

Besluit

Besluit strekkende tot het verlenen van accreditatie aan de opleiding hbo-master International Communication (double degree) van de Hanzehogeschool Groningen in samenwerking met Leeds Beckett University, IULM International University, Libera Università di Lingue e Comunicazione, Vilnius University

	Gegevens	
datum	Naam instelling	: Hanzehogeschool Groningen, in samenwerking met Leeds Beckett University (Verenigd Koninkrijk), IULM International University, Libera Università di Lingue e Comunicazione (Italië), Vilnius University (Litouwen)
31 oktober 2016	Naam opleiding	: hbo-master International Communication (90 EC) (postinitieel; double degree)
onderwerp	Datum aanvraag	: 29 april 2016
Besluit	Graad opleiding	: Master of Arts
accreditatie hbo-master	Variant opleiding	: voltijd
International Communication	Specialisaties	: International Public Affairs; International Marketing Communication; Intercultural Management
(double degree)	Locaties opleiding	: Groningen, Leeds, Milaan, Vilnius
Hanzehogeschool Groningen	Datum goedkeuren panel	: 23 november 2015
(004824)	Datum locatiebezoek	: 28 januari 2016
uw kenmerk	Datum visitatierapport	: 18 april 2016 (herzien: 12 september 2016)
O&O165026	Instellingstoets kwaliteitszorg	: ja, positief besluit van 26 april 2013
ons kenmerk		
NVAO/20162380/ND		
bijlagen		
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Aanvullende informatie

Op verzoek van de NVAO is op 12 september 2016 een herziene versie van het visitatierapport bezorgd. Het gaat om een louter redactionele aanpassing van het samenvattende advies van het visitatiepanel. De NVAO heeft de herziene versie van 12 september 2016 in haar besluit overgenomen.

Beoordelingskader

Beoordelingskader voor de beperkte opleidingsbeoordeling van de NVAO (Stcrt. 2014, nr 36791).

Bevindingen

De NVAO stelt vast dat in het visitatierapport deugdelijk en kenbaar is gemotiveerd op welke gronden het panel de kwaliteit van de opleiding goed heeft bevonden.

Samenvatting bevindingen en overwegingen van het panel.

The Master International Communication (MIC) is a professional Masters programme, offered as a fulltime track by Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen (Hanze UAS). It comprises 90EC and is entirely conducted in English. Its key-objective is to prepare students for strategic communication positions in an international environment and to equip them with the ability to consider and resolve communication issues from a broad managerial perspective, impacting communication level decisions.

The MIC programme has been offered since 2010. It was jointly developed by the Geert Hofstede Consortium that consists of Hanze UAS, Leeds Beckett University, IULM International University - Libera Università di Lingue e Comunicazione and Vilnius University. The development of the programme was enabled through Erasmus Life Long Learning funding.

The MIC is a joint master programme (double degree) over three semesters. A core programme is offered by all participating universities¹, each offering one semester of specialisations in the second semester.

Standard 1. Intended Learning Outcomes

The MIC programme fosters students to become strategic communication advisors. The programme derived its professional and competency profile from the education report published by the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management, the confederation of the world's major PR and communication management associations and institutions. The seven intended learning outcomes apply to all consortium partners and were validated by the international professional field.

The Consortium Board of Reference has been actively involved in the development of the intended learning outcomes. This board consists of authorities and representatives of various leading international alliances and organisations. In regard to the programme competencies it can be said, that they fit the needs of the international work field.

The intended international and intercultural features of the MIC programme have been made explicit in terms of competencies and learning outcomes. The same applies to research in the sense that students are expected to design and perform solid research, analyse data and write a well-founded advice.

The main features that distinguish this Master in International Communication from similar programmes are 'the European perspective' and the 'offering and management of sustainable and innovative solutions to communication problems of the professional field', the latter being clearly reflected in the intended learning outcomes. This aspect also ties in neatly with the profile of Hanze UAS that focusses on Energy and Healthy Aging.

¹ IULM does not offer the first semester of the programme as there were not enough students registering for the entire programme at IULM.

Pagina 3 van 8 Because of its internationally derived learning outcomes, the integration of intercultural and research competencies and the programme's unique profile, the panel considers Standard 1 to be 'good'.

Standard 2. Teaching and Learning Environment

Admission

Enrolment in the MIC programme requires a Bachelor's degree in communication or an extensive work experience at a comparable level. The admission policy also incorporates good English language proficiency, a letter of motivation and two letters of reference. The panel believes these requirements fit the MIC programme. Also the student's applications are screened by both Consortium partners where the applicant wishes to study.

Curriculum

The MIC programme comprises three semesters of 20 weeks each. The first semester features the so-called Core Curriculum, the second semester focusses on the specialisation and the third semester is dedicated to the dissertation. Students start at one of the four partner universities to follow the Core Curriculum. In the second semester they attend another partner university for their specialisation. Students write their dissertation during their third semester under supervision of two of the partner universities.

The cohesion of the curriculum is achieved through the capstone assignments at the end of each module which follow a pattern of increasing complexity. The curriculum is also structured through the professional roles that are – in a slightly implicit way – addressed throughout the programme. The first semester mainly focusses on the roles of manager, researcher and consultant, and the second semester instructs students to be trainer, spokesperson and facilitator. The panel assessed the programme as well-structured, both in terms of content and complexity.

MIC has turned the programme competencies into module competencies. The course outlines describe the learning outcomes per module. The implementation of new modules is discussed during the annual consortium meeting.

The programme relates to the professional practice through the Consortium Board of Reference and the Advisory Board of Hanze UAS MIC. Also, the lecturers participate in various professional networks. The capstone courses always feature real-life cases from external clients. Furthermore, students participate in battles initiated and evaluated by professional international or multinational organisations.

The panel established that applied research is an important element of the MIC curriculum. Each of the communication-related modules includes assignments that demand analysis and research. The Research & Methodology courses support and connect to the capstone assignments. The professorship of Communication & the Sustainable Society contributes as well in creating a research environment within the school.

The international dimension of the MIC programme is reflected in the student population, the mandatory 'going abroad' semester, the literature, the European perspective, the assignments and real life cases, as well as the dissertation topics.

Pagina 4 van 8 Designed on the concept of competency-based learning, the MIC programme uses a varied and adequate mix of teaching methods. With respect to this, the panel would like to refer to the highly instructive boardroom simulation sessions conducted in cooperation with the students of the Master International Business Management.

Staff

The panel is positive about the extremely capable faculty. Except for one, all of the lecturers hold a PhD. They keep up with global communication developments by participating in professional international network organisations, by collaborating in research projects, writing articles and attending conferences. Some of the lecturers run their own consultancy. The lecturers are offered the opportunity and also use it to professionalise both in didactics and in the subjects they teach.

Services and facilities

As part of the audit the panel members conducted a guided tour around the school. The panel observed that the classrooms are well-equipped. There are private spaces for group meetings and individual learning. Students have full access to the (digital) library of both Hanze UAS and the University of Groningen. These libraries are furnished with sufficient books, journals and digital databases and provide students with relevant English-language publications in the communications field.

A digital learning environment is available for all MIC students of the consortium. On Blackboard they can find up-to-date information about the programme and the various courses.

The panel established that the international desk of Hanze UAS serves the special needs of international students. The material facilities and the housing of the programme tie in nicely with the requirements of a professional Masters programme in International Communication.

Altogether, the panel evaluates Standard 2 as 'good'.

Standard 3. Learning Assessment System

On the one hand the MIC programme has to align its methods of assessment with the assessment system adopted by the Consortium and on the other hand has to comply with the assessment policy of its own university.

The MIC programme builds upon a combination of research and practice in international communication. The testing formats, especially the capstone assignments, ensure that students have to combine and integrate all three elements through the development of professional products. With regard to these assignments the panel established that they are solid in level, framework, subjects and grading. Moreover, the programme has mechanisms in place to ensure the validity, reliability and transparency of assignments and tests.

The School of Communication, Media and IT (SCMI) has a collective joint Examination Board. The Assessment Committee is delegated to monitor the quality of the assignments. The Board of Examination as well as the Assessment Committee is well-qualified and well-equipped to fulfill their tasks. Both bodies have a firm position within the organisation. Although the Board's annual report could be more reflective, the panel concludes that the Examination Board is 'in control' of the quality of the graduates. Since MIC is a double degree programme, safeguarding the quality of the assessments and graduation level at the

Pagina 5 van 8 partner universities is assured through the accreditation process at all of the partner universities.

Based on these findings, the panel considers Standard 3 to be 'good'.

Standard 4. Learning outcomes achieved

The achieved learning outcomes of the MIC programme are measured on the basis of the dissertation and an oral defense thereof. The dissertation also includes a reflective portfolio, which is conditional to graduate. The dissertation has to incorporate all seven learning outcomes and reflects 25 EC. The dissertation relates to a real-life problematic situation of a complex nature, which needs to be addressed from a professional communication point of view.

The panel reviewed the dissertations of fifteen students and also looked into some of the reflective portfolios. The panel was pleased with the quality of the final products. They were written in proper English demonstrating both an academic approach and the ability to deliver relevant practical solutions. The panel also praises the graduates' capability to reflect on their work in a solid manner.

In the audit both the work field representatives and the alumni expressed their satisfaction about students' professional performance. The panel is convinced that the MIC students are well-prepared to act at Master's level as strategic communication advisors in an international environment.

The panel therefore rates Standard 4 as 'good'.

Overall conclusion

The Master International Communication of Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen is a solid Master level programme. The programme has incorporated the profile of the Geert Hofstede Consortium as well as the Hanze UAS' profile, as it is clearly positioned into the broader environmental and societal context.

The MIC programme has a clear international focus, it is up-to-date and covers both academic and practical aspects. Research is used throughout the curriculum and contributes to creating a useful advice report. The real-life cases, the challenging battles, the board room simulations, the well-qualified faculty and the international environment are strong elements of the programme that help students to become strategic communication advisors of the future.

The panel evaluates all standards as 'good'. Hence, following NVAO regulations the overall judgement on the Master International Communication of Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen reads 'good'.

Ingevolge het bepaalde in artikel 5a.10, derde lid, van de WHW heeft de NVAO het college van bestuur van de Hanzehogeschool Groningen te Groningen in de gelegenheid gesteld zijn zienswijze op het voornemen tot besluit van 29 augustus 2016 naar voren te brengen. Van deze gelegenheid heeft het college van bestuur geen gebruik gemaakt.

De NVAO besluit accreditatie te verlenen aan de postinitiële hbo-master International Communication (double degree) (90 EC; variant: voltijd; locaties: Groningen, United Kingdom, Italy, Lithuania) van de Hanzehogeschool Groningen, te Groningen, Leeds Beckett University, IULM International University, Libera Università di Lingue e Comunicazione, Vilnius University. De opleiding kent de volgende specialisaties: International Public Affairs; Internationaal Marketing Communication; Intercultural Management. De NVAO beoordeelt de kwaliteit van de opleiding als goed.

De toevoeging 'of Arts' wordt aan de graad Master toegevoegd indien ten minste 70% van de opleidingen binnen een cluster is geaccrediteerd na 1 januari 2012².

Dit besluit treedt in werking op 31 oktober 2016 en is van kracht tot en met 30 oktober 2022.

Den Haag, 31 oktober 2016

De NVAO
Voor deze:

bla 

Dr. A.H. Flierman
(voorzitter)

Paul Zevenbergen
Bestuurder

Tegen dit besluit kan op grond van het bepaalde in de Algemene wet bestuursrecht door een belanghebbende bezwaar worden gemaakt bij de NVAO. De termijn voor het indienen van bezwaar bedraagt zes weken.

² Stcrt. 2013, 35337 en Stcrt. 2015, 27438. De NVAO publiceert maandelijks een overzicht van deze clusters op haar website.

Standaard		Beoordeling door het panel
1. Beoogde eindkwalificaties	De beoogde eindkwalificaties van de opleiding zijn wat betreft inhoud, niveau en oriëntatie geconcretiseerd en voldoen aan internationale eisen.	goed
2. Onderwijsleeromgeving	Het programma, het personeel en de opleidingsspecifieke voorzieningen maken het voor de instromende studenten mogelijk de beoogde eindkwalificaties te realiseren.	goed
3. Toetsing	De opleiding beschikt over een adequaat systeem van toetsing.	goed
4. Gerealiseerde eindkwalificaties	De opleiding toont aan dat de beoogde eindkwalificaties worden gerealiseerd.	goed
Eindoordeel		goed

De standaarden krijgen het oordeel onvoldoende, voldoende, goed of excellent. Het eindoordeel over de opleiding als geheel wordt op dezelfde schaal gegeven.

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- Drs. W.G. van Raaijen (*chair*), senior advisor and partner at Hobéon, The Hague;
- Prof. dr. A.M. Cotton, professor Communication Studies at the Arteveldehogeschool in Ghent, Belgium. She is also co-ordinator of the Master in European Public Relations, offered by EUPRERA, The European Public Relations Education and Research Association;
- S. Yarwood, Director Marketing at Starbucks for Europe, Middle East and Africa;
- C. Sardelis (*student member*), master student International Communication Management at The Hague University of Applied Sciences, The Hague.

Het panel is ondersteund door I. van der Hoorn MSc, secretaris (gecertificeerd).