in the "Internationalisation strategy IBMS Top of Holland" (2016). For IBMS graduates it is essential to be interculturally competent and internationally aware. IBMS has formulated a mission statement that translates in to the following vision on internationalisation: "to provide students with a truly international learning experience in preparation of a career in international business by offering a quality and attractive curriculum in an effective international classroom".

The internationalisation goals are visualised as a circle, within the middle the students who should achieve intercultural and international learning outcomes at home and abroad in both the formal and informal curriculum. A diverse, internationally experienced and interculturally competent staff team should deliver the education that allows students to achieve the learning outcomes. Valorisation and impact should be achieved by being recognised as a best practice and improving the internationalisation of education. For each of these areas goals and objectives for the period 2017 to 2020 have been identified.

The programme's vision on internationalisation is rooted in the internationalisation for all concept of the Internationalisation Policy Stenden (2016) with the focus areas internationalisation at home, internationalisation abroad and staff development. The institution has an international advisory board with eminent scholars such as Prof Hans de Wit whose definition of internationalisation is applied in the programme's policy documents. IBMS also benefitted from the expertise and research input of the Stenden professorship (*lector*) in Internationalisation of Higher Education. The panel noted that staff, students, alumni and employers are all strongly involved and supportive of the internationalisation policy. Noteworthy is the Internationalisation Student Task Force (I-STAF) consisting of students who (co-)organise various internationalisation activities and provide feedback on internationalisation activities in an enthusiastic manner, as the panel witnessed during the site visit.

Internationalisation is an important topic of discussion in the Business Advisory Board and during the interviews examples were given how presentations of international projects and from alumni are interwoven in the curriculum. From the side of the professional field it was remarked that the emphasis on internationalisation is very strong, although the business component (guest lecturers from business, outreach to industry, focus on new technology and management styles) could be strengthened.

The international branch campuses (IBC) in Indonesia, Qatar, South Africa, and Thailand are unique features of Stenden UAS. So is the concept of the Grand Tour which started with 39 students in 2001 and expanded to over 600 students now. Each student has the



possibility to participate in it and spend part of their studies abroad at an IBC. The design of the curricula and the academic calendar at the IBC are adapted to switch between campuses without losing time. The choice of locations on different continents enables optimal opportunities for gaining intercultural competences and international experiences. The panel heard about the positive experiences of students and staff in Qatar, and noticed the plans of IBMS to become a centre of expertise for doing business in the MENA region and to cooperate with the Bangkok campus. However, there are still plenty of opportunities for involving other IBCs in IBMS.

The changes that IBMS is facing because of the merger with the adjacent UAS NHL (leading to a new institution NHL Stenden from January 2018 onwards) and because of the national restructuring of the UAS business studies sector are significant and will be taking effect in the academic year 2018-2019. IBMS and International Business and Languages (IBL) of Stenden will merge with the IBMS programme of NHL into a new International Business (IB) programme. Preparations have been underway for some time and although changes in the partnership are to be expected, in particular regarding the contribution of Van Hall Larenstein, the panel is convinced that the strong international profile of IBMS will be brought into the new constellation. Interviews with institutional and programme management, as well as with staff members, have confirmed the confidence of the panel in a strong internationalisation perspective of the new IB programme of NHL Stenden.

#### Conclusion and (re)commendations

The panel concludes that the internationalisation goals for the programme are satisfactorily documented and coherent. The goals are shared and supported by stakeholders within and outside the programme. The international branch campuses and the Grand Tour are exemplary practices that stand out as unique opportunities for students to gain international experience and intercultural competences. The panel recommends that this unique selling point is highlighted in the programme's internationalisation goals with full exploitation of the possibilities for mobility across the IBCs.

#### Criterion 1b: Verifiable objectives

Verifiable objectives have been formulated that allow monitoring the achievement of the programme's internationalisation goals.

#### Findings and considerations

Specific goals and objectives for the period 2017 to 2020 are outlined in the Internationalisation Strategy IBMS Top of Holland (2016). These objectives correspond to the internationalisation goals on students, staff, curriculum and valorisation. It is stated in which year each objective should be achieved. In the annual plans of IBMS these objectives are briefly touched, with some indicators and highlighting of challenges, but not in a systematic and comprehensive manner.

The objectives are reasonable and sufficiently challenging. The vast majority of objectives are formulated in a verifiable manner, e.g. "50% international students with 15 nationalities", "participating in Global Mindset Monitor research programme", "reach top 3 national student survey scores", develop a specified joint minor with Doha campus colleagues, "carry out the MINT scan every three years". However, some objectives could have been further

operationalised, e.g. "increase involvement of alumni", "continued focus on international nature of case studies and course work".

#### Conclusion and (re)commendations

The panel concludes that objectives have been formulated and that these objectives are verifiable, allowing the monitoring of the achievement of the programme's internationalisation goals. The panel commends the programme on its exemplary approach to make objectives verifiable and measurable, and encourages a systematic and comprehensive covering of the objectives in the annual plans.

#### Criterion 1c: Impact on education

The internationalisation goals explicitly include measures that contribute to the overall quality of teaching and learning.

#### Findings and considerations

Both students and staff have multiple opportunities to go abroad and the internationalisation at home possibilities for students are also well-developed, These characteristics of the programme contribute to the overall quality of teaching and learning. In addition, more international business contacts and research outcomes that feed into the curriculum and staff development are mentioned as contributing factors by the programme. In this regard the establishment by Stenden UAS, in cooperation with the University of Groningen, of the Centre for Internationalisation of Education is particularly noteworthy. It opens up prospects of new research activities and PhD theses on the subject of internationalisation, from which IBMS staff can profit both by contributing to its research and by incorporating research results in the programme. The panel noted that interviewees, in particular from the professional field, emphasised the importance of establishing more international business contacts and partnerships. This is also acknowledged in the programme's internationalisation strategy document.

The way in which students contribute and give feedback on the programme's internationalisation, e.g. through the Internationalisation Student Task Force (I-STAF) and in International Student Activities (ISAs) is to be commended. As a result the programme has received higher scores in the national students survey and a very high score on internationalisation.

#### Conclusion and (re)commendations

The panel concludes that the internationalisation goals also relate to teaching and learning. The measures included do contribute to their quality. The panel commends the institution on the exemplary manner in which student feedback is sought to contribute to the overall quality of teaching and learning. Furthermore, IBMS education stands to benefit from the emergence of the new Centre for Internationalisation of Education.

#### Overall conclusion regarding Standard 1. Intended internationalisation

The panel found that IBMS has actively and enthusiastically worked in the past years to devise coherent and verifiable internationalisation goals, in line with the institution's goals and supported by internal and external stakeholders. The panel deems all of the underlying criteria of this standard to be systematically surpassed.



The panel therefore assesses *Standard 1. Intended internationalisation* as excellent. The international best practices and unique selling points of the IBCs and the Grand Tour should be highlighted in the programme's internationalisation goals.

## Standard 2: International and intercultural learning

#### Criterion 2a: Intended learning outcomes

The intended international and intercultural learning outcomes defined by the programme are a clear reflection of its internationalisation goals.

#### Findings and considerations

The competency-based national profile of IBMS was in recent years updated resulting in a new national profile based on learning outcomes (2016). This move supported the development of student-centred learning and clarified to stakeholders what is on offer and what can be expected from IBMS graduates, The IBMS programme manager and the Stenden professor of Internationalisation played an important part in this exercise that was carried out with partners from the IBMS network.

The panel noted that the programme's competency matrixes 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 provide the necessary bridges between the competencies and the programme's learning outcomes. The intended international and intercultural learning outcomes as specified by the programme relate to intercultural readiness/proficiency, international business awareness, international business communication, collaboration, and personal & professional development. The panel verified that these learning outcomes are integrated into the overall learning outcomes of the programme as included in the document "IBMS Learning outcomes 2017-2018".

The panel found that the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes are grounded in the programme's internationalisation goals relating to students and curriculum, although this link could be made more explicit.

### Conclusion and (re)commendations

The panel concludes that the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes correspond with the programme's internationalisation goals. The panel commends the involvement of the programme in updating the national IBMS profile and the excellent manner in which the gap between competencies and learning outcomes has been bridged.

#### Criterion 2b: Student assessment

The methods used for the assessment of students are suitable for measuring the achievement of the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes.

#### Findings and considerations

IBMS uses a variety of assessment methods; both formative and summative assessments, appropriate to the different learning outcomes and students' learning styles. There are more group assignments in earlier years and increased individual examinations in later years of

the programme. The assessment methods are described in the IBMS competency matrix, the document "Test programme IBMS" and the examples given for international business awareness and intercultural competence. The panel perceives the blueprints for the modules to be transparent and elaborately describing the assessments.

An important tool for IBMS is experiential learning which challenges students to bring theory into practice, develop critical thinking and creative problem-solving skills in an international and intercultural setting. Examples of the experiential learning process are: interacting and reflecting back into the classroom after International Student Activities (ISAs); working together in project teams with incoming students from Qatar; blogging assignments for study abroad; and, demonstrating intercultural skills in a reflective portfolio during an internship or graduation.

The programme is very active in continuously improving the quality of student assessments. For instance, as international students appeared unfamiliar with multiple choice testing, training sessions are offered on how to tackle multiple choice tests. Research of a staff member for a Master thesis investigates how to supervise and assess intercultural group work. The participation in the Global Mind Monitor is expected to increase understanding on the assessment of intercultural learning outcomes and required interventions. Research conducted at the Centre for Internationalisation of Education is also expected to feed into improving the testing of intercultural learning outcomes. The test committee, as a subsidiary of the examination committee, monitors the quality of assessments and student evaluations also cover testing. The same QA processes for Stenden are applied at the IBCs, also e.g. with regard to examinations in Qatar.

The panel finds the assessment methods clear, suitable, appropriately diversified, and appreciates the focus of the programme on continuous learning to improve the testing of intercultural learning outcomes.

#### Conclusion and (re)commendations

The panel concludes that methods used for the assessment of students are suitable for measuring the achievement of the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. The panel commends the programme on its efforts to improve the quality of testing, in particular of intercultural competences which is widely seen as a major challenge.

## Criterion 2c: Graduate achievement

The achievement of the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes by the programme's graduates can be demonstrated.

#### Findings and considerations

The programme argues that the achieved level is demonstrated in the internship project, the final thesis and the performance of graduates. The panel concurs, after examining a collection of results from projects, theses, portfolios, graduation assessments and other student work, that the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes have been achieved. The panel was also impressed by the showcases of students where they demonstrated their international and intercultural achievements. Experiencing other cultures, appreciation of otherness, developing oneself personal (including leadership skills)



in an international group, and making students globally prepared are some of the benefits of the programme mentioned by students.

In a survey among IBMS alumni from 6 UAS, wherein Stenden alumni represented some 7%, it was found that three-quarters of respondents reported that their IBMS education provided them with the required international business awareness and that their IBMS programme supported them to develop intercultural competences. Compared to a control group IBMS alumni scored considerably higher on employability, intercultural, and employment skills. In a survey in 2011 the programme's alumni, students and company representatives graded the achievement of international business awareness around 8 (on a scale from 1 to 10) and the achievement of intercultural adaptability at almost 9 (alumni and students) or slightly over 8 (company representatives).

The programme further points to positive experiences recorded by alumni in interviews in the IBMS alumni magazines. Latest data reveal that at least 64% of students that graduated in the past two years secured employment upon graduation, and another 9% decided to pursue a Master's study. The panel examined the overview of companies and internships and graduation projects and concludes that these provide a good international mix of companies. The panel found that interviewed alumni and industry representatives were very positive about the intercultural skills gained at IBMS. Sensitivity for and knowing international cultures, working in a multicultural environment and knowing how to manage people from different cultures were explicitly mentioned as traits for which the IBMS programme prepares well.

The programme reports that it seeks advice actively from alumni and invites them structurally to events at Stenden. This was recognised by interviewed alumni. Two alumni serve on the Business Advisory Board. Nevertheless, the programme intends to create an alumni network and increase their involvement, which is supported by the panel.

## Conclusion and (re)commendations

The panel concludes that the graduates demonstrably achieve the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. The programme is to be commended on its exemplary preparation of students for working in a multicultural environment and supporting the development of their intercultural skills

### Overall conclusion regarding Standard 2. International and intercultural learning

The panel found that the programme's internationalisation goals are well reflected in its intended international and intercultural learning outcomes, that the student assessment methods are most suitable and that the programme has demonstrated that these learning outcomes are achieved. The panel deems all of the underlying criteria of this standard to be surpassed. The major accomplishment to bridge the gap from competencies to international and intercultural learning outcomes, the continued efforts to improve the testing of intercultural learning outcomes, and the excellent preparation of students to acquire intercultural skills can be regarded as international examples.

The panel therefore assesses Standard 2. International and intercultural learning as excellent.

## Standard 3: Teaching and Learning

#### Criterion 3a: Curriculum

The content and structure of the curriculum provide the necessary means for achieving the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes.

#### Findings and considerations

The content and structure of the curriculum are outlined in the Course Document IBMS. An overview of the international and intercultural curriculum components has been attached as an annex to the self-evaluation report. The IBMS learning outcomes document shows the correspondence between the curriculum and the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes.

The core programme is taught during the first five semesters of the curriculum. In the first two years students are required to participate in one or more International Student Activities (ISAs) each year. The programme has the ambition to embed ISAs more permanently in the curriculum and to develop an annual ISA with the Bangkok campus. In semesters 6 to 8 the students choose one of the four specialisations: Small Business and Retail management (offered by Stenden); Business to Business or Innovation and Leadership (offered by NHL); or, Sustainability Management (offered by Van Hall Larenstein).

The curriculum is entirely taught in English. Students take a second language during the first two years of the programme. Dutch students can enrol in two years of Spanish or combine one year of Spanish and one year of German. International students take Dutch for two years to facilitate their integration into Dutch society. The language courses also give attention to wider cultural and business contexts.

For all Dutch students it is mandatory to spend one semester abroad for either a study abroad, internship or graduation project. International students are encouraged to opt for a period of study or internship in a third country. One option to study abroad is to follow modules in Doha (Qatar) where also a joint minor is being developed. Another option is to participate in the Grand Tour by taking a minor (pre-approved by the examination committee) at one of the other IBCs in Thailand, South Africa or Indonesia. Yet a third option exists, namely to study a semester abroad by making use of the extensive global network of some 200 exchange partners of the three universities (Stenden, NHL, Van Hall Larenstein). The panel considers that it must be difficult for students to make a choice among this long list of institutions. It would be helpful for students if a selection would be made of institutions that are perceived to be most relevant for the programme and to identify these as key partners in order to build stronger relationships and facilitate the mobility of students to these places.

Each year there are incoming students from the Doha campus who study the third year at Stenden. In order for students enrolled at the IBCs to obtain a Stenden Bachelor's degree it is necessary to study 60 ECTS (1/4 of the programme duration) at Stenden in The Netherlands. New regulations from the Dutch government will make it possible for students to stay at the Doha or another campus abroad but under the current regulations that is not an option if the student wants to obtain a Dutch degree.

The panel has learned from the interview that students may be confronted with gender and discrimination issues. There have been some tensions between Dutch and Doha students. The programme took measures to tackle such problems and students abroad are monitored



by a staff member. The panel appreciates the measures taken but thinks that it would be beneficial if methods to tackle gender and discrimination problems are integrated more explicitly in the curriculum, and that it needs to be addressed in companies.

The panel is convinced that, based on its examination of the documents and student interviews, it is certainly possible for students to achieve all the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes through the provided curriculum.

## Conclusion and (re)commendations

The panel concludes that the content and the structure of the curriculum provide the necessary means for achieving the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. The programme is to be commended on the provision of multiple options for gaining international experiences; through the IBCs, institutional partnerships, ISAs, and internationalisation at home. The panel recommends that the programme prioritises the long list of institutional partners to identify key partners for the programme.

#### Criterion 3b: Teaching methods

The teaching methods are suitable for achieving the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes.

#### Findings and considerations

IBMS uses the learning track model and, partially, Problem Based Learning (PBL) for its educational model. However, the merged NHL Stenden will implement a new educational concept, design-based education, across the institution. The panel believes that it is important not to rush into the new educational concept but to allow the new IB programme sufficient time to adapt.

The programme applies a variety of teaching methods such as PBL sessions, ISAs, seminars, module assignments and case studies in an international context. The ISAs consist of the following phases: a pre-departure meeting and pre-assignment at home; the activity itself outside of the classroom; post-arrival reflection and evaluation in a classroom setting. The ISAs allow students to gain positive experiences in small and manageable doses, thereby giving students more confidence to experience a full semester abroad. International examples are used to enrich learning and ISAs, blogs and events help students to develop a better understanding of their own intercultural competence. Students carry out assignments in multinational teams. International company clients assignments facilitate international components and multicultural learning. The panel heard from students that intercultural awareness feature prominently in the module assignments.

IBMS prepares incoming students through an introductory programme with a IBMS buddy and by providing in the first semester a Cultural Awareness course as part of the Personal Development Programme (PDP). All third-year students follow a Personal Development course and Managerial Skills classes focused on fostering successful cooperation (group work) and, as students from Doha enter in the third year, an appreciation of otherness of students from different campuses.

The panel is convinced that, based on its examination of the documents and its interviews with teaching staff and students, it is possible for all students to achieve the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes through the provided teaching methods.

However, the panel learned from the interviews that there is a call from students and the professional field to include in the teaching more international guest lecturers from industry.

#### Conclusion and (re)commendations

The panel concludes that the teaching methods are suitable for achieving the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. The programme is to be commended on its use of a variety of teaching methods integrating the traditions from three institutions. The panel recommends to involve more international guest speakers from industry to further enhance the international dimension of its business education.

#### Criterion 3c: Learning environment

The learning environment is suitable for achieving the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes.

#### Findings and considerations

The set-up of the programme provides students with an international classroom experience. The Personal Development Groups, module assignment groups and projects have a multinational composition. Inbound international students join IBMS each semester. Other students serve as their buddies to smoothen integration. The ISAs imply collaboration with students from partner universities. The interviewed students perceived that they receive (also from older year students) a lot of useful information on the programme, that teachers are of great help (also in dealing with intercultural problems), that Stenden does well in contacting students abroad, and that there is a real community feeling.

The new facilities at the Leeuwarden campus enhance the learning environment. A wish for a spacious room to work on projects together with international students was mentioned in the student group. The panel learned that there are three rooms for contemplation, taking into account the different religious backgrounds of students. ICT tools play an important role, in particular for liaising with the Doha campus and with students on an internship or graduation project overseas, for involving international guest speakers, and for projects with students from partner institutions.

IBMS organises regularly events that enhance the learning environment, such as: a "Being International" conference for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year students with external speakers and alumni; country event for first year students; Spanish business fair for students taking Spanish; third year reunion for students in their specialisation, involving alumni. There are also many informal events, partly run by student-run committees, which may be hosted at a Stendenowned home for international students. I-STAF and several student associations and the Erasmus Student Network contribute further to a vibrant international student community.

# Conclusion and (re)commendations

The panel concludes that the learning environment is suitable for achieving the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. The programme is to be commended on the use of both formal and informal activities to make the students feel at home and increase their mutual cultural understanding.



### Overall conclusion regarding Standard 3: Teaching and Learning

The panel found that the curriculum, teaching methods and learning environment are most suitable for achieving the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. The panel deems all of the underlying criteria of this standard to be surpassed. The panel commends the programme's pioneering role and innovative sprit in providing multiple options for gaining international and intercultural experiences, and making every effort to let the international students feel at home.

The panel therefore assesses *Standard 3: Teaching and Learning* as excellent. Identifying key partner institutions for exchanges and involving more international guest speakers from industry would further benefit the teaching and learning process.

#### Standard 4: Staff

#### Criterion 4a: Composition

The composition of the staff (in quality and quantity) facilitates the achievement of the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes.

#### Findings and considerations

The teaching staff is mostly seconded from the specialisations at the three partner UAS. Having an international profile is one of the selection criteria for this staff to become active in the IBMS programme. There is a core team of lecturers, whose members staff the curriculum committee. Two internationalisation officers play an important role in developing the internationalisation strategy, the internationalisation of the curriculum, and the development of institutional partnerships. In addition, there is an academic contact person for the students from the Doha campus who study for one year at Stenden.

The panel noted in the provided overview of staff and examiners that of the 39 people listed 32 are Dutch. Of the listed 11 support staff members all except one are Dutch. Of the teaching staff in the four specialisations all except one are Dutch. The programme wants to attract more international staff members to diversify the composition of the team and enhance the international classroom experience for students. The panel underlines this priority and would like to see a recruitment plan and concrete steps to make this happen. The merger with NHL should enhance the possibilities for hiring staff (who are not seconded) in the new IB programme.

The norm for teaching staff is a 1:25 ratio, thus: 1 teaching staff to 25 students. Several staff members have experience in teaching abroad in Qatar or one of the other IBCs. The teaching staff in the specialisations have mostly Master's degrees, a few have a PhD, and a few a Bachelor's degree. One staff member is involved in research into the role of the lecturer in the international classroom. Two lecturers are conducting PhD research and one is completing a Master's thesis on student cooperation in group assignments. The new centre for internationalisation in education and the Stenden professorship open up new possibilities for contributions of lecturers to research. The panel encourages the programme to foster the links with research and to feed the research results into the teaching and learning. Some staff members have expressed a desire to develop Master's programmes

and the panel believes that this would be a good way to strengthen the link between education and research.

#### Conclusion and (re)commendations

The panel concludes that the composition of the staff does indeed facilitate the achievement of the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. However, the staff composition is not ideal from a viewpoint of international diversity. The panel recommends that the programme drafts a recruitment plan to attract more international staff members and invests in the resulting actions to make this happen.

#### Criterion 4b: Experience

Staff members have sufficient internationalisation experience, intercultural competences and language skills.

#### Findings and considerations

About 60 per cent of the core staff team, including the programme manager, have professional or other international experience abroad, apart from IBMS experience. Almost 20 per cent of staff members have another nationality than Dutch. There are some international guest speakers in modules and one structural cooperation with a Croatian guest lecturer. As the panel remarked before this number should be increased.

Intercultural skills of staff members are enhanced by participating in ISAs (70 per cent of the core team), acting as PDP coach, participating in international events and cross-campus staff visits (Doha and Bangkok), and in collaborating with colleagues at the Doha campus. The panel appreciates these practical, hands-on intercultural experiences and from the interviews with students and staff it can be concluded that the intercultural competences of staff are sufficient.

A small majority of the staff speak "native or near-native English" according to test scores (C1). In the national students survey the programme's students scored 3.73 on lecturer's proficiency in English, comparable to the average for all IBMS programmes. The panel heard no complaints from students regarding the language skills of teachers.

During the interviews the panel saw that staff members are committed and loyal in their work for IBMS and that their enthusiasm in teaching is appreciated by the students.

#### Conclusion and (re)commendations

The panel concludes that staff members have sufficient internationalisation experience, intercultural competences and language skills. The panel commends the staff members on their commitment and enthusiasm in teaching.

#### Criterion 4c: Services

The services provided to the staff (e.g. training, facilities, staff exchanges) are consistent with the staff composition and facilitate international experiences, intercultural competences and language skills.

#### Findings and considerations



Stenden UAS provides courses in intercultural sensitivity and feedback, Cambridge training and certification, support (e.g. Erasmus grants) for staff exchange, etc. The Expertise Services and Research department offers advice in education design or team training. The International Affairs department and the professorship in Internationalisation of Higher Education provide expertise on internationalisation and international and intercultural learning outcomes. The two internationalisation officers bring staff members in contact with counterparts at partner universities and in international networks, and they initiate international student and staff activities. The Dutch-speaking support staff receive training in English. ICT& Facilities offer technical support to e.g. enable cooperation with the IBCs. There are regular skype meetings with the Doha campus but the panel heard from interviewees that virtual meetings cannot always replace physical meetings, and opportunities for the latter should be sought.

The programme organises team meetings on subjects related to the international classroom. IBMS has allocated funds for staff training and development in internationalisation. The programme manager determines priorities based on staff members talents and requests, and the outcomes of student evaluations. Ad-hoc opportunities when the need arises are also possible. In fact the panel heard in the interviews that staff developments opportunities often present themselves in an ad-hoc manner. Perhaps this is a consequence of the set-up of IBMS. The HRM plan IBMS 2015 makes it clear that staff, with the exception of four staff members, are employed by one of the three UAS, and not by IBMS. This implies that they reside under the HRM cycles of their 'mother institute'. Most staff are employed (in terms of staff hours) by Stenden, NHL, and then VHL. The expectation expressed in the HRM plan is that the merger between Stenden and NHL will increase the coherence of the IBMS team. The management that was interviewed also held the opinion that the specialisations and programme's strengths will remain after the merger. The footprint of the new programme at the Emmen location will also become stronger as the panel heard.

The teaching staff mentioned in the interviews that there is room for improvement when it comes to staff mobility. The panel advocates that more staff mobility windows are created and that the possibilities for staff exchange with the IBCs are considered, not as ad-hoc activities but as a core element of human resources policy. The programme wants to organise staff trainings to further improve their intercultural competences. The panel supports this and advises the programme to make these trainings mandatory.

#### Conclusion and (re)commendations

The panel concludes that the services provided to the staff are consistent with the staff composition. These services do adequately facilitate international experiences, intercultural competences and language skills. The panel recommends the programme to further enhance these experiences and skills by developing a policy with concrete steps to increase the staff mobility and exchanges.

#### Overall conclusion regarding Standard 4: Staff

The panel found that the staff composition with 20 per cent international teaching staff is adequate but could be even more international. The staff members have sufficient internationalisation experience, intercultural competences and language skills, and are facilitated by the services provided to them. The panel deems all of the underlying criteria of

this standard to be met and commends the programme with its committed and enthusiastic staff.

The panel therefore assesses Standard 4: Staff as good.

The panel recommends that the programme drafts a recruitment plan with specific actions to attract more international staff members.

## Standard 5: Students

#### Criterion 5a: Composition

The composition of the student group (national and cultural backgrounds) is in line with the programme's internationalisation goals.

#### Findings and considerations

Almost half of enrolled IBMS students (424 in 2016) are international. They come from 45 countries; 20 per cent are from non-EER countries. This distribution is in line with the programme's internationalisation objective of 50 per cent international students from at least 15 nationalities. The most represented nationalities within the international students group are: German, Chinese, Bulgarian, Indian, Egyptian, and Qatari. Although the total number of enrolled students has grown this has not been matched by a similar increase of international students, resulting in a proportional decline of international students. Nevertheless, the proportion of international students is higher than on average in IBMS programmes. The influx of Qatari students at Stenden is an important factor in this. The panel assumes that this also shows that more engagement with the other IBCs would lead to increasing numbers of international students.

The mix of nationalities is important for reaching the IBMS objectives of an international classroom with intercultural learning experiences. Also for the organisation of specific international events and the PDP programme, and internationalisation at home initiatives, the participation of international students is both useful and necessary. The panel therefore recommends to make a recruitment and marketing plan that can ensure that the proportion of international students will rise instead of fall. During the interviews the panel heard already interesting suggestions, such as turning alumni into real ambassadors for the programme in their home country, and visiting secondary schools in target countries (not only in Germany as happens now). The Grand Tour experiences could also be made more visible for students through videos, blogs and social media. Engaging the IBCs in the recruitment plan and selecting key partners for exchanges would also be useful. With regard to the latter it was mentioned in the interviews that Bulgaria, Romania and Vietnam hold high promises to attract international students.

## Conclusion and (re)commendations

The panel concludes that the composition of the student is in line with the programme's internationalisation goals. The panel recommends that the declining proportion of international students is turned around by devising an effective recruitment and marketing plan.



#### Criterion 5b: Experience

The internationalisation experience gained by students is adequate and corresponds to the programme's internationalisation goals.

#### Findings and considerations

The programme provides many opportunities for the students to gain internationalisation experiences, such as the ISAs, international guest lectures, international classroom, study, internship, or graduation abroad, and of course the concept of the Grand Tour and exchanges with partner institutions. It was remarked in the interviews that for some students the Grand Tour is less threatening than an exchange programme with partners institutions, as the IBCs follow the same academic calendar and rules as Stenden. There are approximately three times as many students in the intercampus mobility than through exchanges with partner institutions. The IBCs are self-sustainable.

For Dutch students a semester abroad is mandatory, many international students choose a semester in a third country. As a result all students have several international and intercultural experiences during their study. In the last three years an average of 46 per cent of all internships and thesis projects were carried out outside the student's native country. The feedback of students, also heard by the panel in the interviews, ISA assignments and student blogs all show that students find these experiences very enriching.

#### Conclusion and (re)commendations

The panel concludes that the internationalisation experience gained by students is adequate and corresponds to the programme's internationalisation goals.

#### Criterion 5c: Services

The services provided to the students (e.g. information provision, counselling, guidance, accommodation, Diploma Supplement) are adequate and correspond to the composition of the student group.

#### Findings and considerations

The Stenden Mobility Centre and Grand Tour office facilitate incoming and outgoing exchange and Grand Tour students. The International Office supports with enrolments, visa, etc. For incoming students IBMS provides the introduction programme Study Start Week, student buddies are assigned to them, and the internationalisation officers pay attention to the integration of students. Incoming exchange students discuss their experiences with the internationalisation officers and complete a reflection report on their semester in IBMS which is used for preparing in a next instance. A staff member serves as counsellor for IBMS Qatari students. Doha campus and exchange students can make use of the services of Student Stay, a housing organisation.

During the interviews the panel spoke to students that were satisfied about the services provided to them but also encountered some concerns on the provision of these services outside of Stenden, in particular guidance and tutoring for students going abroad for internships. It was remarked that NHL staff were not always as approachable as Stenden staff. The panel is of the opinion that the programme should look into this more closely.

Student counsellors, prayer rooms, a Language Centre, bank and sports facilities, Campus Café etc. are available for all IBMS students. Community building is supported by social media channels in which a Social Media Team, mainly consisting of students, plays an important role.

The panel has verified that the Diploma Supplement that is provided to students after graduation entails the necessary information.

## Conclusion and (re)commendations

The panel concludes that the services provided to students are manifold and adequate.

#### Overall conclusion regarding Standard 5: Students

The panel found that the student composition meets the programme's objective of 50 per cent international students with 15 nationalities. To ensure that this objective is continued to be met the panel recommends that the declining proportion of international students is turned around by devising a recruitment and marketing plan that includes measures such as engaging the IBCs, visiting secondary schools in target countries and turning alumni into ambassadors for the programme in their home country. The panel deems all of the underlying criteria of this standard to be met and commends the programme on the achievement that all students gain several international and intercultural experiences during their study.

The panel therefore assesses Standard 5: Students as good.



# 6. Overview of assessments

Standard	Criterion	Level of fulfilment for each standard unsatisfactory/satis- factory/good/excellent (see descriptions in chapter 4)	
1. Intended	1a. Supported goals		
internationalisation	1b. Verifiable objectives	Excellent	
	1c. Impact on education		
2. International and	2a. Intended learning outcomes		
intercultural learning	2b. Student assessment	Excellent	
	2c. Graduate achievement		
3. Teaching and learning	3a. Curriculum		
	3b. Teaching methods	Excellent	
	3c. Learning environment		
4. Staff	4a. Composition		
	4b. Experience	Good	
	4c. Services		
5. Students	5a. Composition		
	5b. Experience	Good	
	5c. Services		

# **Annex 1. Composition of the panel**

#### Overview panel requirements

	anel ember	Subject	Internat.	Educat.	QA	Student	CeQuInt	Review country	Other country
•	Rolf Heusser		Х	Х	Х		Х		Х
•	Griet Naeyaert	Х	X						Х
•	Dennis Righters	Х	X	Х	Х			Х	
•	Lara Schu				Х	Х	X		Х

Subject: Subject- or discipline-specific expertise;

Internat.: International expertise, preferably expertise in internationalisation; Educat.: Relevant experience in teaching or educational development;

QA: Relevant experience in QA or auditing; or experience as student auditor;

Student: Student with international or internationalisation experience;

CeQuInt: CeQuInt trained or more than three CeQuInt experiences as a panel member

Review system: at least 1 member from the higher education system of the programme under

assessment;

Other system: at least 2 members who are not from the country of the programme under

assessment.

# Panel chair: Dr. Rolf Heusser, director of National Institute for Cancer Epidemiology and Registration (Switzerland).

Dr. Heusser is part-time lecturer of the University of Zürich, ETH Zürich, University of Berne. He is a member of the accreditation advisory committee in Luxembourg and was Chairman of the scientific advisory board of the German accreditation agency AHPGS. From 2001 to 2010 he was the Director of the Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance of the Swiss Universities (OAQ). From 2004 to 2014 he was the Chairman of ECA. He has been trained as a CeQuInt expert and participated in CeQuInt procedures.

# Griet Naeyaert MA, International Coordinator, Artevelde University College (Belgium/Flanders).

Since 2008 she has been building International Relations for the Bachelors of Business Management and of International Business Management at Artevelde University College in Ghent. From 2003 to 2008 she was Consular Officer at the Embassy of Belgium in Washington D.C.



# Dennis Righters MBA, lecturer Organisational Behaviour & Marketing, Rotterdam Business School, Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences (The Netherlands).

Thesis coordinator (IBMS) and chair of the Participatory Council. He was guest lecturer at the University of Ljubljana and Geely Beijing University. Consultant with Q-Minds B.V. He was a panel member in several NVAO assessments of business programmes.

# Lara Schu B.Sc., student Computer Science (M.Sc.) at the University of Kaiserslautern (Germany).

She was an expert in 16 expert panels of the German accreditation agencies ASIIN and ACQUIN, She was trained as a CeQuInt expert.

Process coordinator and secretary of the panel: Mark Frederiks, Coordinator international policy, NVAO.

# Annex 2. Documents reviewed

- Self-evaluation report
- Annexes:
  - o 1.1: Internationalisation strategy IBMS
  - 1.2: Year plan 2016 IBMS (As example)
  - o 2.1: Competences overview IBMS 2016-2017
  - o 2.2: IBMS Learning outcomes 2017-2018
  - o 3: IBMS Curriculum 2016-2017
  - 4.1 4.4: Course Descriptions IBMS 2016-2016 year 1 / year 2 / year 3 / year 4
  - 5: Intercultural and international curriculum components
  - o 6: Student assessments international and intercultural learning outcomes
  - o 7: Diploma Supplement Bachelor IBMS
  - o 8: Student population
  - o 9.1: IBMS intake degree students by nationality
  - o 9.2: Overview outgoing and incoming exchange
  - 9.3: Overview companies internship projects and graduation projects
  - o 10.1: Overview staff and examiners 2016-2017
  - o 10.2: Staff key figures
  - o 11: Overview internationalisation activities (incl. ISAs)
- Strategic plan 2013-2016 IBMS
- Jaarplan 2017 IBMS
- IBMS Curriculum 2017-2018
- HRM plan IBMS 2015
- Grand Tour for Beginners
- The development of international competences by IBMS alumni
- Materials on international student activities and projects, study abroad, student blogs
- Examples of student work and portfolios, assignments, graduation assessments, theses
- Information on intended and achieved learning outcomes, competences matrixes, alumni survey IBMS 2011
- Minutes of meetings



# Annex 3. Site visit programme

## Overview

**Date:** 11-12 December 2017

Institution: Stenden University of Applied Sciences

**Programme:** International Business and Management Studies (IBMS)

**Location:** Leeuwarden, The Netherlands

# **Programme**

## Monday 11 December 2017

17.00: Preparatory meeting of the panel and dinner

# **Tuesday 12 December 2017**

Time	Activity	Location
8:15	Welcome and guidance to the panel room Anne Klaas Schilder, Rianne Meijerink	Lobby Stenden University Hotel
8:30 – 9:15	<ul> <li>Setting the stage for the visitation days</li> <li>Anne Klaas Schilder, Rianne Meijerink</li> <li>Klaas-Wybo van der Hoek, Stenden Executive Board</li> </ul>	Panel room, i.e. Room A1.03, Stenden
	Time to review documents	
9:15 – 9:45	Internationalisation in IBMS: approach and showcase  Internationalisation officers:	Panel room
	<ul><li>Peter de Boer</li><li>Maria Angeles Sànchez Carrascal</li></ul>	

#### Students:

- Marc de Jong
- Alexander Lim

#### 10:00 – 10:30 Interview with Management

Panel room

#### IBMS Board of directors:

- Mrs Ann Mannen Head of School, School of Business, Stenden Univ. of applied sciences
- Mr Tjalling Huisman Dean department Animals and Business, Van Hall Larenstein Univ. of applied sciences
- Mr Egon van der Veer Director faculty of management and Economics, NHL Univ. of applied sciences

#### Programme managers:

- Gerrit Vriesema team leader IBMS
- Mrs Rianne Meijerink former programme manager IBMS, project leader CeQuInt
- Mr Renju Mathai (Skype) programme manager IBMS
   Qatar

#### 10:30 - 11:00 Tour & Coffee break

## 11:00 -11:45 Interview with international services representatives

Panel room

- Afke Bruinsma Exchange coordinator Stenden
- Joop Dijkstra International office Stenden
- Moniek Dijkema -int. office and exchange coord. NHL
- Dymphi van der Hoeven– policy officer International Affairs Stenden
- Margriet ter Horst Student counsellor Stenden
- Charlie Roscoe IBMS intern International marketing department Stenden
- Dr Robert Coelen *Professorship Internationalisation in Higher Education, Stenden*

#### 12:00 – 12:45 Interview with students

Panel room

- Markus Pertz 2<sup>nd</sup> year
- Gerard van Engelenburg 3rd year
- Tran Duong 4th year
- Siddharth Bhavnani (Skype) 4th year, IBMS Qatar
- Nena Wulff (Skype) 5th year
- Rutger Rhee 5<sup>th</sup> year

## 12:45 – 13:45 Lunch / internal deliberation / review documents

Panel room



13:45 – 14:30	Interview with Alumni & industry representatives	Panel room
	Alumni:	
	<ul> <li>Marie Geest (Skype) - Outlet operations coordinator, T Hilfiger, Amsterdam</li> <li>Gerard Jaszczuk (tentative) – Export support officer, V der Meulen Meesterbakkers, Hallum, the Netherlands</li> </ul>	•
	Industry Representatives:	
	<ul> <li>Erin Levey (Skype) - Head of Research &amp; Investor Strate London. eRevalue employs two IBMS alumni.</li> <li>Greta Jager – Smit, GJ Support. Chair Frisian Export Company liaison Export Carrousel (part of IBMS prograte)</li> <li>Vincent Walstra or Marieke Venema – Operational Direct / Human Resources dept. at Ayold, Leeuwarden. Ayold employs two IBMS alumni and currently has one IBMS internship student.</li> </ul>	Club, Organisor and amme). ector
14:45 – 15:30	Interview with (teaching) Staff	Panel room
	<ul> <li>Paul Hartog - core teacher, host ISA @Home project</li> <li>Anu Jossan (Skype) - core teacher IBMS Qatar</li> <li>Letty Nijhuis - core teacher, secretary Exam committee</li> <li>Maria Angeles Sanchez Carrascal - core teacher, acad students, Int officer and host ISA projects</li> <li>Gerrit Vriesema - teacher year 3, previous coordinator team leader IBMS</li> <li>Miriam Terpstra - core teacher, PDP coordinator, host</li> <li>Marijke Boven - core teacher, PDP coach, host ISA pre</li> </ul>	lemic counsellor SUQ minor Business to Business, ISA projects
15:30 – 15:45	If needed: Wrap up and final questions	Panel room
	IBMS board of directors, Project manager	
15:45 – 17:00	Internal discussion and outcomes	Panel room
17:00 – 17:30	Feedback panel to programme and departure	Panel room

e<sub>|</sub>c<sub>|</sub>a

european consortium for accreditation

www.ecahe.eu