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Bachelor International Business The Hague University of Applied Sciences

*Report of the extensive programme assessment
29 – 30 January 2020*

Utrecht, The Netherlands
April 2020
www.AeQui.nl
Assessment Agency for Higher Education

Colophon

Bachelor International Business

The Hague University of Applied Sciences

Location: The Hague

Mode of study: fulltime

Croho: 30029

Committee

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The committee was presented to the NVAO for approval.

The assessment was conducted under responsibility of AeQui VBI

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Summary

On 29 and 30 January 2020 an international assessment committee of AeQui visited the hbo-bachelor programme International Business (IB) at *De Haagse Hogeschool* (The Hague University of Applied Sciences, THUAS). While its origins go back to 1992, the current IB programme started in September 2018. At the time of the site visit, the former International Business and Management Studies (IBMS) programme was phasing out and the new programme is being implemented incrementally. For this assessment the committee has used the NVAO framework for extended programme assessment. The committee judges that the programme meets all eleven NVAO standards and issues a **positive** recommendation for the accreditation of the IB programme at THUAS.

Intended learning outcomes

The committee considers that the IB programme at THUAS has a clear profile: it stands for a combination of firm local roots and an outspoken international and intercultural dimension. The committee thinks highly of the way the unique selling points reflect the core values of the university and are shared by all stakeholders. As IB THUAS follows the national IB framework, the intended learning outcomes are up to standard in terms of domain, level and orientation. The involvement of the professional field as 'critical friend' in the design, development, delivery and evaluation of the IB programme is exemplary. According to the assessment committee, the IB programme **meets** this standard.

Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum of the IB programme is sound: the module contents are relevant and their link to the overall programme and its competencies / learning outcomes is clear. The committee thinks highly of the professional orientation of the programme. The educational principles underpinning the curriculum are developed nicely on paper and implemented successfully in the day-to-day delivery of the programme. The number and composition of the student body, as well as the relevant teaching formats allow students to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in a truly international and intercultural setting. This international and intercultural component constitutes a clear asset to the programme and requires a common language of instruction. According to the assessment committee, the IB programme **meets** all curriculum standards.

Staff

The committee is impressed by the quality and motivation of the staff and thinks highly of their professionalisation opportunities. It fully understands that

students are very satisfied with the knowledge, skills and availability of the staff who contribute to a welcoming learning environment. Currently, staff numbers are not in relation to the IB student population. The management is aware of this situation and is taking action. According to the assessment committee, the IB programme **meets** this standard.

Facilities

The accommodation and material facilities are satisfactory at this moment and will become state-of-the-art after the partial renovation of the main campus building. The committee thinks highly of the way in which dedicated IB mentors provide tailored support to students throughout the entire programme. According to the assessment committee, the IB programme **meets** both standards.

Quality assurance

The recently established Quality Management System is based on sound principles and is a work in progress: the first results seem to indicate that the system is useful. The committee endorses the plans for more involvement of students and alumni, in addition to the adequate role of staff and committees. According to the assessment committee, the IB programme **meets** this standard.

Student assessment

The policies and principles underlying student assessment in the IB THUAS programme are robust. Assessment is based on sound educational and assessment concepts, which are implemented properly in the day-to-day reality of the IB programme. The committee thinks highly of the way in which the assessment of the IP8 projects is organised. Moreover, the Examination Board and the Assessment Committee are on top of their tasks: the quality of assessment is safe in the hands of these

committees and their members, which constitute a kind of institutional memory with regard to assessment at times of curriculum developments. The transparency of assessment (traceability/paper trails), however, could be further improved. According to the assessment committee, the IB programme **meets** this standard.

Achieved learning outcomes

It is the explicit ambition of the programme to provide internationally-oriented students with the means to reach their potential as global citizens and responsible business professionals. The sample of IP8 research projects, internship reports and Strategic Management assignments (reflecting the IBMS competencies) as well as the discussions with students, graduates and employers confirm according to the committee that the IB programme is succeeding in this ambition. Moreover, it is to the credit of the programme that all graduates find relevant positions on the labour market or pursue a master's programme. While the quality of the final products is sufficient, students could be challenged more to demonstrate the acquired research skills in the IP8 project. According to the assessment committee, the IB programme **meets** this standard.

Quality of internationalisation

When developing the new IB curriculum, the management has strengthened the international dimension of the programme by embedding its internationalisation aspirations and activities explicitly in the mission, vision and educational frameworks of the university and the faculty. Hence IB's decision to

apply for the Certificate on Quality in Internationalisation (CeQulnt). The assessment committee combined the accreditation visit with an assessment of the programme's Quality of Internationalisation. The result of this assessment is reported in a separate document according to the CeQulnt guidelines. The committee considers that the IB THUAS programme fulfils each of the five standards of the CeQulnt assessment framework; its overall judgement is therefore **positive**.

Recommendations

The committee has issued a positive judgement on the quality of each individual standard and on the quality of the programme as a whole. Nonetheless, the committee sees room for improvement in a number of areas. The committee therefore advises the IB programme:

- to enhance the research orientation in the curriculum, which in turn will bring the quality of the IP8 research projects up to a level that befits the ambitions of the new IB programme;
- to address student complaints about organisational issues and communication;
- to improve the transparency of assessment through a document trail on all course assessments and by providing qualitative feedback in the assessment forms to underpin the scores;
- to clarify to all people involved in the programme which set of exams/products constitutes the basis for measuring that students have achieved the required competencies at bachelor level.

All standards of the NVAO assessment framework are assessed positively; the assessment committee therefore awards a positive recommendation for the accreditation of the programme.

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

Mariëlle Klerks
Chair

Mark Delmartino
Secretary

Overview of judgements

Bachelor programme International Business fulltime

Variants: four-year programme (240 EC) and three-year programme (180 EC)

International Business and Management Programme fulltime (phasing out)

Variants: four-year programme (240 EC) and fast-track three-year programme

Extensive programme assessment (NVAO)

The judgements per standard are presented in the table below.

Standard	Judgement
1. Intended learning outcomes	<i>Meets the standard</i>
2. Curriculum: orientation	<i>Meets the standard</i>
3. Curriculum: content	<i>Meets the standard</i>
4. Curriculum: learning environment	<i>Meets the standard</i>
5. Curriculum: intake	<i>Meets the standard</i>
6. Staff	<i>Meets the standard</i>
7. Facilities	<i>Meets the standard</i>
8. Tutoring	<i>Meets the standard</i>
9. Quality assurance	<i>Meets the standard</i>
10 Student assessment	<i>Meets the standard</i>
11 Achieved learning outcomes	<i>Meets the standard</i>
Overall judgement	Positive

Quality of Internationalisation (CeQulnt)

1. Intended internationalisation	<i>Excellent</i>
2. International and intercultural learning	<i>Good</i>
3. Teaching and learning	<i>Excellent</i>
4. Staff	<i>Excellent</i>
5. Students	<i>Excellent</i>

Conclusion

Positive

Introduction

The IB programme at THUAS aims to provide internationally-oriented students with the means to reach their potential as global citizens and responsible business professionals. In line with the mission and vision of both University and Faculty, the IB programme is firmly anchored in the city of The Hague and highly international. IB THUAS is a four-year full-time programme of 240 EC; students with appropriate qualifications can opt for a three-year fast-track programme. The IB programme is currently in transition: the former IBMS programme is phasing out, while the IB programme started in September 2018. The committee has focused its assessment on the current situation taking into account the different stages of development of the 'old' IBMS and the 'new' IB programme, while incorporating in its deliberations also recent achievements and future plans.

The institute

The Hague University of Applied Sciences (THUAS) offers professionally oriented degree programmes in a broad range of domains. Currently THUAS has more than 25000 students and almost 2000 staff members. THUAS has its roots firmly anchored in the city of The Hague and is at the same time highly international. It has the outspoken ambition to be the most international university of applied sciences in the Netherlands.

THUAS consists of 8 Faculties, 5 Service Departments and about 30 Research Groups. The assessment visit took place at the Faculty of Business, Finance & Marketing (BFM on the main campus of THUAS, which is conveniently located next to the railway station Den Haag Hollands Spoor. The Faculty offers five degree programmes and features three research groups (*lectoraten*). In terms of student intake, the IB programme is among the bigger programmes of THUAS. It holds a similar position with regard to the international composition of its student and staff body.

The programme

The bachelor programme International Business (IB) at THUAS is relatively new. During the previous accreditation round in 2013, the assessment committee looked at the International Business & Management Studies (IBMS) programme and issued a positive recommendation. This IBMS programme is now phasing out. In accordance with the Government's vision to have fewer but

broader programmes, 14 Dutch universities of applied sciences have looked into their portfolio of programmes with an international business dimension and have adjusted these to reflect current international business practices and recent insights from research. After extensive discussions with relevant stakeholders and experts from academia and industry, a new framework for IB programmes was developed and validated in 2017. This framework features 24 programme learning outcomes (PLOs), which are now reflected in all IB programmes in the Netherlands. In addition to disciplinary competencies, IB students also acquire generic '21st century' skills that add value to apply for a broad range of jobs.

This nation-wide development has had as a consequence for THUAS and the BFM faculty that their IBMS programme will expire. As of September 2018, first-year students are enrolling in the new IB programme. At the time of the assessment visit early 2020, the IB programme was running for the second year. This means that the assessment committee looked at the implementation of the new IB programme in the first and second year and at its intentions for years 3 and 4. Furthermore, the committee checked how IBMS students were doing in their final years of study, reviewing 15 graduation projects produced by IBMS students in the academic year 2017-2018 and 2018-2019. IBMS/IB students with the appropriate educational background (see Standard 5) can opt for a three-year study programme (180

EC) leading to the same exit qualifications. Between 2010 and 2018, students could opt for a study programme of 240 EC in three years. The committee has also looked into the opportunities for and performance of the Three-Year Programme (TYP) students.

During the site visit, the assessment committee has come across what the self-evaluation describes as *a programme in flux*: the last cohort of IBMS students is now in its fifth semester and will graduate nominally in 2020-2021; the first cohort of IB students is in its third semester and expected to graduate in 2021-2022. The new national framework is conversion neutral: IBMS students can also graduate after 2020-2021. The committee gathered during the visit that the respective IBMS and IB curricula have been in constant development over the past five years and it will require another few years before the IB curriculum is fully tried-and-tested.

THUAS aspires to be the most international University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands, an ambition that is endorsed by the faculty BFM and the IBMS/IB programme. When developing the new IB curriculum, the management has strengthened the international dimension of the programme by embedding its internationalisation aspirations and activities explicitly in the mission, vision and educational frameworks of the university and the faculty. Hence IB's decision to apply for the Certificate on Quality in Internationalisation (CeQulnt). The result of this assessment is reported in a separate document according to the CeQulnt guidelines.

The assessment

The Faculty BFM of THUAS assigned AeQui VBI to perform a quality assessment of its bachelor programme IB. In close co-operation with the programme management, AeQui convened an independent and competent assessment committee. The committee members are presented in attachment 1. A preparatory meeting with representa-

tives of the programme was held to exchange information and plan the date and programme of the site visit.

Upon request of the Faculty and the IB programme, the assessment committee combined the accreditation visit with an assessment of the programme's Quality of Internationalisation. The committee performed this assessment according to the guidelines issued by the European Consortium for Accreditation and has reported on its findings, considerations and conclusions in a separate report.

The assessment of this bachelor Programme International Business is part of the cluster assessment International Business and Management Sciences. During the preparation and the site visit, the panel has discussed and taken into account the several programme assessments in the cluster.

In the run-up to the site visit, the assessment committee has studied the self-evaluation report on the programme and reviewed a sample of Integrated Projects accepted during the last two years. The committee's initial findings based on the report and its impressions on the graduation projects provided input for the discussions on site. During the visit, the committee has looked into several additional materials. Attachment 5 lists the documents that were put at disposition of the committee before and during the visit.

Given that IB is a programme in transition, the committee has focused its assessment on what is happening in the current academic year 2019-2020 taking into account the different stages of development of both the IBMS and the IB curriculum. Moreover, in elaborating its findings and considerations, the committee has taken on board the information it gathered through written materials and oral discussions and which related to both the previous phase of development and the plans for the future.

The site visit was carried out on 29-30 January 2020 according to the programme presented in attachment 2. The committee has assessed the programme in an independent manner; at the end of the visit, the chair of the assessment committee presented the initial findings of the committee to representatives of the programme and the institution.

In this document, the committee is reporting on its findings, considerations and conclusions according to the 2018 NVAO framework for extended programme assessment. A draft version of the assessment report was sent to the programme management; its reaction has led to this final version of the report.

Intended learning outcomes

The committee considers that the IB programme at THUAS has a clear profile: it stands for a combination of firm local roots and an outspoken international and intercultural dimension. The committee thinks highly of the way the unique selling points reflect the core values of the university and are shared by all stakeholders. As IB THUAS follows the national IB framework, the intended learning outcomes are up to standard in terms of domain, level and orientation. The involvement of the professional field as 'critical friend' in the design, development, delivery and evaluation of the IB programme is exemplary. According to the assessment committee, the IB programme meets this standard.

Intended learning outcomes

Standard 1: The intended learning outcomes tie in with the level and orientation of the programme; they are geared to the expectations of the professional field, the discipline, and international requirements.

Findings

Profile

The committee read in the extensive and informative self-evaluation report that the predecessor programme of the current THUAS IB was established in 1992. Over the years it has developed into a well-connected learning community that encompasses 1475 students, 65 lecturers, a large alumni network and connections with hundreds of companies around the world.

The main goal of the IB programme is to prepare students to become future-proof business professionals in an international environment by providing education that is not only based on theoretical knowledge but also practice-oriented and relevant through the development of 21st century skills. The committee noticed that there is a clear connection between the key features of the IB programme and the core values of THUAS: world citizenship, inclusiveness, internationalization and network university. For the day-to-day student and staff life, emphasizing global citizenship as a key value of THUAS means that international students at IB feel welcome and appreciated. This in turn helps the IB programme radiate the attractiveness of an international student community within the faculty and the university. The committee gathered from the discussions

that the programme is successful at concretising and implementing these values.

When preparing for the new IB curriculum, the programme has formulated a mission statement in close consultation with all stakeholders: IB THUAS is to provide curious and internationally-oriented students with the means to reach their potential as responsible business professionals and global citizens. In line with this mission, four collective ambitions were formulated as vision: graduates are ethically and morally responsible professionals, have an anchored professional business network, are highly internationalized global citizens, and are part of a robust IB learning community. The committee was informed that these four ambitions have led to the formulation of the internationalization goals of the programme. The committee's findings and considerations on these internationalization goals are discussed in its assessment report on the quality of internationalization.

There are fourteen IB programmes in the Netherlands that are following the national IB framework. Each programme has its own distinctive characteristics. The THUAS variant of the IB programme stands apart as a highly internationalized programme: the committee learned that the unique selling points of the THUAS IB programme are its high percentage of international students, its internationally diverse group of lecturers, its network of global partners and its attention to in-

ternationalization as part of the curriculum content. Furthermore, the committee gathered from the information materials and the discussions that the four above-mentioned ambitions have been taken on board when operationalizing the IB curriculum according to the new national framework and in line with the distinctive characteristics of the THUAS variant of the IB programme.

Learning outcomes

During the previous accreditation round in 2013, the then assessment panel looked at the International Business & Management Studies (IBMS) programme, which is still existing but phasing out. The current assessment committee noticed that the learning outcomes of the IBMS programme are based on the IBMS competency framework of 2010 featuring 16 competencies. The committee was provided with this competency framework and has used it as a reference when reviewing the components of the former curriculum and especially the final products of the programme (see standard 11).

The new IB THUAS programme follows the provisions of the national IB framework. This framework features 24 programme learning outcomes (PLOs). In addition to disciplinary competencies, IB students also acquire generic '21st century' skills that add value to apply for a broad range of jobs. Both IBMS competency framework and IB programme learning outcomes are listed in attachment 3 to this report.

While the national framework proposes an extensive, detailed and thoroughly validated set of learning outcomes and a shared body of knowledge and skills, in the implementation of the PLOs there is room for individual programmes to bring in their own colour, focus and didactic approach. The committee established that the IB THUAS programme has used this room to integrate issues such as global citizenship, inclusiveness, networking, challenging and achievable education and practice-oriented learning. These issues are fully in line with the educational vision of

the university and faculty, which, in turn, corresponds well with many of the principles laid out in the IB framework. Furthermore, the committee learned that the curriculum committee, which overlooked the development of the new IB curriculum, was tasked to ensure that the modules would align with the new set of PLOs, so that students would be able to reach all learning outcomes at the required level, and that there would be sufficient attention in the modules to acquiring the 21st century skills.

Professional field

The committee gathered from the information materials and the discussions that the new IB THUAS principles and curriculum have been extensively validated by representatives from the professional field, notably alumni and employers/internship providers on the Business Advisory Council (BAC). The committee had a very interesting discussion with BAC representatives during the visit and was informed that the BAC among others reviews the relevance of the IB curriculum, looks critically at the learning lines and advises on individual modules. The BAC representatives confirmed to the committee that it has made concrete suggestions to the programme management on how to make the curriculum even more future-proof. The alumni and professional field representatives appreciate the efforts of the programme to incorporate their suggestions in the modules. For instance, the fast changing world requires professionals that are versatile and able to cope with changing job market requirements; there is more attention to digital transformation and what this means for doing business; and the focus on the societal impact of doing business is becoming more important. The committee gathered from the discussion that the BAC is a staunch supporter of the IB THUAS programme.

Considerations

The committee considers that the IB programme at THUAS has a clear profile with unique selling propositions that are well-articulated. The committee thinks highly of the interrelatedness between the mission and vision of the programme

and the core values of the university. THUAS has its roots firmly anchored in the city of The Hague and is at the same time highly international. The committee appreciates that the university's outspoken ambition to be the most international university of applied sciences in the Netherlands finds a sounding board in the endeavours of the IB programme. Furthermore, the committee welcomes the efforts of the management to extensively motivate its mission and vision, and to embed these ambitions in the programme it delivers.

In addition to the comprehensive quality of the strategic documents, the committee thinks highly of the way in which the unique selling propositions of the programme are incorporated in the minds of the different stakeholders. According to the committee, there is a common understanding among students, staff, alumni and professional field about the features that set 'their' IB programme apart from other similar programmes in the Netherlands. Moreover, its firm local roots and its outspoken international dimension are definitely the core elements of what IB THUAS stands for.

Having established that the 'old' IBMS programme follows the IBMS competency framework and the 'new' IB programme takes over the entire set of nationally validated intended learning outcomes, the committee considers that the envisaged final qualifications are formulated appropriately in terms of domain (international business), level (bachelor) and orientation (professional).

Finally, the committee thinks highly of the involvement of the professional field in the design, development, delivery and evaluation of the IB programme. This involvement takes shape both formally through the Business Advisory Council and informally through contacts and activities with individual companies, employers, placement providers and alumni. According to the committee, the BAC is a very useful 'critical friend' for the programme.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee concludes that IB THUAS **meets** standard 1, intended learning outcomes.

Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum of the IB programme is sound: the module contents are relevant and their link to the overall programme and its competencies / learning outcomes are clear. The committee thinks highly of the professional orientation of the programme. The educational principles underpinning the curriculum are developed nicely on paper and implemented successfully in the day-to-day delivery of the programme. The number and composition of the student body, as well as the relevant teaching formats allow students to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in a truly international and intercultural setting. This international and intercultural component constitutes a clear asset to the programme and requires a common language of instruction. In addition to these positive elements, the committee has identified three issues the programme is advised to address: the research orientation can be enhanced in the curriculum; student complaints about organisational issues and communication require structural attention; and the considerable differences in educational background among incoming students need continuous attention. According to the assessment committee, the IB programme meets all curriculum-related standards.

Orientation

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

Findings

The committee gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that the IB programme is going to lengths to have its students acquire appropriate research skills and professional skills. An important means in this respect is the interaction with both the professional field and the THUAS research platform The Next Economy.

The committee noticed that the link with the professional field is strong and takes different forms: IB staff members have contacts with industry and/or are part-time employed in industry, the BAC provides advice and introduces students and staff to companies and opportunities, and recently the programme started developing projects with business partners in which students can apply both research skills and take care of marketing, sales, finance and operations.

Furthermore, IB THUAS is member of several consortia, networks of likeminded business schools and universities: these networks constitute the basis for many student and staff exchange, and offer opportunities for curriculum development.

In terms of research, lecturers, students and external parties can participate in four so-called THUAS research platforms, notably the platform on the Next Economy. The committee was informed that several lecturers are conducting research within this network and in other research groups together with professors (*lectoren*). Furthermore, students acquire research skills in integrated projects: IP5 for instance is a practice-based research assignment where students search and find a sponsor company that is willing to host and facilitate their research project. In the IP8 research project students demonstrate the research skills they have acquired throughout the programme.

Considerations

The committee considers that the professional orientation is very well established within the IB programme. Students have many opportunities in the curriculum to train their professional skills either directly with companies through internships and business projects or indirectly through assignments with a considerable professional field-related component. According to the committee, this is a particularly strong element of the programme. As will be elaborated on in standard 11, this comprehensive attention to professional skills leads to interns being offered contracts by

companies and graduates finding suitable employment.

As far as the research component is concerned, the committee considers that students are acquiring the necessary research skills in the curriculum and can demonstrate the acquired research competences in the FP8 project. However, the research component is not yet very strongly developed in the curriculum. The committee acknowledges that this issue is on the agenda of the programme: increasing the exposure of lecturers to research and the plans for an IB-dedicated professorship are certainly useful pathways that the committee endorses. However, the committee encourages the programme to pay attention to other aspects as well. For instance, the committee's findings on the quality of the FP8 projects (see standard 11) show that the Applied Research line requires more challenging contents. Moreover, the committee fully supports the recommendation of the BAC to further increase the link with professional practice by creating sustainable partnerships based on research.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee concludes that IB THUAS **meets** standard 2, curriculum orientation.

Content

Standard 3: The contents of the curriculum enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Findings

The THUAS IB programme is a four-year full-time programme, which amounts to 240 ECTS. Students enrolled prior to 2018-2019 follow the old IBMS curriculum, while students who started as of September 2018 are on the new curriculum according to the national IB framework. At the time of this assessment visit, early 2020, the two curricula still exist next to each other. Students with the appropriate educational background (a Dutch VWO diploma or an international equivalent) can since 2018 opt for a three-year study programme

(TYP) of 180 EC leading to the same exit qualifications. From 2010-2018 students could opt for a study programme of 240 EC in three years. TYP students have a stronger academic background and more advanced English language skills. Therefore their start level is higher and they follow more advanced modules right from the start. The current first-year IB TYP students combine modules of the new IB programme with main phase modules of the old curriculum. An overview of the curriculum situation in the academic year 2019-2020 is provided in attachment 4 to this report.

IBMS curriculum

Students who enrolled before September 2018 are following the old IBMS curriculum, which is divided in five main areas: Business Environment, Research, Finance & Business Analytics, Business Communication & Development, and Learning Skills. The committee learned that the IBMS programme focuses on international marketing and finance. There is a strong vertical cohesion across the IBMS curriculum and the level to be achieved for each competency is gradually increasing. Moreover, the curriculum features a balanced combination of theory and practice, which is reflected in the didactical approach in the modules and projects. IBMS students carry out an independent research project (IP8) during the last semester: in this project the acquired knowledge and competencies converge, and students demonstrate that they have the capacity to carry out independent research.

IB curriculum

In the new IB curriculum the IBMS competence-oriented approach has been replaced by a set of 24 programme learning outcomes (PLOs) and a stronger focus on 21st century skills. The committee noticed in the curriculum overview that there is a considerable overlap in the names of the respective IBMS and IB modules, but learned that the contents have been adjusted to fit the IB framework. Specific features of both curricula are the extensive mandatory exchange study period abroad (30 EC), the mandatory internship (27 EC)

and the IP8 research project (20 EC). The new IB curriculum furthermore offers more flexibility and choice through specialisations, minors and electives.

From old to new curriculum

At the time of the site visit, IBMS students were mainly following courses in the third and fourth year, while the IB students were either in their first or third semester. The committee understood from the information materials and the discussions on site that the design of the new curriculum is taking a lot of time and is involving many staff members. Turning the IB framework into the IB THUAS curriculum, so called 'PLO owners' were appointed to operationalise the PLO descriptions in more concrete descriptions of knowledge, skills and attitudes that corresponded with the three respective levels of the IB framework.

The committee noticed that compared to the IB framework, the learning outcomes at IB THUAS are clustered differently: based on their interconnectedness, similarities and weight in the programme, the IB curriculum has the following learning lines: (i) International business knowledge; (ii) International business environment; (iii) Applied research; (iv) Cross cultural collaboration; (v) Personal and professional development; (vi) Integrated learning line. Over the course of four years, students progress gradually from level 1 to level 3 for each of the required PLOs. In order to monitor the coherence of the curriculum, the programme has developed a matrix showing how each course contributes to the acquisition of relevant PLOs and at what level. The committee has studied the matrix and found it to be a comprehensive and useful document.

Considerations

The committee considers that the quality of both IBMS and IB curricula is sound. The module contents are relevant and their link towards the bigger programme and its competency framework (IBMS) and learning outcomes (IB) is clear. The appointment of 'PLO owners' forms a good safeguard for a further adequate development of the

third and fourth year modules. According to the committee, the IB THUAS profile and unique selling points are properly addressed in the curriculum, notably but not exclusively through the mandatory internship and mandatory study period abroad.

During the visit and across standards, the committee has identified a number of areas in the programme that are less well developed and require attention such as enhancing the research orientation or improving organisational and communication issues. The current transition phase from IBMS to IB constitutes an excellent opportunity to look into these issues and adjust the curriculum accordingly. In this regard, the committee welcomes the increased attention of the IB programme to applied research and to integrated interdisciplinary projects.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee concludes that IB THUAS **meets** standard 3, curriculum content.

Learning Environment

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

Findings

Didactic concept

The programme aims to develop IB students in three ways: as international business professionals, as global citizens in a diverse world and as responsible and curious individuals. The committee understood that in order to achieve this, the programme requires a particular set of educational principles and teaching formats. The committee learned that the IB programme is based on three educational principles, which have been motivated extensively and properly in the self-evaluation report: (i) applied business learning in an international setting; (ii) intercultural collaborative learning; and (iii) responsible and critical learning.

These principles are operationalised in the respective modules through a range of activating and diverse teaching formats, such as workshops, integrated projects, company projects, blended learning, self-study assignments, individual and group work. Further to what will be described in more detail under standard 10, the committee noticed that assessment is aligned with these educational principles and teaching formats.

During the visit, students indicated to the committee that these principles and formats are indeed followed and implemented in the day-to-day reality of the courses. They appreciate in particular that lecturers divide the student groups in such a way that each group is geographically and culturally diverse. Moreover, the assignments often have a professional dimension and there is plenty of attention to feedback.

The committee gathered from the information materials that the specific description of the didactic concept is targeted towards the new IB curriculum. However, students and staff provided several examples illustrating that these principles were already 'mainstream' in the IBMS programme. One new development is the specific build-up of the curriculum structure in such a way that the module contents per semester link even better than before to the integrated project in that same period.

Feasibility

The committee was informed that in the run-up to the IB curriculum, the programme has looked into the stumbling blocks of the IBMS curriculum in an attempt to increase the feasibility of the courses and the overall programme. This has led to a number of changes in the curriculum structure, including less but bigger courses: having fewer modules at the same time in turn allows for a better scheduling of assignments/deadlines and assessments. The committee welcomes these initiatives and encourages the programme management to continue its efforts towards more integrated multidisciplinary courses of 6 ECTS.

Students indicated in their video and written contribution to the self-evaluation, as well as during the visit that they very much appreciate the learning environment. However, there are two elements that offer room for improvement: the organisation of the programme and the communication. While students acknowledge that the programme is in transition and that staff is going to lengths to support students, there are many small issues on individual course level that taken together have an impact on the feasibility of the programme. Students mentioned to the committee that they would appreciate if the course evaluation forms would also feature a section on general organisation / communication in which students could voice their concerns. The committee endorses this suggestion.

Language of instruction

In so far as the language of instruction is concerned, the committee was informed that IB and IBMS have an English name and are taught in English because students are educated for positions in international companies and the international labour market, with a focus on international business awareness and intercultural competencies. According to the programme, this can only take place in an international classroom. The committee agrees to this reasoning: teaching this particular discipline (international business) in an international and intercultural way can only be realised successfully through a language of instruction that is shared by a wide range of geographically and culturally different people.

Considerations

The committee thinks highly of the learning environment of the programme: the educational principles are developed nicely on paper and are implemented successfully in the day-to-day delivery of the programme. The committee endorses the enthusiasm of students for the teaching formats which allow to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in a truly international and intercultural setting. This international and intercultural

setting is a clear asset to the programme according to the committee and requires a common language of instruction.

The committee appreciates the programme's efforts regarding the feasibility of the curriculum and recommends the further transition to fewer but bigger courses with a greater focus on multidisciplinary and complex problem solving. The committee subscribes to the overall appreciation of the students for the learning environment and endorses their suggestion to monitor more structurally the small organisational and communication issues.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee concludes that IB THUAS **meets** standard 4, learning environment.

Intake

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

Findings

Intake and composition

The committee learned that in the academic year 2019-2020, 1475 students are enrolled in the programme, representing 51 nationalities. Based on detailed information on student intake between 2016 and 2019, the committee noticed that in this period the yearly intake has grown by 20% from 453 to 540 students.

The share of international students, i.e. students with a foreign diploma, has increased at a similar rate, from 45% to 53%. The number of students on the three-year study programme with 180 EC has grown, and also their share of the total intake has risen from 8% to 10%. The committee noticed furthermore that the four-year programme now attracts an almost equal number of international and Dutch students – before local students were in the majority - while four out of five TYP students are international. The committee learned that the programme is satisfied with the current

intake, both in terms of numbers and composition. If anything, the programme would like to reach more Dutch students on TYP.

Finally, the committee was informed that the programme also attracts students with Dutch roots but an international upbringing and/or Diploma; similarly, students with a diploma from an International School in the Netherlands find their way to the IB programme, as well.

Admission requirements

The committee noticed that the admission requirements are clearly stipulated: Dutch students should have a regular secondary school diploma, while international students who have not completed programmes in English should also demonstrate their language proficiency through a certificate. Students applying for the TYP should have a vwo diploma or international equivalent; the English language requirements apply as well.

Every spring and summer, the programme offers different intake activities for local and international students. During the Matching Days students take two intake tests on English and Mathematics and discuss their non-binding results afterwards in a personal interview with an IB lecturer who is also member of the first-year mentor team. Dutch students indicated to the committee that they appreciated in particular the atmosphere during the Open Days and trial study days; for a few students who were still in doubt what and where to study, the atmosphere during these public events made them decide to enrol at IB THUAS. International students mentioned that they very much liked the personal attention after the intake tests: this first contact with the programme and face-to-face interaction with staff members lowered the barrier for integration during the first days of the academic year.

Level playing field

The committee discussed in several sessions the qualifications and the needs of incoming students. While there is an improvement in the overall performance of students – less drop-outs,

more students with positive Binding Study Advise, greater share of students finishing the programme in five years – the number and share of students that drop out remains considerable. The committee understood that there are several reasons that may cause this drop-out, but important factors are a gap in academic knowledge, the lack of necessary study skills, and insufficient grounding in mathematics and/or English. The programme indicated that it is taking several measures to level the mathematics and English skills, and to increase study skills. However, the programme has an open enrolment and the requirements in terms of English languages skills are minimal. The committee welcomes these support initiatives and encourages the management to look for measures that bring the highly diverse student intake as soon as possible on a more comparable level playing field.

Considerations

The committee considers that the current size and composition of the student cohorts allows the

programme to deliver its curriculum in an international and intercultural way. The information activities are strong and relevant as students emphasised that the reality of the IB programme matches the expectations and ambitions that were raised prior to enrolment.

The committee acknowledges that the differences in educational background among students are considerable. It welcomes the attention of the programme to this issue and encourages the management to keep considering how it can streamline its efforts in order to bring all students on a more comparable level and then move on together.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee concludes that IB THUAS **meets** standard 5, intake.

Staff

The committee is impressed by the quality and motivation of the staff and thinks highly of their professionalisation opportunities. It fully understands that students are very satisfied with the knowledge, skills and availability of the staff who contribute to a welcoming learning environment. Currently, staff numbers are not in relation to the IB student population. The management is aware of this situation and is taking action. According to the assessment committee, the IB programme meets this standard.

Staff

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

Findings

According to the information materials, there are 63 staff in IB: about two thirds are non-Dutch representing 30 countries. Almost all Dutch staff have international experience. Moreover, several staff maintain a close relationship with the professional field and with business developments. It is THUAS policy that staff have a teaching and assessment qualification; newly hired lecturers should start this training within their first year of appointment.

The student staff ratio stands at 30:1, which is considerable. The committee was informed that this ratio used to be lower but has increased because the number of students has grown faster than the number of staff. Both faculty and programme management indicated that they are aware of the issue, have hired a number of additional staff recently and will continue to recruit more staff in the near future. While it appreciates the additional hires, the committee thinks that the programme could be more proactive in recruiting staff, e.g. by identifying beforehand which profiles are needed. This approach will become all the more important when IB students enter the third and fourth year of the new curriculum: new minors and specialisations will require specific expertise that may not be available among the existing staff.

The committee gathered from the information materials, including a staff overview, that teachers

are competent in terms of domain expertise and have outstanding didactic qualities. Students confirmed both findings on knowledge and didactics indicating that they find the lecturers to be open and helpful. The committee, moreover, appreciates that both university and faculty promote staff development and professionalisation: there are many opportunities for staff interaction with the work field, with international partners, and with professors in the THUAS research groups.

Although the committee has only met a small sample of lecturers and staff, the interviewees were invariably motivated for the job and enthusiastic about the students. Some newly hired staff with a professional background in business emphasised during the discussion that they are well catered for within the programme; they are happy to be part of the intercultural and international IB community of students and staff.

Considerations

The committee is impressed by the quality and the motivation of the staff and thinks highly of their professionalisation opportunities. It fully understands that students are very satisfied with the knowledge, skills and availability of the staff who contribute to a welcoming learning environment.

Currently, the number of staff is not in relation to the number of students. The management is aware of this situation and is taking action. The committee endorses the efforts of the management in this regard and encourages them to be even more proactive in recruiting new staff in view of the growing student numbers and the

specific expertise that will be needed for the new IB modules and specialisations.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee concludes that IB THUAS **meets** standard 6, staff.

Facilities and Tutoring

The accommodation and material facilities are satisfactory at this moment and will become state-of-the-art after the partial renovation of the main campus building. The committee thinks highly of the way in which dedicated IB mentors provide tailored support to students throughout the entire programme. According to the assessment committee, the IB programme meets both standards.

Facilities

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

Findings

The IB programme is situated in the BFM Faculty on the main campus of THUAS, which is conveniently located next to the railway station Den Haag Hollands Spoor. The main campus building offers class-rooms with contemporary equipment (smartboards, beamers, etc.), PC rooms, lecture halls and a large aula. There are also specific facilities such as the Speakers' Corner or the Innovation Playground, which offers the facilities and equipment to host collaborative online international learning (COIL) lessons organised together with partner schools. The main campus building is in the process of partial renovation in order to adjust it to the growing student numbers, modern IT requirements and the educational vision of the university. During its visit, the committee was shown around the building and learned about the scope and impact of the renovations. Students indicated to the committee that they appreciate the material facilities on campus.

Considerations

The committee considers that the accommodation and material facilities are satisfactory at this moment and will become state-of-the-art after the partial renovation of the main campus building. Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee concludes that IB THUAS **meets** standard 7, facilities.

Tutoring

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

Findings

The committee learned about the extensive mentoring scheme IB has developed in order to support students in their progress, professional orientation and personal development. Students indicated to the committee that they are very satisfied with the quality and availability of the mentors, not only during the first year of the programme but throughout the curriculum. Mentors are very often the first contact point of students; if students need support in the personal sphere, then the mentor will refer the student to the student counsellor for specialised help.

The committee understood from the information materials and the discussions that mentors play a particularly important role in the life of the IB student during the first year. At the start of the academic year, a mentor is assigned to every group of 25-30 first year students. There are weekly group meetings on topics such as motivation and learning to learn, as well as four individual coaching sessions per year. Given the diverse student population, mentors also facilitate collaborative learning among students. In the main phase, students are assigned another mentor for the rest of the programme. Together students and mentor look not only at study progress but also to the orientation of the student on the professional world and prepare students for key components of the curriculum, such as the study abroad pe-

riod and the internship. Students who do not finish the programme within a reasonable period are offered additional coaching on study planning.

Considerations

The committee thinks highly of the way in which the IB programme coaches its students throughout the entire programme. Students are satisfied about the professionalism of the mentors and the tailored support they receive in the respective phases of their study. According to the commit-

tee, the programme's mentoring is a good example of how core values of a programme and a university can be implemented in a concrete way.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee concludes that IB THUAS **meets** standard 8, tutoring.

Quality assurance

The recently established Quality Management System is based on sound principles and is a work in progress: the first results seem to indicate that the system is useful. The committee endorses the plans for more involvement of students and alumni, in addition to the adequate role of staff and committees. In order to strengthen the quality culture among all IB THUAS stakeholders, the management is recommended to implement the QMS results swiftly and communicate systematically on the decisions and development initiatives undertaken. According to the assessment committee, the IB programme meets this standard.

Quality assurance

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

Findings

The committee learned that in 2017, the IB programme designed a Quality Management System (QMS), which is based on the Plan Do Check Act cycle. According to this system, quality is measured by four indicators: study success, student satisfaction, bachelor level and connection to the professional field. Quantitative targets are defined for study success and student satisfaction, while the bachelor level and the connection to the professional field are qualitatively measured.

The committee noticed in the information materials that roles and responsibilities are well defined. Both staff (lecturers, module coordinators, year coordinators) and committees (curriculum committee, Degree Programme Advisory Council (OC), Exam Board, Business Advisory Council) play an important role in gathering input and analysing the results. Examples of (ways to gather) input for the QMS are class representative meetings, surveys, semester reviews, semester reports with

information on the success rate of each exam. If results indicate that improvements to a module should be made, suggestions and improvements will be laid down in an Improvement Action Plan. The adjusted module will be evaluated the following year. The programme management indicated to the committee that the QMS has already led to an improvement of study success.

Considerations

According to the committee, the recently established QMS is a work in progress: the first results seem to indicate that the system is useful. The committee considers that the foundations of the system look good and foresee a considerable role for staff members. It endorses the plans announced in the self-evaluation report, such as a stronger involvement of students and alumni. In order to strengthen the quality culture among all IB THUAS stakeholders, the management is advised to implement the QMS results swiftly.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee concludes that IB THUAS **meets** standard 9, quality assurance.

Student assessment

The policies and principles underlying student assessment in the IB THUAS programme are robust. Assessment is based on sound educational and assessment concepts, which are implemented properly in the day-to-day reality of the IB programme. The committee thinks highly of the way in which the assessment of the IP8 projects is organised. Moreover, the Examination Board and the Assessment Committee are on top of their tasks: the quality of assessment is safe in the hands of these committees and their members, which constitute a kind of institutional memory with regard to assessment at times of curriculum developments. In addition to the many positive elements, the committee considers that there is some room for improvement, notably with regard to the qualitative motivation of scores in assessment forms. According to the assessment committee, the IB programme meets this standard.

Student assessment

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

Findings

Assessment system

The committee learned that the assessment system of the IB programme is strongly embedded in the policy and provisions of both university and faculty. For instance, the IB programme is using the assessment cycle specified in the Assessment Handbook of the faculty. According to the extensive description in the self-evaluation, this assessment cycle does not only focus on the entire logistical testing process from designing to administering the test, but also serves as a check mechanism whether the quality of the testing and the assessment is adequate.

Furthermore, the committee noticed that there is a clear link between the assessment policy of the IB programme and the educational principles, which have been described in standard 4. In addition to a number of general assessment principles, such as constructive alignment and transparent testing, the IB programme features principles such as integrated testing, professional field-related assessment methods, inclusive and accessible testing to live up to its educational approaches of applied business learning and international cultural learning. Moreover, the programme achieves responsible critical learning by paying ample attention to feedback and activating tests.

The committee gathered from the discussions that teaching staff at IB has sufficient expertise in assessment or is strongly encouraged to acquire the necessary skills, e.g. through a university teaching qualification (BKO) and or a basic examination qualification (BKE). In view of the growing student numbers, the IB programme is exploring the possibility of digital testing.

Course assessment

The committee gathered from the discussions with students, alumni and staff that the above-mentioned assessment principles are rigorously applied in the IB programme. Students indicated to the committee that they are aware of the assessment principles, that they appreciate the variety of testing formats and that, in general, they are adequately informed about the assessment criteria. Students nonetheless mentioned, both in their written contribution to the self-evaluation report and to the committee during the visit, that the communication on assignments and exams could be improved: in certain cases students do not exactly know what is expected from them and what will be tested. The committee gathered from the discussion with students that the core of the problem lays in the communication flaws rather than the assessment provisions.

Before the site visit, the committee reviewed a sample of IP8 projects and their assessment forms. Moreover, during the visit, the committee

looked into a number of Internship reports, Strategic Management assignments and assessments in a range of other course dossiers. Based on this sample review, the committee gathered that course assessment in both the old IBMS and the new IB programme follows the principles set out in the information materials and stipulated in the policy documents of the university, faculty and programme. While most information was available, the committee found that the assessment forms motivating the scores of the Strategic Management assignment were missing. Moreover, the committee found that often the written feedback on the assessment form of the Internship reports was rather limited. In these cases, it was not always clear why the student had been given a certain score. In view of transparency of information and accountability towards students and internal and external reviewers, the committee urges the programme management to ensure that a paper/digital trail is available on all assessments of all courses, and that each score is motivated through some insightful feedback.

Furthermore, the committee gathered from its own review and the description in the self-evaluation report that the programme takes the assessment of the IP8 research projects very seriously: over the years, the programme has developed an extensive assessment process and a comprehensive evaluation form to ensure that the thesis assessment is done properly. After an initial check by the coach, the two examiners each score the thesis on seven components. The thesis accounts for 70% of the final grade. If this score is beyond the threshold, then the student defends the thesis in a presentation. This defence, which represents 30% of the final grade, is scored on ten components relating to knowledge and insight and to presentation. Furthermore, the committee learned that the evaluation form is backed up by a very extensive assessment rubric, with even more detailed criteria for the seven thesis-related components.

Comparing its own findings on the quality of the IP8 projects with the scores and justification of

the grades in the assessment form, the committee found that it agreed in almost all cases to the scores of the examiners; these which obtained a relatively high score were indeed of better quality than those with a lower grade. In this regard, the committee appreciates the extensive work undertaken by the IP8 committee to ensure the calibration of the assessments.

The committee did notice though that the written justifications on the assessment form were rather limited, certainly in comparison to the extensive quantitative scoring. While alumni and staff/examiners indicated that students get comprehensive oral feedback right after the defence, the committee thinks that some more qualitative feedback would be helpful for students, but also to justify the score for external quality assurance purposes (such as its own thesis review). Such written feedback is all the more important when examiners decide to give a score on the extremes of the continuum: in fact, the sample contained two IP8 projects which the committee found marginally sufficient. The examiners had also given a low score on both projects; however, the committee could not establish from the written justification why the examiners had decided to grant the theses a pass.

Assessment quality

During the visit, the committee spoke to representatives of the Exam Board and the Assessment Committee. It gathered from the discussion that the Exam Board fulfils all its legal duties and is supported in this by the Assessment Committee. Moreover, both bodies dedicate much time to quality controlling samples of course assessments and thesis evaluations. During the discussion, the interviewees mentioned that both committees currently have a lot of work because of the ongoing curriculum developments and the fact that IBMS and IB students follow different curricula with similar yet not identical arrangements.

The committee furthermore noticed that some of the issues it had identified with regard to the end

level products (see standard 11) and the availability of paper trails had also been noticed by the Exam Board and reported to the management. Given the work overload among staff, however, several recommendations of the Exam Board had not yet been taken up.

Considerations

The committee considers that policies and principles underlying student assessment in the IB THUAS programme are robust. Assessment is based on sound educational and assessment concepts, which are implemented properly in the day-to-day reality of the IB programme. The committee thinks highly of the way in which the assessment of the IP8 projects is organised, the scores are calibrated among all examiners, and its quality is safeguarded through a range of internal and external checks and benchmarks. Moreover, the committee thinks the IP8 assessment form is relevant as it measures the appropriate criteria in extensive depth through the assessment matrix and the form allows for written qualitative feedback to underpin the respective scores. Moreover, the committee considers that the Examination Board and the Assessment Committee are on top

of their tasks and that the individual members have the needed experience. According to the committee, the quality of assessment is safe in the hands of these committees and their members, which constitute a kind of institutional memory with regard to assessment at times of curriculum developments.

Based on its own sample review of tests and the discussions on site, the committee considers that in addition to the many positive elements on student assessment, there is also room for improvement on two accounts: the programme could increase the transparency of assessment through a document trail on all course assessments and by providing qualitative feedback in the assessment forms to underpin the scores. Moreover, the recommendations of the Exam Board need to be followed up more systematically.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee concludes that IB THUAS **meets** standard 10, student assessment.

Achieved learning outcomes

It is the explicit ambition of the programme to provide internationally-oriented students with the means to reach their potential as global citizens and responsible business professionals. The sample of IP8 research projects and internship reports (reflecting the IBMS competencies) as well as the discussions with students, graduates and employers confirm according to the committee that the IB programme is succeeding in this ambition. Moreover, it is to the credit of the programme that all graduates find relevant positions on the labour market or pursue a master's programme. While the quality of the final products is sufficient, the committee thinks that students can be challenged more in the IP8 project to demonstrate the acquired research skills. According to the assessment committee, the IB programme meets this standard.

Achieved learning outcomes

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

Findings

End level

In order to establish whether students achieve the intended learning outcomes, the committee has reviewed a representative sample of graduation products from 15 students who graduated in the academic years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 from both the 3 Year Programme and the 4 Year Programme. These students were all enrolled in the IBMS programme and therefore had to demonstrate the achievement of seven generic and nine professional competencies.

The committee has discussed at length both before and during the site visit the end level of the IBMS/IB programme. The discussion focused first and foremost on getting a clear picture of the (combination of) elements that are used to establish whether students have indeed reached all competencies at bachelor level. Before the site visit, the committee was provided with 15 IP8 projects, integrated projects of 20 ECTS in which students research a business problem with an international dimension for a sponsor company. While the committee noticed that the IP8 project constitutes an important component of the programme, the project does not address the entire set of competencies. Following its request for clarification, the committee received a sample of Internship reports as well as graded assignments

related to the Strategic Management course, which together covered the missing competencies, except for general competency 7 (ethical and corporate responsibility), which is assessed during the Study Abroad semester. Especially the Internship reports provided the committee with a more complete picture of the achieved end level of the students, while the Strategic Management assignments contributed in a more modest way.

While the self-evaluation report was very clear on how the new IB programme intends to measure the realisation of the intended learning outcomes, the committee was surprised to notice that not all representatives of the programme shared the same understanding of which products serve to establish that all IBMS competencies have been reached.

The Curriculum Committee and the Exam Board, however, were very knowledgeable in this respect. The assessment committee, therefore, strongly advises the programme management to look into this issue and make clear to all people involved in the programme which set of exams/products constitutes the basis for measuring whether (IBMS) students have achieved the required competencies at bachelor level. This recommendation is all the more urgent given that there are two more IBMS cohorts that still need to graduate, in 2020 and 2021. Furthermore, the assessment committee strongly advises the pro-

programme to make sure that also general competency 7 is always achieved at end level 3 (test matrix mentions level 2/3).

Quality of final products

Before and during the site visit, the committee has reviewed three products (IP research projects, Internship reports and Strategic Management assignments) from the same fifteen students, which are representative for the entire group of graduates in terms of their final grade.

With regard to the IP8 research projects, the committee found that the projects all fulfilled the minimum criteria of what one would expect of a professionally oriented final product at bachelor level. The committee considered the quality of two IP8 projects only marginally sufficient. This was in line with the assessment given by the assessors. The committee was of the opinion that, overall, students definitely demonstrate a sufficient level of research skills in their projects. However, the committee found the implementation and the description of the research work rather basic. Students often apply in a quite fixed way a few theoretical insights to a concrete case, but often do not take a distance from the initial problem. According to the committee, the IP8 projects could have benefitted from more creativity and a more critical approach, also towards the solutions proposed. In general, the committee deems the written English proficiency reflected by the IP8 projects to be sufficient. In some cases, however, the written English level proficiency was rather weak, as was also noticed by the IP8 assessors.

The committee noticed that the internship reports allowed students to demonstrate a different set of competencies, which are complementary to the research project. Overall, the committee was satisfied by the quality of the sample of Internship reports it has reviewed and found that their quality was sufficient. In most cases, the quality of the internship reports was in line with the performance of the individual student on the research project. The committee did notice, however, that

some students were somewhat more proficient in the internship report than in the research project. The Strategic Management assignments all had a predefined structure with a range of tools that students had to apply for their analysis. According to the committee, the expected level of work adequately corresponds to the resolution of a basic case study in strategy. Reviewing the assignments, the committee found that students were not always triggered to fully demonstrate their problem solving competences. Hence, the committee feels that as part of the assignment students should be required to better justify the use and relevance of the tools they have chosen to solve a given problem. In line with its findings on the two other final products, the committee found that the overall quality of the assignments was sufficient and that in most cases the individual quality of the assignment was in line with the overall performance of the individual student. The committee also noticed that in a few cases the quality of the Strategic Management assignment was better than the research project.

Alumni

In addition to verifying the quality of the end level products, the career of bachelor graduates is another way to establish whether students achieve the intended learning outcomes upon completion of the programme. The committee gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that the programme prepares students very well for a career in international business: about 60% of the graduates are offered a job with their internship company and can start right after graduation; another 20% finds a job that is commensurate with their domain and level of education; and the remaining 20% goes on to study a master's programme.

This picture was confirmed by the Business Advisory Council whose representatives emphasised that, as internship providers and employers, they are particularly satisfied with the professional skills of the IBMS/IB students / graduates. Students and alumni moreover were very positive on their ability to pursue a professional career upon

graduation. Asked what their plans for the short-term future were, most final-year students indicated that they would first look for a job and not pursue a master programme right away. This choice was based on the fact that they had enrolled on the IB programme with the ambition to find an attractive job and pursue an international career. They were grateful that the programme had prepared them well for this particular goal and now wanted to realise their initial ambition and become international business professionals. Several students, however, indicated that in the long run, after a few years of professional experience, they might take an MBA programme. The committee understood from the BAC representatives that this is indeed a relevant and realistic pathway for IB graduates.

The committee noticed that several alumni have good contacts to the IB programme and that some alumni are on the Business Advisory Council. Moreover, the programme has an alumni network through LinkedIn, collects information on the professional whereabouts of its graduates, intends to collect more data and manage these more extensively as an additional source of information and networking. The committee welcomes this attention to alumni and thinks that the programme is making good use of its graduates. However, the committee did not find any specific information on the IB/IBMS students that move on to a master's programme. It suggests the programme to also look into this group of graduates and find out what they consider the strengths and weaknesses of the programme as preparation for an academic trajectory.

Considerations

The achievement of the intended learning outcomes is established by looking at the quality of the final exams and at the careers young graduates pursue after their studies. Based on the sample it reviewed, the committee considers that students who finish the programme have indeed achieved the set of specific and generic competencies of the IBMS profile. Moreover, it is to the

credit of the programme that graduates are successful in finding relevant positions on the labour market or proceed to a master's programme. The committee therefore considers that the IB programme meets the criteria of this standard.

However, the committee has identified two points of improvement with regard to the establishment of the programme's end level. First, the committee was surprised to notice that it was not clear to everyone involved in the programme which products serve to establish that all IBMS competencies have been reached. Hence the committee recommends the programme management to ensure that it is clear to everyone which set of exams/products constitutes the basis for measuring whether (IBMS) students have achieved the required competencies at bachelor level. In this regard, the programme may want to have less but more integrated assignments in which students demonstrate that they have achieved all programme learning outcomes.

Secondly, the committee considers that the quality of the IP8 research projects is overall sufficient, but that they could be stronger. According to the committee, the current curriculum redesign offers a good opportunity for the programme to review the modules that prepare students for the research project; the IP8 project itself in turn could challenge students more to be critical about the business problem they address, the research methods they adopt for the case, and the solution they propose for the problem.

In view of the two above-mentioned recommendations, the programme may also want to collect information from those bachelor graduates who proceed to a master programme. Their impressions on the strengths and weaknesses of the IB programme as preparation for an academic trajectory are relevant to adjust where necessary the quality of the academic skills / research methodology components of the curriculum and the IP research projects.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee concludes that the IB THUAS programme **meets** standard 11, achieved learning outcomes.

Attachments

Attachment 1 Assessment committee

Drs. Mariëlle Klerks

Committee chair on behalf of AeQui and CeQulnt certified auditor

Dr. Gerry Geitz

Director Education and Research, NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences Leeuwarden

Dr. Babak Mehmenpazir

Vice Dean strategic management and international accreditations, EM Strasbourg Business School, France

Prof. dr. Natalia Ribberink

Professor Foreign Trade and International Management, Hamburg University of Applied Science, Germany

Joris Hahn BSc

Master student Spatial Transport & Environmental Economics, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Mark Delmartino MA

NVAO-certified committee secretary and CeQulnt certified auditor.

All committee members and the secretary signed a declaration of independence and confidentiality, which were submitted to NVAO.

Attachment 2 Site visit programme

Venue: Rooms Pressure Cooker and World Room
The Hague University of Applied Sciences

Wednesday 29 January 2020

12.30 Arrival committee, preparatory meeting and lunch
14.00 Welcome by programme manager
14.15 Guided tour with presentations at information market
15.00 Round table discussion with student community and IB network
16.30 Meeting with Business Advisory Council and alumni
17.30 Meeting with Faculty & Programme Management
18.15 End of day 1

Thursday 30 January 2020

09.00 Internal committee meeting & open consultation hour
10.00 Meeting with programme management
10.45 Meeting with lecturers
12.00 Internal meeting and lunch
13.00 Meeting on international activities
13.45 Meeting with students
15.00 Internal committee meeting
15.30 Meeting with Exam, Assessment, Curriculum, Thesis committees
16.30 Internal committee meeting
18.00 Feedback to management
18.30 End of site visit

A list of interviewees is available

Attachment 3 Final qualifications

The International Business programme has 24 Programme Learning Outcomes (PLO), clustered around 4 domains: Ways of Thinking (WT), Ways of Working (WW), Living in the World (LW), and Tools for Working and Management (TWM).

Critical Thinking Level 3	WT1	Use the process of thoughtful evaluation to deliberately formulate a reasonable conclusion
Innovation & Creativity Level 3	WT2	Create innovative ideas in a changing business environment systematically
International Business Awareness Level 3	WT3	Analyse patterns in global macro-economic factors and policies that drive international trade and business development
International Business Communication Level 3	WW4	Communicate (business) messages effectively and persuasively using advanced English to an (un)informed audience
	WW5	Optional: Use one or two additional languages to facilitate international business
Collaboration Level 3	WW6	Collaborate effectively with different kinds of stakeholders, in different cultural, organisational and political landscapes to contribute to achieving agreed goals.
Management of Information as digital citizen Level 3	WW7	Produce management information from various data sources in an international business environment.
Personal & Professional Development Level 3	LW8	Express reflections on his personal and professional development with the aim of personal growth
	LW9	Respond appropriately to an unfamiliar, or unexpectedly changing, business environment
Ethical & Social Responsibility Level 3	LW10	Formulate one's own position concerning ethical and social responsibility in a professional environment
Intercultural Proficiency Level 3	LW11	Mitigate the pitfalls of cultural differences in business and social contexts
	LW12	Display willingness to work with people from other cultures and to work in countries with different cultural backgrounds
	LW13	Use appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication in an intercultural setting.
	LW14	Assess the effect of cultural differences upon organizational behaviour and strategic choices
Marketing & Sales Level 2 (minimum)	TWM15	Develop a well-founded marketing plan to support the creation of value for international customers
	TWM16	Use appropriate sales techniques in support of durable customer relationships
	TWM17	Incorporate developments of the digital landscape in a marketing strategy
Finance & Accounting Level 2 (minimum)	TWM18	Evaluate financial performance of the organisation from different stakeholders' perspectives
	TWM19	Recommend financing possibilities in a dynamic international environment
Operations & Supply Chain Management Level 2 (minimum)	TWM20	Evaluate the operations processes within and between organizations
	TWM21	Manage the operations processes within and between organizations
Organisation & People Level 2 (minimum)	TWM22	Draft the strategic cycle of parts of the organisation (process and content)
	TWM23	Assess the impact of change on the organization
Business Research Level 3	TWM24	Analyse a complex business problem in an international business setting with use of an adequate research design, resulting in an evidence based feasible solution

The **International Business Management Studies** programme follows the IBMS Competency Framework established in 2010. It features 16 professional and generic competencies.

Professional competencies

1. International Business Awareness
2. Intercultural Competence
3. International Strategic Vision Development
4. Business Processes & Change Management
5. Entrepreneurial Management
6. International Marketing & Sales Management
7. International Supply Chain Management
8. International Finance & Accounting
9. International Human Resource Management

Generic Competencies

1. Leadership
2. Co-operation
3. Communication
4. Business Research Methods
5. Planning & Organising
6. Learning & Self-development

Attachment 4 Overview of the curriculum

IB four-year programme (2019-2020)

Year 1

Management & Organisation (3 EC)
Marketing Fundamentals (3 EC)
Business Math (3 EC)
Thinking in Action I (3 EC)
International Business Environment (3 EC)
Accounting (3 EC)
Introduction to Business Communication (3 EC)
IP1: Creative International Business Solutions (6 EC)
Statistics & Research I (3 EC)
Finance I (3 EC)
Economics (3 EC)
International Business Law (3 EC)
Public Speaking for Business (3 EC)
Operations & Sales (6 EC)
Language & Culture I (3 EC)
IP2: Business Plan (6 EC)
Personal & Professional Development (3 EC)

Year 2

Accounting II (3 EC)
Statistics & Research II (3 EC)
International Business Law II (3 EC)
Organisations & Supply Chain (6 EC)
Language & Culture II (3 EC)
Corporate Social Responsibility (6 EC)
IP3: International Business & Economics Analysis (6 EC)
Marketing & Sales II (3 EC)
Thinking in Action II (3 EC)
Information Management (3 EC)
Finance II (3 EC)
People & Organisation (6 EC)
IP4: Research Techniques (6 EC)
Personal & Professional Development (3 EC)

Year 3 – old programme

Financial Statement Analysis (3 EC)
Global Marketing & Export Management (3 EC)
IP5: Company Based Research (4 EC)
Business English Communication (3 EC)
Minor (15 EC)
IP6: Study Abroad (30 EC)
Personal & Intercultural Skills (2 EC)

Year 4 – old programme

Integrated Project (27 EC)
 Business Intelligence (3 EC)
 Current Trends in Economic Topics (3 EC)
 Strategic Management (3 EC)
 Valuation (3 EC)
 Integrated Project 8 (20 EC)
 DLS (1 EC)

Fast-track three-year programme (2019-2020)

Year 1

Business Communication (3 EC)
 Finance & Control (6 EC)
 Management & Organisation (3 EC)
 Marketing Fundamentals (3 EC)
 Economics (3 EC)
 International Business Law (3 EC)
 Sales & Procurement (2 EC)
 International Business Environment (3 EC)
 Business Game (1 EC)
 e-Business (3 EC)
 Micro-Economics (3 EC)
 International Business Law II (3 EC)
 Strategic Management (2 EC)
 Cost Accounting (3 EC)
 English Business Communication (4 EC)
 Business Statistics (3 EC)
 IP: Business Plan (6 EC)
 Language & Culture (3 EC)
 Academic Intercultural Skills & Mentoring (3 EC)

Year 2

Supply Chain & Operations Management (4 EC)
 Business Ethics é Sustainability (3 EC)
 Management Accounting (3 EC)
 Corporate Finance (3 EC)
 Business English Communication (4 EC)
 Integrated Project: Research Techniques (5 EC)
 International Marketing Communication (3 EC)
 Databases & Information Systems (3 EC)
 Global Marketing & Exports Management (3 EC)
 Financial Statement Analysis (3 EC)
 Business English Communication (3EC)
 Integrated Project: Company Based Research (4 EC)
 Minor (15 EC)
 Professional & Intercultural Skills (4 EC)

Year 3

Internship (27 EC)

Business Intelligence (3 EC)

Current Trends in Economic Topics (3 EC)

Strategic Management (3 EC)

Valuation (3 EC)

Integrated Project 8 (20 EC)

DLS (1 EC)

Minors (15 EC)

Business Marketing, Services Marketing and Digital Transformation

Finance

Business in Africa

Business in Asia

Business in Latin America

Business in Africa

Trends in Supply Chain & Operations

HRM

Branding

Sustainable Business

Attachment 5 Documents

Information reports

- Self-Evaluation Report International Business, The Hague University of Applied Sciences, December 2019.
- International Business. Self-Evaluation Report for the Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation, The Hague University of Applied Sciences, December 2019.

Appendices to self-evaluation report

- National profile IB
- Educational Vision THUAS
- Educational Framework Faculty Business, Finance & Marketing
- Programme Learning Outcomes Matrix
- IBMS competency Framework
- Programme and Examination Regulation and OLP 2019-2020
- Staff overview
- Graduation manual IB 2017-2018 & 2018-2019
- Module descriptions IB and assessment matrix
- List of internationalisation activities since 2016-2017

Materials made available on site

- Documentation Quality Management System IB
- Exam Board - annual reports
- IP8 (Thesis) Committee - annual reports
- Curriculum Committee – meeting minutes and annual reports
- Business Advisory Council - meeting minutes
- Degree programme Advisory Committee - meeting minutes
- Assessment handbook Faculty Business, Finance & Marketing
- Course dossiers
 - International Business Environment
 - Economics
 - Language & Culture
 - Corporate Social Responsibility
 - International Business Law II
 - Integrated Project 4
 - Business English Communication
 - Global Marketing & Export Management
 - Study Abroad
 - Internship
 - Current Trends in Economics
 - Strategic Management
- THUAS Compasses
- Overview old curriculum
- Overview new curriculum
- Staff development plan
- Programme Learning Outcome operationalisation format

Graduation Projects

Representative sample of IB-8 (thesis) projects, Internship reports and Strategic Management assignments and their respective assessments of 15 students who graduated in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019. The list of students is available.

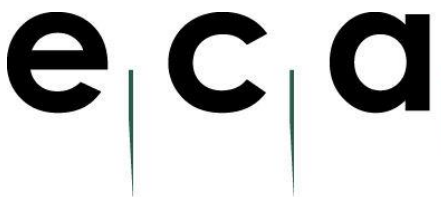
Assessment report

Bachelor International Business

The Hague University of Applied Sciences



Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation



European consortium for accreditation

Assessment report

Bachelor International Business

European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education
ECA OCCASIONAL PAPER



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1. Executive summary

This report contains an assessment of the quality of internationalisation of the bachelor's programme International Business (IB) at *De Haagse Hogeschool* (The Hague University of Applied Sciences, further: THUAS). The audit was performed by an international panel, convened by AeQui and validated by the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO), during a visit to The Hague on 29 and 30 January 2020. The panel's findings, considerations and conclusions are based on a self-evaluation report, on additional materials illustrating the programme's performance on internationalisation and on a series of discussions with different internal and external programme stakeholders.

According to the panel, the IB THUAS programme fulfils all criteria and all standards of the CeQuInt evaluation framework and this up to a level that always surpasses the generic quality that can be reasonably expected from an international perspective.

The IB programme at THUAS aims "to provide curious and internationally-oriented students with the means to reach their potential as responsible business professionals and global citizens". Formulated in close consultation with all stakeholders, there is a common understanding among students, staff, alumni and professional field about the international character of 'their' IB programme and about the features that set IB THUAS apart from other similar programmes in the Netherlands: international students and staff, internationalised curriculum, global citizenship, inclusiveness, global partner network. The panel thinks highly of the interrelatedness between the mission of the programme and the core values of the university. The internationalisation goals are well chosen according to the panel, are strongly tailored to the IB curriculum and have a firm impact on the quality of teaching and learning, both directly and indirectly. These goals come with verifiable objectives that monitor the scope / content of the internationalisation goals and measure the progress on each goal.

The commonly agreed set of programme learning outcomes at national level constitutes a strong framework which allows IB THUAS to integrate its own focus areas and unique selling points (among other things its international orientation and character). The panel thinks highly of the formulated graduate outcomes and their operationalisation in the curriculum. The structure of the new IB programme in terms of learning outcomes, module learning goals and assessment is developed strongly on paper. The panel is confident that, due to the extensive

preparation and the good quality learning environment, the new programme will deliver on its international and intercultural ambitions.

Students are offered good quality teaching and learning that fits perfectly with the type of education the faculty and the university want to offer to the IB students in The Hague. The curriculum, the educational principles, the teaching methods and the learning environment are all aligned, reflect the core values of the university and ensure that students can acquire the envisaged international and intercultural learning outcomes.

The geographically and culturally diverse composition of the staff body reflects perfectly the vision and ambitions of the programme. The staff quality is high and so is their disciplinary, professional, didactic, international, intercultural and language expertise. The opportunities for staff professionalisation are numerous and appropriate, and will be further developed in line with the objectives of the programme's internationalisation goals. Having met very motivated and enthusiastic teachers on site, the panel fully understands that students are highly satisfied with the knowledge, skills and availability of the staff who contribute to a safe and welcoming learning environment.

The composition of the student body is truly international and intercultural diverse. The curriculum allows students to acquire extensive international and intercultural competences both at home and abroad. Students can use a variety of services which are of good quality and benefit the international and intercultural dimension of the programme. According to the panel, mentoring constitutes a good example of how the core values of a programme and a university can be implemented in a proper way.

The panel has assessed the quality of internationalisation of the new IB programme. Throughout the visit, it has come to appreciate not only the recent efforts to internationalise the IB curriculum, but also the intrinsic DNA of the international business education programmes at THUAS in the past. This means according to the panel that also IBMS students have been and continue to be exposed to a highly international and intercultural learning environment where extensive attention is paid to international business awareness, intercultural competence, collaborative pedagogies, cultural diversity in the classroom and inclusive assessment.

In addition to all positive comments and appreciations, the panel sees room for improvement in three areas. It advises the IB THUAS programme to:

- make ethical and social responsibility/sustainability an important pillar of the programme's international and intercultural competences;
- ensure that the content of the internship allows students to acquire the learning outcomes on intercultural proficiency;
- consider offering also fast-track three-year programme students a compulsory experience abroad through the internship;
- design a testing format that establishes whether students have acquired the graduate outcome intercultural awareness at end level.

In sum, the panel considers that the bachelor's programme International Business at The Hague University of Applied Sciences fulfils each of the five standards of the CeQuInt assessment framework. Its overall judgement on the programme's quality of internationalisation is **positive**.

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:

- Drs. Mariëlle Klerks, Panel chair on behalf of AeQui and CeQuInt certified auditor
- Dr. Gerry Geitz, Director Education and Research, NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences Leeuwarden
- Dr. Babak Mehmenpazir, Vice Dean strategic management and international accreditations, EM Strasbourg Business School, France
- Prof. Dr. Natalia Ribberink, Professor of Foreign Trade and International Management, Hamburg University of Applied Sciences, Germany
- Joris Hahn BSc, Master student Spatial Transport & Environmental Economics, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
- Mark Delmartino MA, NVAO-certified panel secretary and CeQuInt certified auditor.

The composition of the panel reflects the expertise deemed necessary by the Frameworks. The individual panel members' expertise and experience can be found in [Annex 1: Composition of the assessment panel](#). All panel members signed a statement of independence and confidentiality. These signed statements are available from AeQui upon simple request. The procedure was coordinated by ir. René Kloosterman, Director of AeQui.

The assessment panel studied the self-evaluation report and annexed documentation provided by the programme before the site visit. ([Annex 2: Documents reviewed](#)) The panel members shared their initial findings prior to visit and held a preparatory meeting at the start of the site visit. This visit took place on 29 and 30 January 2020 at The Hague University of Applied Sciences in The Hague. ([Annex 3: Site visit programme](#)) The panel formulated its preliminary assessments per standard 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 panel finalised the draft report on 2 April 2020. It was then sent to the IB programme management to review the report for factual mistakes. The panel considered their feedback and approved the final version of the report on 15 April 2020.

3. Basic information

Qualification:	International Business, Bachelor of Business Administration
Number of credits:	240 EC (IB – 4 year programme) 180 EC (IB – 3 year programme)
Specialisations (if any):	Not applicable
ISCED field(s) of study:	Business Administration
Institution:	The Hague University of Applied Sciences
Type of institution:	Publicly funded institution
Status:	The programme is accredited by the Dutch Flemish Accreditation Body (NVAO)
QA / accreditation agency:	Previous programme accreditation – Hobéon Current programme accreditation - AeQui
Status period:	Programme accreditation is valid until 01.07.2020

Additional information:

The assessment of the Quality of Internationalisation (as reported in this document) was combined with an assessment of the programme quality of the Bachelor International Business according to Dutch regulations. The results of this assessment are presented in a separate report, which the institution will use to request an extension of the accreditation period with NVAO.

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.

The bachelor's programme International Business (IB) at The Hague University of Applied Sciences (THUAS) started in 1992. Although it has changed names several times, high quality international business education has always been the key goal and quality of the programme. Over the years it has developed into a well-connected international learning community that currently, in 2019-2020, encompasses 1475 students, 65 lecturers, a large alumni network and connections with hundreds of companies around the world. IB claims to be the most international study programme of the university: it is among the bigger programmes in terms of student intake (around 500 per year) and international composition of its student (50%) and staff (60%) body that altogether represent more than 50 different nationalities.

The Hague University of Applied Sciences (THUAS) offers professionally oriented degree programmes in a broad range of domains. Currently THUAS has more than 25000 students and almost 2000 staff members. THUAS has its roots firmly anchored in the city of The Hague and is at the same time highly international. It has the outspoken ambition to be the most international university of applied sciences in the Netherlands. THUAS consists of 8 Faculties, 5 Service Departments and about 30 Research Groups. The assessment visit took place at the Faculty of Business, Finance & Marketing (BFM), which offers five degree programmes and features three research groups.

The programme under assessment, the bachelor's programme International Business, is being implemented incrementally since September 2018; students who enrolled before on the International Business & Management Studies (IBMS) programme still follow the IBMS curriculum, which is phasing out. While internationalisation has always be a key component of business education at THUAS and BFM, the international and intercultural components of the IBMS programme were more implicitly embedded in the curriculum. When designing the IB programme according to the new national IB framework (see standard 2), the programme management incorporated IB's internationalisation aspirations and activities explicitly in the mission, vision and educational frameworks of the university and the faculty.

The mission statement of the new IB programme was formulated in close consultation with all stakeholders: IB THUAS is "to provide curious and internationally-oriented students with the means to reach their potential as responsible business professionals and global citizens". In line with this mission, four collective ambitions were formulated as vision: graduates are ethically and morally responsible professionals, have an anchored professional business network, are highly internationalized global citizens, and are part of a robust IB learning community. The panel noticed that there is a clear connection between the key features of

the IB programme and the core values of THUAS, as stipulated in the university's educational framework: world citizenship, inclusiveness, internationalization and network university.

Taking into account the educational vision of both university and faculty, the IB programme used Betty Leask's conceptual framework "Internationalisation of the curriculum" to review its internationalisation practice and to formulate its internationalisation goals. Leask defines this concept as "the incorporation of international, intercultural and/or global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods and support services of a programme of study."

The panel learned from the extensive and highly informative description in the self-evaluation report how the programme has used Leask's conceptual framework to rethink and expand its internationalisation policy. In this process, the programme decided to focus on two graduate outcomes (see standard 2) that are at the foundation of the internationalisation goals: "international business awareness" and "intercultural competence". This exercise has resulted in a curriculum that is comprehensively international and takes into account also the institutional, the local, national and international context of the programme and the domain of IB. Moreover, eight internationalisation goals were formulated according to which the IB THUAS programme is to:

- comprehensively incorporate its vision on internationalisation of the curriculum and global citizenship in its programme's overall mission, vision and educational principles;
- incorporate a strong focus on international business awareness in IB's formal and informal curriculum;
- incorporate a strong focus of intercultural competence in IB's formal and informal curriculum;
- implement inclusive, activating and collaborative pedagogies to accommodate and leverage students' cultural diversity in the international classroom throughout the curriculum;
- review and, where needed, adjust assessment practice with the goals above in mind to ensure constructive alignment and inclusive practice throughout the curriculum;
- equip staff with the means to operationalise the goals stated above;
- build and strengthen local and international partnerships with new and existing partners in business and higher education;
- stimulate research, where feasible, into areas that strengthen any of the goals above amongst staff and students.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel **considers** that the IB programme at THUAS has a clear profile with distinctive characteristics that are well-articulated. It thinks highly of the interrelatedness between the mission and vision of the programme and the core values of the university. THUAS has its roots firmly anchored in the city of The Hague and is at the same time highly international. The panel appreciates that the university's outspoken ambition to be the most international university of applied sciences in the Netherlands finds a sounding board in the endeavours of the IB programme.

Furthermore, the panel acknowledges the extensive efforts of the management to expand its internationalisation policy, and the systematic and comprehensive approach it took when internationalising the IB curriculum. The panel considers that the resulting internationalisation

goals are well chosen and constitute a good basis for implementing, monitoring and evaluating the international and intercultural dimension of the curriculum.

The panel thinks highly of the way in which the mission, vision and internationalisation goals of the programme have been validated by all relevant internal and external stakeholders. This appreciation is based on the panel's observation during the visit that there is a common understanding among students, staff, alumni and professional field about the international character of 'their' IB programme and about the features that set IB THUAS apart from other similar programmes in the Netherlands.

The panel **concludes** that the internationalisation goals for the IB THUAS programme are documented, shared and supported by both internal and external stakeholders.

Criterion 1b: Verifiable objectives

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

The panel learned from the information materials and the discussions on site that, while formulating the internationalisation goals, the programme has also set a number of verifiable objectives to monitor the progress and performance of the programme on each internationalisation goal. These objectives are formulated in a SMART way and relate directly to the respective goals. Moreover, in order to reach the international business awareness competence (goal 2) and the intercultural competence (goal 3), separate objectives have been formulated with regard to the formal curriculum and the informal curriculum.

As some of the objectives featured a clear timebound component, with delivery foreseen in June 2019, the panel was informed – and received a paper trail documenting the process - that these components of the respective programme goals had indeed been reached. For instance, the internationalisation goals had been discussed with a wide range of external stakeholders, and – as will be extensively described in section 2 - the IB programme learning outcomes on international business awareness and intercultural proficiency had been operationalised in the curriculum courses and projects.

The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions that in the future, IB THUAS aspires international recognition through AACSB (school level) and/or EPAS (programme level). The panel understands the rationale for this ambition because such recognition would enhance the programme's reputation considerably among international institutions and students. According to the panel, IB THUAS should further increase the number of accredited international partners if they are seeking international accreditation themselves. Hence the panel's suggestion to sharpen the indicators for internationalisation goal 7 (partnerships) accordingly.

Finally, the panel learned that the internationalisation goals and their objectives will be integrated soon in the recently established IB dedicated Quality Management System. In this way, the goals will become an integral part of the internal quality assurance system of the programme that operates according to the Deming-cycle Plan Do Check Act.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel **considers** that the IB THUAS programme has formulated highly adequate objectives: these objectives are relevant for measuring the scope/content of the programme’s internationalisation goals and have been formulated in such a way that they will also measure the progress the programme is making on each of these goals. Moreover, the first results are positive and instil confidence in the system: some indicators have already been reached and the international goals will become an integral part of the programme’s overall quality management system.

The panel **concludes** that verifiable objectives have been formulated that allow monitoring the achievement of the programme’s internationalisation goals.

Criterion 1c: Impact on education

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

The panel noticed that the internationalisation goals are highly connected to the development of the new IB THUAS curriculum and therefore explicitly include measures that contribute to the overall quality of teaching and learning. In fact, the first internationalisation goal – on vision and mission – impacts on all aspects of the programme delivery. The next four goals – on international business awareness, intercultural competence, inclusive pedagogies and assessment – directly impact on individual teaching and learning components of the programme. These goals aim to operationalise and consolidate the programme’s expanded vision on internationalisation in the new curriculum. The remaining three goals – which focus on staff, partnerships and research - indirectly contribute to the overall quality of teaching and learning, by supporting a learning environment in which the teaching and learning envisaged in the first goals can be shaped in a professional and sustainable manner.

The panel noticed furthermore during the visit that whilst the formulation of internationalisation in the curriculum has been considerably strengthened in view of the new IB curriculum, the respective components of the internationalisation goals were already – at least implicitly – present in the ‘old’ IBMS curriculum. This means that also IBMS students have been and continue to be exposed to a highly international and intercultural learning environment where extensive attention is paid in teaching and learning to international business awareness, intercultural competence, collaborative pedagogies, cultural diversity in the classroom and inclusive assessment. For a very long period already, emphasizing global citizenship as a key value of THUAS has meant that international students – and international staff - feel welcome and appreciated at IB/IBMS. The panel gathered from the discussions that the programme has been successful at implementing the THUAS, BFM and IB/IBMS values and has put in a considerable additional effort in the recent past to incorporate these values explicitly in the new IB curriculum.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel **considers** that the internationalisation goals are strongly connected to the IB curriculum and will impact on the quality of teaching and learning directly and indirectly. The panel acknowledges that the

process of formulating goals and objectives that have a direct bearing on the quality of teaching and learning has been lengthy and laborious, but its results are good. Furthermore, it is important to underline that these efforts are about concretising and making explicit what was already in the DNA of the international business education programmes at THUAS in the past.

The panel **concludes** that the internationalisations goals explicitly include measures that contributed to the overall quality of teaching and learning.

Overall conclusion on standard 1

The panel concludes that the IB THUAS programme meets all underlying criteria of this standard and this to a level that systematically and substantially surpasses the current generic quality for this standard. According to the panel, the IB programme at THUAS has a clear profile with distinctive characteristics that are well-articulated. It thinks highly of the interrelatedness between the mission and vision of the programme and the core values of the university. The panel acknowledges the extensive efforts and welcomes the comprehensive approach to internationalise the curriculum. The resulting internationalisation goals are well chosen and they are strongly tailored to the IB curriculum and will impact on the quality of teaching and learning, directly and indirectly. Moreover, these goals constitute a good basis for implementing, monitoring and evaluating the international and intercultural dimension of the curriculum. Furthermore, the panel thinks highly of the way in which the mission, vision and internationalisation goals of the programme have been validated by all relevant internal and external stakeholders: there is a common understanding among students, staff, alumni and professional field about the international character of 'their' IB programme and about the features that set IB THUAS apart from other similar programmes in the Netherlands. Furthermore, the programme has formulated highly adequate objectives, which are relevant for measuring the scope/content of the programme's internationalisation goals and will effectively measure the progress the programme is making on each of these goals. Finally, the panel wants to emphasise the above-mentioned efforts are about concretising and making explicit what was already in the DNA of the international business education programmes at THUAS in the past: hence, also IBMS students have been and continue to be exposed to a highly international and intercultural learning environment where extensive attention is paid in teaching and learning to international business awareness, intercultural competence, collaborative pedagogies, cultural diversity in the classroom and inclusive assessment. Based on the interviews and the examination of the underlying documentation, the panel assesses *Standard 1. Intended internationalisation* as **excellent**.

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.

The bachelor programme IB at THUAS is relatively new and started in September 2018. During the previous accreditation round in 2013, the assessment committee issued a positive recommendation on the IBMS programme, which is now phasing out. In accordance with the Government's vision to have fewer but broader programmes, 14 Dutch universities of applied sciences have looked into their portfolio of programmes with an international business dimension and have adjusted these to reflect current international business practices and recent insights from research. After extensive discussions with relevant stakeholders and experts from academia and industry, a new framework for IB programmes was developed and validated in 2017. This framework features 24 programme learning outcomes (PLOs), which are reflected in all IB programmes in the Netherlands. The PLOs are organised in 14 themes and four domains – ways of thinking, ways of working, living in the world, and tools for working & management – which are derived from the KSAVE model (Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes, Values and Ethics). This approach ensures that in addition to disciplinary competences, IB students also acquire generic '21st century' skills that add value to a broad range of jobs.

The panel noticed that the nationally agreed IB PLOs constitute a robust framework within which each individual IB programme is at liberty to integrate and operationalise its own focus areas and distinctive characteristics. The THUAS variant of the IB programme stands apart as a highly internationalized programme: the panel learned that the unique selling points of the programme are its high percentage of international students, its internationally diverse group of lecturers, its network of global partners and its attention to internationalization as part of the curriculum content. Moreover, the programme takes on board the educational vision of the university and the faculty, addressing issues such as global citizenship, inclusiveness, networking and practice-oriented learning.

The panel learned that the curriculum committee, which is overlooking the development of the new IB curriculum, was tasked to ensure that all modules would align with the new set of PLOs, that students would reach all learning outcomes at the required level, and that there would be sufficient attention in the modules to acquiring the 21st century skills. Further to what was mentioned under standard 1, the programme's intended international and intercultural learning outcomes have been concretised in two graduate outcomes: "international business awareness" and "intercultural competence". These graduate outcomes, in turn, have been operationalized in six PLOs: this means that the international business awareness of IB students is addressed and assessed in modules and projects covering the Way of Thinking PLO 3 on international business awareness and in the Living in the World PLO 10 on ethical and social responsibility. The intercultural competence of IB students is reflected in the Living and Working PLOs 11-14 on Intercultural Proficiency.

The panel gathered from the extensive documentation in the self-evaluation report, which included a detailed overview of how graduate outcomes are operationalised per year, ILO,

course, assessment method and internationalisation goal, that both competences are addressed in each year of the curriculum and in a majority of courses and projects.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel **considers** that the commonly agreed set of programme learning outcomes at national level constitutes a strong framework which allows IB THUAS to integrate its own focus areas and unique selling points. The panel thinks highly of the formulated graduate outcomes and the way in which these outcomes, which are specific to IB THUAS, have been incorporated in the nationally agreed programme learning outcomes.

The panel **concludes** that the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes correspond with the programme's internationalisation goals.

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.

The panel learned that the assessment system of the IB programme is embedded in the policy and provisions of both university and faculty. For instance, the IB programme is using the assessment cycle specified in the Assessment Handbook of the faculty. This assessment cycle does not only focus on the entire logistical testing process from designing to administrating the test, but also serves as a check mechanism whether the quality of the testing and the assessment is adequate. Moreover, the panel noticed in the course materials it reviewed on site that the policies and principles underlying student assessment are implemented properly in the day-to-day reality of the IB programme.

The panel gathered that already in the old IBMS curriculum, both international business awareness and intercultural competence played an important role throughout the curriculum, in the assessment of the respective modules and projects, and in establishing whether the 16 generic and professional IBMS competencies had been achieved at programme level. Having started the new IB curriculum in 2018, the programme has explicitly incorporated its internationalisation goals in the learning outcomes and in its teaching and learning. Currently (2019-2020), the programme is consolidating its first year, implementing its second year and developing its third and fourth year.

The self-evaluation report contained an extensive overview demonstrating in detail how the international and intercultural learning outcomes are addressed in the courses and projects throughout the curriculum, and how these outcomes are tested. According to the panel, the attention to international and intercultural learning outcomes is comprehensive, and assessed through a wide range of relevant testing methods: written exams, individual reports, active participation in workshops, group portfolios, 360° reflection, individual pitches, internship report, thesis, etc. The panel noticed that this approach is fully aligned with the overall educational and assessment principles that will be described in standard 3.

In order to monitor the coherence of the curriculum, the programme has developed a matrix showing how each course contributes to the acquisition of relevant PLOs and at what level. The panel has studied the matrix and found it to be a comprehensive and useful document. Based on the curriculum matrix and the discussions on site, the panel gathered that the PLO 10 Ethical and Social Responsibility was not included in the programme focus, although it was mentioned as an explicit component of the graduate outcome “international business awareness”. Given the core values of the university and the programme’s reference to the principle “doing business, doing good”, the panel suggests to also pay explicit attention to this aspect of the graduate outcomes, operationalise this component in the relevant courses and projects, and identify adequate ways to assess student’s competence in “formulating one’s own position concerning ethical and social responsibility in a professional environment.” Furthermore, the panel was surprised to notice that this PLO is not assessed in any of three major components of the programme: study abroad, internship and thesis. It strongly advises the programme to make ethical and social responsibility, as well as sustainability, an important pillar of the programme and include / test it more extensively in the final part of the programme.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel **considers** that policies and principles underlying student assessment in the IB THUAS programme are robust and implemented properly in the day-to-day reality of the IB programme. Although more implicitly integrated in the IBMS curriculum, the international and intercultural competences of students were also tested in modules and projects. In the new curriculum, the attention to international and intercultural learning outcomes is comprehensive, and will be assessed explicitly in many courses and projects through a wide range of relevant testing methods. The panel thinks highly of the well worked out structure; the extensive preparation and the existing learning environment give the panel confidence that the international and intercultural competences of the students will be assessed adequately. In view of the explicit profile of both university and programme, the panel advises to pay more attention in the curriculum to ethical and social responsibility (PLO 10), making it an important pillar of the international and intercultural competences in the THUAS variant of IB.

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

Criterion 2c: Graduate achievement

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

At the time of the site visit, January 2020, the IB programme was not yet fully operational in all four years. The students who started the new IB programme in September 2018 will have a graduation programme in 2021-2022 that is likely to consist of the IP 8 research project, the Internship report and the Personal and Professional Development self-reflection document.

In order to establish whether students are achieving the intended learning outcomes at the time of the assessment visit, the panel has reviewed a representative sample of graduation products from 15 students who graduated in the academic years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019.

These students were all enrolled in the IBMS programme and therefore had to demonstrate the achievement of seven generic and nine professional competencies. The panel noticed that both internship and research project include a clear international dimension. Moreover, all products were of a quality that can be expected from a final project of professional orientation at bachelor level. In addition to verifying the quality of the end level products, the career of bachelor graduates is another way to establish whether students achieve the intended learning outcomes upon completion of the programme. The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that the programme prepares students very well for a career in international business: about 60% of the graduates are offered a job with their internship company and can start right after graduation; another 20% finds a job that is commensurate with their domain and level of education; and the remaining 20% goes on to study a master's programme. Although the international and intercultural learning outcomes were only implicitly operationalised in the sixteen competencies of the IBMS programme, it is fair to state according to the panel that students who graduate IBMS at THUAS are "competent managers for business organisations in an international environment", as stated in the IBMS mission.

The panel learned that in the new IB curriculum, the modules are grouped in six learning lines. The graduate outcomes "international business awareness" and "intercultural competence" are acquired through the modules and projects that are interconnected both horizontally and vertically in these learning lines. The assessment forms for the IB thesis (IP8 research project) and for the IB internship were revised and now feature an explicit international dimension in the thesis and an explicit intercultural dimension in the internship. In line with its finding on student assessment, the panel thinks highly of the well worked out structure; the extensive preparation and the existing learning environment moreover give the panel confidence that the IB students will be able to demonstrate that they have indeed achieved the international and intercultural learning outcomes at the expected level by the end of the programme.

Based on its review of the study matrix, the panel noticed that the IB internship is expected to measure the students' intercultural proficiency at end level. Given the importance of the intercultural competence for the programme and the fact that the internship is the only component in the final year that addresses this competence and these PLOs, the panel thinks that the programme should be very careful in setting the terms of reference for each internship: the content of the internship should enable students to train this competence and acquire the necessary intercultural proficiency. Moreover, the programme will have to identify a way how students can demonstrate – and be tested - that they have acquired the PLOs and the intercultural competence 'on the job', i.e. during the internship.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel **considers** that IBMS students are adequately prepared for a position on the labour market or a follow-up study: graduates are successful in pursuing a master's programme or in finding a job that is commensurate with the level, domain and international dimension of their study. Given that the current graduates enter the labour market as trained business professionals with explicit international and implicit intercultural competencies, the panel is confident that future IB graduates will be equally successful in achieving the intended learning outcomes. In view of the profile of IB THUAS, the panel strongly advises the programme to ensure that the programme learning outcomes on intercultural proficiency and ethical and social responsibility

are explicitly taken up in the learning goals of one of the major components in year 4, and assessed at end level.

The panel **concludes** that the graduates demonstrably achieve the intended learning outcomes and are likely to achieve the recently formulated international and intercultural learning outcomes.

Overall conclusion on standard 2

The panel concludes that the IB THUAS programme meets all underlying criteria of this standard. The commonly agreed set of programme learning outcomes at national level constitutes a strong framework which allows IB THUAS to integrate its own focus areas and unique selling points. The panel thinks highly of the formulated graduate outcomes and the way in which these IB THUAS specific outcomes have been operationalised in the curriculum. The panel considers that the structure of the new IB programme in terms of learning outcomes, module learning goals and assessment is developed strongly on paper. Moreover, the extensive preparation and the existing learning environment give the panel confidence that the international and intercultural competences of the students will be assessed adequately throughout the programme and at end level, in the Internship and Research Project. In addition to these positive appreciations, the panel advises the programme to make ethical and social responsibility an important pillar of the international and intercultural competences in the THUAS variant of IB. Moreover, the programme should take care that its learning outcomes on intercultural proficiency and ethical and social responsibility are explicitly taken up in the learning goals of one of the major components in year 4, and assessed at end level. Based on the interviews and the examination of the underlying documentation, the panel assesses *Standard 2. International and intercultural learning* as **good**.

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.

The THUAS IB programme is a four-year full-time programme, which amounts to 240 ECTS. Students enrolled prior to 2018-2019 follow the old IBMS curriculum, while students who started as of September 2018 are on the new curriculum according to the national IB framework. At the time of this assessment visit, early 2020, the two curricula still exist next to each other. Students with the appropriate educational background can opt for a three-year fast track study programme (TYP) leading to the same exit qualifications. This option exists since 2010 and has been launched in September 2019 for the first time under the new IB framework.

The 'old' IBMS curriculum has a focus on international marketing and finance and is divided in five main areas: Business Environment, Research, Finance & Business Analytics, Business Communication & Development, and Learning Skills. There is a strong vertical cohesion across the curriculum and the level to be achieved for each competency is gradually increasing. Moreover, the curriculum features a balanced combination of theory and practice, which is reflected in the didactical approach in the modules and projects.

In the new IB curriculum students achieve 24 PLOs and focus more on 21st century skills. The panel noticed in the curriculum overview that there is a considerable overlap in the names of the respective IBMS and IB modules, but learned that the contents have been adjusted to fit the IB framework. Specific features of both curricula are the extensive mandatory exchange study period abroad (30 EC) for the four-year students, as well as the mandatory internship (27 EC) and the IP8 research project (20 EC) for all students. In years 3 and 4, the new curriculum offers more flexibility and choice within the specialisations, minors and electives.

The panel understood from the information materials and the discussions on site that the design of the new curriculum is taking a lot of time and involving many staff members. Turning the IB framework into the IB THUAS curriculum, key staff members were appointed as 'PLO owners' to operationalise the PLO descriptions in more concrete descriptions of knowledge, skills and attitudes that corresponded with the three levels of the IB framework. The panel noticed furthermore that the learning outcomes are clustered in six learning lines based on their interconnectedness, similarities and weight in the programme: (i) International business knowledge; (ii) International business environment; (iii) Applied research; (iv) Cross cultural collaboration; (v) Personal and professional development; (vi) Integrated learning line. Over the course of four years, students progress gradually from level 1 to level 3 for each of the required PLOs. In order to monitor the coherence of the curriculum, the programme has developed a matrix showing how each course contributes to the acquisition of relevant PLOs and at what level. The panel has studied the matrix and found it to be a comprehensive and useful document.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel **considers** that both IBMS and IB curricula are adequate. The module contents are relevant and their link towards

the bigger programme and its competency framework (IBMS) and learning outcomes (IB) is clear. According to the panel, the profile and unique selling points of IB THUAS are properly addressed in the curriculum, notably but not exclusively through the mandatory internship and mandatory study period abroad. The panel is convinced that the learning environment of the TYP is so rich that it offers students enough opportunities to achieve the international and intercultural learning outcomes, as well. However, TYP students do not have a study abroad semester, which adds a lot to the achievement of the international and intercultural learning outcomes. The panel therefore recommends the programme to keep monitoring the achievement of these learning outcomes by TYP students. Furthermore, the programme may consider a mandatory international internship for TYP students.

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

Criterion 3b: Teaching methods

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

In line with the educational vision of both university and faculty, the programme aims to develop IB students in three ways: as international business professionals, as global citizens in a diverse world and as responsible and curious individuals. The panel understood that in order to achieve this, the programme is using three educational principles, which have been motivated extensively and properly in the self-evaluation report: (i) applied business learning in an international setting; (ii) intercultural collaborative learning; and (iii) responsible and critical learning. These principles are operationalised in the respective modules through a range of activating and diverse teaching formats, such as workshops, integrated projects, company projects, blended learning, self-study assignments, individual and group work.

The panel noticed furthermore that principles and methods of assessment are aligned with these educational principles and teaching formats. In addition to a number of general assessment principles, such as constructive alignment and transparent testing, the IB programme features principles such as integrated testing, professional field-related assessment methods, inclusive and accessible testing to live up to its educational approaches of applied business learning and international cultural learning. Moreover, the programme achieves responsible critical learning by paying ample attention to feedback and activating tests.

During the visit, students indicated to the panel that these educational principles and formats are indeed followed and implemented in the day-to-day reality of the courses. They appreciate in particular that lecturers divide the student groups in such a way that each group is geographically and culturally diverse. Moreover, the assignments often have a professional dimension and there is plenty of attention to feedback.

The panel gathered from the information materials that the specific description of the didactic concept is targeted towards the new IB curriculum. However, students and staff provided several examples illustrating that these principles were already 'mainstream' in the IBMS

programme. One new development is the specific build-up of the curriculum structure in such a way that the module contents per semester link even better than before to the integrated project in that same period.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel **considers** that the teaching methods in the IB programme are relevant for the type of education the programme, faculty and university want to offer to the IB students. The panel thinks highly of the way the educational principles, which befit the programme, are developed nicely on paper and implemented successfully in the day-to-day delivery of the programme. The panel endorses the enthusiasm of students for the teaching formats that allow to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in a truly international and intercultural setting.

The panel **concludes** that the teaching methods are suitable for achieving the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes.

Criterion 3c: Learning environment

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

The panel gathered from the information materials and the discussions that the international and intercultural learning ambitions of the programme can only be realised in a truly multinational and culturally diverse setting. In this regard, IB THUAS is doing very fine: the programme aspires a balance between international and Dutch students and a slight overrepresentation of international staff: in both cases, the actual percentages are close to the desired ones. Dutch and international students are deliberately mixed in all classes and assigned to work together in intercultural groups on integrated project assignments. The teaching staff is encouraged to bring perspectives, examples and contacts from their own cultural and international professional background into the classroom. Moreover, the large body of incoming exchange students (roughly 100 per semester) also add to a truly international and intercultural environment that is helpful in attaining the learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the panel noticed that the link with the (international) professional field is strong and takes different forms: IB staff members have contacts with industry and/or are part-time employed in industry, the Business Advisory Council provides advise and introduces students and staff to companies and opportunities, and recently the programme started developing projects with business partners in which students can apply both research skills and take care of marketing, sales, finance and operations.

The programme is aware of the importance of a strong, connected learning community and takes care to foster a strong sense of community by publishing a student newsletter, creating a warm, personal atmosphere in IB's hallway in the campus building and by organising extracurricular activities focused on building a strong intercultural community. In terms of the informal curriculum, (international) student trips are organised, and study and student associations organise extracurricular activities with the support of the programme. The panel

gathered from the materials and the discussions that the university, faculty and programme are committed to creating an international campus culture.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel **considers** that the learning environment of the IB programme is very relevant for the type of education the programme, faculty and university want to offer to IB students. The panel thinks highly of the way in which the unique selling points of IB THUAS impact on the learning environment, and the other way around: the international and intercultural setting is a clear asset to the programme, and the programme makes the most of this setting by fostering a safe and inclusive learning community and by leveraging the diversity of its students, staff and partnerships. Moreover, the panel considers is a particular strong point of this programme that students can train in many ways their professional skills in an international environment.

The panel **concludes** that the learning environment is suitable for achieving the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes.

Overall conclusion on standard 3

The panel concludes that the IB THUAS programme meets all underlying criteria of this standard, and this to a level that systematically and substantially surpasses the current generic quality for this standard. It considers that the IB students, and for that matter also the remaining IBMS students, are offered good quality teaching and learning. This appreciation relates not only to the curriculum, but also extends to the teaching methods and the learning environment. According to the panel, the curriculum, teaching methods and learning environment of the programme are relevant for the type of education the faculty and the university want to offer to the IB students in The Hague. Moreover, the panel thinks highly of the way in which the THUAS core values, and in particular the international and intercultural components, impact on the curriculum, the didactical underpinning and the learning environment of the IB THUAS programme. Based on the interviews and the examination of the underlying documentation, the panel assesses *Standard 3: Teaching and Learning* as **excellent**.

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.

According to the information materials, there are 63 staff in IB: about two thirds are non-Dutch representing 30 countries and all continents. Almost all Dutch staff have international experience. Moreover, several staff maintain a close relationship with the professional field and with business developments. A great majority is educated to master's level and 6 staff have a PhD. About ten IB staff are currently conducting research in the THUAS research platform or in other research groups. The panel gathered from the staff overview that teachers are competent in terms of domain expertise and didactics.

The student staff ratio stands at 30:1, which is considerable. The panel was informed that this ratio used to be lower but has increased because the number of students has grown faster than the number of staff. Both faculty and programme management indicated that they are aware of the issue, have hired a number of additional staff recently and will continue to recruit more staff in the near future.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel **considers** that the international composition of the staff and their cultural diversity is a particularly strong asset to deliver the IB THUAS programme. Altogether the staff members bring a wide range of perspectives on (international) business and beyond, which the panel noticed they happily share with an equally diverse and international student group. During the visit, the panel noticed that both programme and faculty management are aware that more staff need to be hired soon and confirmed to the panel that they would do so.

The panel **concludes** that the composition of the staff facilitates the achievement of the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes.

Criterion 4b: Experience

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

Although the panel has only met a small sample of lecturers and staff and does not know to what extent these are representative for the entire personnel, the interviewees were invariably motivated for the job and enthusiastic about the students. Moreover, they showed adequate expertise in terms of international exposure and intercultural awareness. The panel is also satisfied by the English language proficiency of the staff: it demonstrates that recruiting staff with an English language level C1 CEFR pays off. The detailed overview of IB programme staff confirms this impression as staff acquired a heterogeneous range of international or intercultural experiences prior to joining THUAS.

Moreover, some newly hired staff with a professional background in business emphasised during the discussion that they are well taken care of in the programme and trained to teach

in the international classroom; they did not regret the switch from industry to education and were happy to be part of the intercultural and international IB community of students and staff.

Students indicated during the visit that they are satisfied with the staff: teachers are competent in their respective disciplines and have good didactic skills. Support staff are service-minded and available. Overall, students appreciate the level of English of their teachers and mentioned that staff display a strong intercultural sensitivity in class. Asked what they particularly like about studying at IB THUAS, student pointed to the safe study environment and the attention they get from their teachers and staff.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel **considers** that the staff has proper international, intercultural and language expertise to deliver the IB programme in The Hague. Having met highly motivated and enthusiastic teachers on site, the panel fully understands that students are very satisfied with the knowledge, skills and availability of the staff who contribute to a safe and welcoming learning environment.

The panel **concludes** that staff members have adequate internationalisation experience, intercultural competences and language skills.

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.

The panel learned from the information materials and the discussions that all lecturers are encouraged to develop themselves professionally and that this professional development is organised structurally in the staff appraisal cycle. Based on their individual professionalisation needs, lecturers are stimulated to build up international experiences, intercultural competence and expand international knowledge in their particular field.

Furthermore, the panel was informed that professional staff development is being aligned with the internationalisation goals: according to the verifiable objectives for goal 6 (equip staff to operationalise the internationalisation goals), the programme will re-assess the current expertise of the team, leverage expertise by stimulating peer-learning, facilitate structured staff training, and monitor the result of the staff development activities in the curriculum. During the visit, staff indicated that they are aware of these initiatives and confirmed that they have indeed the opportunity to attend training or participate in staff exchange and visits to partner universities.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel **considers** that the opportunities for staff professionalisation are numerous and appropriate. It welcomes the link between the appraisal cycle, the professional development opportunities and the verifiable objectives of the internationalisation goal on staff.

The panel **concludes** that the services provided to the IB THUAS staff are consistent with the staff composition and facilitate international experiences, intercultural competences and language skills.

Overall conclusion on standard 4

The panel concludes that the IB THUAS programme meets all underlying criteria of this standard, and this to a level that systematically and substantially surpasses the current generic quality for this standard. According to the panel, the quality of the staff is highly appropriate to deliver the IB THUAS programme. Moreover, it appreciates the international, intercultural and language expertise of the staff. In this regard, the composition of the staff reflects the international and intercultural flavour and ambitions of the programme. The opportunities for staff professionalisation are numerous and appropriate. Having met highly motivated teachers on site, the panel fully understands that students are very satisfied with the knowledge, skills and availability of the staff who contribute to a safe and welcoming learning environment. Based on the interviews and the examination of the underlying documentation, the panel assesses *Standard 4: Staff* as **excellent**.

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.

IB THUAS strives for a highly diverse classroom with roughly 50% domestic students and 50% degree-seeking international students. The panel learned that in the academic year 2019-2020, 1475 students are enrolled in the programme, representing 51 nationalities. Based on detailed information on student intake between 2016 and 2019, the panel noticed that in this period the yearly intake has grown by 20% from 453 to 540 students.

The share of international students, i.e. students with a foreign diploma, has increased at a similar rate, from 45% to 53%. The number of students on the fast-track TYP has grown, and also their share of the total intake has risen from 8% to 10%. The panel noticed furthermore that the four-year programme now attracts an almost equal number of international and Dutch students – before local students were in the majority - while four out of five TYP students are international. The panel learned that the programme is satisfied with the current intake, both in terms of numbers and composition. In this regard it is important to emphasise that apart from local students, there are no major nationality clusters: German and Chinese students are the biggest group with 26 and 25 students, respectively. If anything, the programme would like to reach more Dutch students on TYP.

The panel was informed that the programme also attracts students with Dutch roots but an international upbringing and/or Diploma; similarly, students with a diploma from an International School in the Netherlands find their way to the IB programme, as well. Finally, every year there is a substantial number of approximately 200 credit seeking inbound exchange students that bring in additional international perspectives in the classroom.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel **considers** that the current size and composition of the student cohorts is very well balanced and that there is a robust international classroom. It is to the credit of the programme, faculty and university that the IB programme managed to create this rich international learning environment and maintain this composition over time. Such geographically and culturally diverse student population constitutes an excellent basis according to the panel to deliver the IB curriculum in an international and intercultural way.

The panel **concludes** that the composition of the student group is in line with the profile and the internationalisation goals of the programme.

Criterion 5b: Experience

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

The panel learned that the international experience of IB students is built up throughout their study. During the first two years, students stay at THUAS and follow the internationalised

curriculum. They are purposefully trained, supported and assessed in developing their intercultural collaboration skills in an international, or intercultural context in the integrated project learning line. The collaboration with both partners in the international business field and within the intercultural student body is used to provide an integrated framework of increasingly complex international experiences. This structured international experience at home adequately prepares students for international experience abroad in their third and, possibly, fourth year.

The study-abroad experience remains a key feature of the four year curriculum. For Dutch students, this is often the first study abroad experience, for international students it is a new experience in addition to studying in the Netherlands. In the third year, all students spend a compulsory semester at one of the partner universities abroad. There is a guided trajectory that maximises the learning impact of this experience, including a preparation and reflection trajectory as part of the major. As part of this trajectory students create a reflection portfolio and a video to demonstrate that they have achieved the intended learning outcomes of their period abroad. Before and during their student exchange, they are supported by their mentor via structured online contact. Furthermore, students who wish to do so, can perform their fourth-year internship abroad. As already mentioned under paragraph 3a, given that TYP students do not study abroad as part of their curriculum, the panel suggests turning the internship into a mandatory internship abroad for TYP students. Every research project, moreover, has to include an explicit international dimension.

Students indicated both in the self-evaluation report and in their discussion with the panel that the IB programme at THUAS constitutes a truly international experience. They were informed before enrolment that IB THUAS is international and intercultural, but several students indicated that the reality surpassed their already high expectations. It goes to the credit of IB THUAS that some students were somewhat disappointed by the international dimension of the host university / programme during their study abroad experience, as the atmosphere was not as international and intercultural as they were used to at THUAS.

The panel gathered from the discussions with students and alumni that the international and intercultural component should also include proper attention to the language and culture of the Netherlands. Several interviewees mentioned that they would like / would have liked more opportunities to study Dutch in the curriculum, as this would enhance their employability with (international) companies in the Netherlands which operate in English but maintain a Dutch office/staff culture.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel **considers** that the IB THUAS curriculum allows students to acquire extensive international and intercultural competences, both through the internationalised curriculum on campus and during the study period abroad. These experiences fully align with the programme's internationalisation goals. In this way, students are well prepared to leave THUAS as highly internationalised global citizens.

The panel **concludes** that IB THUAS students gain extensive internationalisation experience during their studies.

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.

The panel learned that many services that support the geographically and culturally diverse student population at IB THUAS are organised at university level. The international office organises housing, central information provision and the enrolment procedure for international students. Likewise, counselling, provision for special needs and career advice services are organised centrally.

At programme level, mentors work in close collaboration with the student counsellor to accommodate the diverse student population at IB. The panel was informed about the extensive mentoring scheme IB THUAS has developed to support students in their progress, professional orientation and personal development.

Mentors play a particularly important role in the life of the IB student during the first year. At the start of the academic year, a mentor is assigned to every group of 25-30 first year students. There are weekly group meetings on topics such as motivation and learning to learn, as well as four individual coaching sessions. Given the diverse student population, mentors also facilitate collaborative learning among students. In the main phase, students are assigned another mentor for the rest of the programme. Together they look not only at study progress but also to the orientation of the student on the professional world and prepare for key components of the curriculum, such as the study abroad period and the internship.

Students indicated to the panel that they are very satisfied with the quality and availability of the mentors, not only during the first year of the programme but throughout the curriculum. Mentors are very often the first contact point of students; if students need support in the personal sphere, then the mentor will refer the student to the student counsellor for specialised help. This counsellor is proficient in English and has good experience in working in an intercultural environment.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, the panel **considers** that IB students can use a variety of services which are of good quality and benefit the international and intercultural dimension of the programme. The panel thinks highly of the way in which the IB programme coaches its students throughout the entire programme. According to the panel, mentoring is a good example of how core values of a programme and a university can be implemented in a concrete way.

The panel **concludes** that student services are adequate and in line with the objectives of the programme and the composition of the student group.

Overall conclusion on standard 5

The panel concludes that the IB THUAS programme meets all underlying criteria of this standard, and this to a level that systematically and substantially surpasses the current generic quality for this standard. The composition of the student body is truly international and

interculturally diverse. The curriculum allows students to acquire extensive international and intercultural competences both at home and abroad. Moreover, students can use a variety of services which are of good quality and benefit the international and intercultural dimension of the programme. In this regard, mentoring deserves a special mention as it constitutes a good example of how core values of a programme and a university are implemented in a concrete way. Based on the interviews and the examination of the underlying documentation, the panel assesses *Standard 5: Students* as **excellent**.

6. Overview of assessments

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

Annex 1. Composition of the panel

Overview panel requirements

<i>Panel member</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Internat.</i>	<i>Educat.</i>	<i>QA</i>	<i>Student</i>
• Mariëlle Klerks		X		X	
• Gerry Geitz	X		X	X	
• Babak Mehmanpazir	X	X	X	X	
• Natalia Ribberink	X	X	X	X	
• Joris Hahn	X			X	X
• Mark Delmartino		X		X	

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 quality assurance or auditing; or experience as student auditor;

Student: Student with international or internationalisation experience;

Drs. Mariëlle Klerks Panel chair on behalf of AeQui and CeQulnt certified auditor

Dr. Gerry Geitz

Director Education and Research, NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences Leeuwarden

Dr. Babak Mehmenpazir

Vice Dean strategic management and international accreditations, EM Strasbourg Business School, France

Prof. Dr. Natalia Ribberink

Professor of Foreign Trade and International Management, Hamburg University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Joris Hahn BSc

Master student Spatial Transport & Environmental Economics, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Mark Delmartino MA

NVAO-certified panel secretary and CeQulnt certified auditor

The procedure was coordinated by Ir. René Kloosterman, Director of AeQui.

Annex 2. Documents reviewed

Information reports

- Self-Evaluation Report International Business, The Hague University of Applied Sciences, December 2019.
- International Business. Self-Evaluation Report for the Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation, The Hague University of Applied Sciences, December 2019.

Appendices to self-evaluation report

- National profile IB
- Educational Vision THUAS
- Educational Framework Faculty Business, Finance & Marketing
- PLO Matrix
- IBMS competency Framework
- Programme and Examination Regulation and OLP
- Staff overview
- Graduation manual IB 2017-2018 & 2018-2019
- Module descriptions IB and assessment matrix

Materials made available on site

- Documentation Quality Management System IB
- Exam Board - annual reports
- IP8 (Thesis) Committee - annual reports
- Curriculum Committee – meeting minutes and annual reports
- Business Advisory Council - meeting minutes
- Degree programme Advisory Committee - meeting minutes
- Assessment handbook Faculty Business, Finance & Marketing
- Course dossiers
- Selection of handbooks, readers
- THUAS Compasses
- BFM Educational Vision
- Overview old curriculum
- Overview new curriculum
- Staff development plan

Graduation Projects

Representative sample of IB-8 (thesis) projects, Internship reports and Strategic Management assignments and their respective assessments of 15 students who graduated in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019. The list of students is available.

Annex 3. Site visit programme

Overview

Date:	29 - 30 January 2020
Institution:	The Hague University of Applied Sciences
Programme:	Bachelor programme International Business
Location:	Johanna Westerdijkplein 75, The Hague

Programme

Wednesday 29 January 2020

12.30	Arrival panel, preparatory meeting and lunch
14.00	Welcome by programme manager
14.15	Guided tour with presentations at information market
15.00	Round table discussion with student community and IB network
16.30	Meeting with Business Advisory Council and alumni
17.30	Meeting with Faculty & Programme Management
18.15	End of day 1

Thursday 30 January 2020

09.00	Internal panel meeting & open consultation hour
10.00	Meeting with programme management
10.45	Meeting with lecturers
12.00	Internal meeting and lunch
13.00	Meeting on international activities
13.45	Meeting with students
15.00	Internal panel meeting
15.30	Meeting with Exam, Assessment, Curriculum, Thesis committees
16.30	Internal panel meeting
18.00	Feedback to management
18.30	End of site visit

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