

Assessment report

Bachelor of Business Administration International Business

Rotterdam Business School
Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences



Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation



The European Consortium for
Accreditation in Higher Education

Assessment report

Bachelor of Business Administration International Business

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European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education



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Glossary

BUS	Business (learning line)
CeQInt	Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation
CoIA	Centre of International Affairs
EEA	European Economic Area
GMM	Global Mind Monitor
IB	International Business
IC	Intercultural Competences
ILO	International / Intercultural Learning Outcome
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LAN	Languages (learning line)
NVAO	Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders ('Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie')
PAC	Programme Advisory Committee
PAS	Professional & Academic Skills (learning line)
PLO	Programme Learning Outcome
PPD	Personal Professional Development
RBS	Rotterdam Business School
RUAS	Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences



1. Executive summary

The international nature of the bachelor programme International Business (IB), offered by Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences was assessed by an assessment panel on behalf of the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO). The panel studied the programme's self-evaluation report, including annexes, and undertook a site visit in Rotterdam on 18 April 2023.

Based on the information gathered from the self-evaluation report, its annexes and the site visit, the panel concludes that the programme has formulated and documented internationalisation goals that are linked to the quality of teaching and learning. Regarding the development of intercultural skills within a diverse learning environment, the goals are widely recognised and supported by stakeholders within and outside the programme. The panel especially appreciates the strong engagement of the members of the Advisory Board. The involvement of alumni is a point for improvement.

The programme is offered by the Rotterdam Business School (RBS), an institute of RUAS. The panel learnt that IB and RBS overlap to a large extent. The programme's internationalisation goals are therefore derived from RBS's vision on internationalisation and have been translated into concrete activities at programme level. Each goal is related to objectives, Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and targets that allow for monitoring of their achievement.

The panel is of the opinion that the programme could strengthen its communication about the intended internationalisation by reformulating the goals in a more explicit way, fitting the RBS vision on internationalisation. It may be beneficial to present the international strategy as one intention, instead of dividing it into smaller pieces. The panel also recommends rephrasing the objectives in a SMART manner to make it easier to measure results. Overall, the panel deems the underlying criteria of this standard to be met and therefore assesses *Standard 1. Intended internationalisation* as **satisfactory**.

The panel established that the programme's international and intercultural learning outcomes (ILO) correspond with the programme's internationalisation goals. They originate from the national framework International Business. The panel appreciates that the learning outcomes refer to the development of professional skills. In order to strengthen the programme's profile, the panel recommends to link the learning outcomes directly to the RBS strategy.

The ILOs are, in general, adequately assessed through projects and business assignments. Still, the panel recommends to include the international dimension more explicitly in all assessment rubrics to ensure that all study work includes a clear international perspective. The panel commends the programme for the use of the GMM as a reflection tool. All in all, the panel deems the underlying criteria of this standard to be met and therefore assesses *Standard 2. International and intercultural learning* as **satisfactory**.



According to the panel, the IB programme has a curriculum that is in line with the ILOs. The integration of the BUS and PAS learning lines provides a strong international backbone to the curriculum and the use of the 'cultural lens' approach in the development of intercultural competences can be regarded as a good practice. Students directly apply what they have learnt in culturally diverse project teams and the panel considers it a strength that this further stimulates the integration of BUS and PAS. Throughout the curriculum, the complexity of (professional) contexts increases, gradually preparing students for a career in international business.

The learning environment provides adequate facilities, and the city of Rotterdam offers many opportunities for international cooperation. The panel recommends that the programme explains how it deploys its location to intentionally and structurally improve the quality of its international education. Overall, the panel is of the opinion that the programme surpasses the generic quality for this standard and assesses *Standard 3: Teaching and Learning* as **good**.

The panel spoke with enthusiastic and qualified staff members who showed a strong commitment to the programme. They represent a wide range of nationalities and cultures and have ample international experience. The panel commends the programme for its staff training programme on intercultural competence development, which can be regarded as an exemplary practice. The panel recommends to make all staff trainings available in English and to stimulate lecturers to go abroad for teaching activities. The panel considers the programme to surpass the generic quality for this standard and therefore assesses *Standard 4: Staff* as **good**.

The panel found that the IB programme attracts students from very diverse backgrounds, creating a truly international and intercultural student community. The percentage of international students – both degree-seeking and exchange students – is in line with the programme's goal. Students are required to follow an internship at an international company abroad (domestic students) or in the Netherlands (international students) and may additionally go on exchange in another country. The panel appreciates that the programme offers many different options for students to spend part of their time abroad and has several services in place to make students feel at home in Rotterdam. All in all, the panel concludes that the IB programme surpasses the generic quality for this standard and therefore assesses *Standard 5: Students* as **good**.

The panel considers the IB programme to be a truly international programme due to the curriculum that combines business theory with the development of relevant professional skills and languages. The programme focuses on the development of intercultural competences among students and staff, enabling them to thrive in an international study and work environment. The panel therefore advises to award the Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation.



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:

- Joep C. de Jong (*panel chair*), lecturer Business Transformation at Hotelschool The Hague (the Netherlands), lecturer Appreciative Inquiry Certification Programme at the David L. Cooperrider Center of Champlain College (USA) and guest lecturer Entrepreneurship & Appreciative Inquiry at ESCP (Germany);
- Natalia Ribberink, Professor of Foreign Trade and International Management, Hamburg University of Applied Sciences (Germany);
- Joost Haandrikman, Head of Education at International Business School Hanze University of Applied Sciences (the Netherlands);
- Eva Delooz, master student Occupational Therapy at Ghent University (Belgium).

On behalf of NVAO, Anne Klaas Schilder was responsible for the coordination of the procedure. The secretary, Anne Martens MA, drafted the panel report in close cooperation with all panel members and in agreement with the panel chair.

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 and the secretary signed a statement of independence and confidentiality. These signed statements are available from NVAO upon request.

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 organised a preparatory meeting on 3 April 2023. The site visit took place on 18 April 2023 at Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences ([Annex 3: Site visit programme](#)).

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

The panel finalised the draft report on 17 May 2023. It was then sent to the institution to review the report for factual inaccuracies. This led to minor adjustments. The panel approved the final version of the report on 30 May 2023.



3. Basic information

Qualification:	Bachelor of Business Administration in International Business
Number of credits:	240 ECTS ¹ credits
Specialisations:	Commerce, Marketing, Supply Chain, Organisation & Change
ISCED field(s) of study:	0311 Economics / 041 Business and administration
Institution:	Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences
Type of institution:	public
Status:	Programme accredited
QA / accreditation agency:	Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO)
Status period:	Accreditation for an indefinite period of time, as of 2 July 2019

Additional information:

The bachelor programme International Business (IB) is part of the Rotterdam Business School (RBS). This institute of Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences currently offers one international bachelor programme and twomaster programmes. The IB programme started in September 2018 when the three bachelor programmes Trade Management Asia (TMA), International Business and Management Studies (IBMS) and International Business and Languages (IBL) merged. In September 2023, RBS will join other (Dutch) programmes in the economic domain in one institute and move to a new location. One of the reasons the IB programme applies for the Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation (CeQulnt) is to strengthen its profile within the new institute and to inspire other economic programmes at RUAS to bridge the gap between cultures, countries and people.

¹ European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System



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	<p>The programme does not meet the current generic quality for this standard.</p> <p>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.</p>
Satisfactory	<p>The programme meets the current generic quality for this standard.</p> <p>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.</p>
Good	<p>The programme surpasses the current generic quality for this standard.</p> <p>The programme clearly goes beyond the acceptable level of attainment across the standard's entire spectrum. None of the underlying criteria have any shortcomings.</p>
Excellent	<p>The programme systematically and substantially surpasses the current generic quality for this standard.</p> <p>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.</p>



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 programme International Business (IB) is offered by Rotterdam Business School (RBS), an institute of Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences (RUAS). The programme's main goal is "to educate and train resilient business experts that are capable of behaving effectively yet at the same time also appropriately in an international business context". Due to the merger of bachelor programmes in 2018, IB is currently RBS's only bachelor programme and during the assessment the panel learnt that therefore IB and RBS overlap to a large extent. The programme's internationalisation goals are therefore derived from RBS's vision. Internationalisation within the IB programme is considered to be an intentional process of integrating relevant international, intercultural and global dimensions in all aspects.

The overall RBS strategy contains four key areas: employability, sustainability, inclusivity and optimal use of resources. Internationalisation is seen as an instrument that contributes to the achievement of goals and targets within these key areas. It should contribute to graduates' employability while making them more aware of the role of sustainability in a competitive international business environment. The institute has a highly culturally diverse student population, reflecting the Rotterdam society, and is devoted to creating an inclusive work and study environment for all. Finally, it aims to use its financial resources as efficiently as possible while implementing the different aspects of its mission.

The self-evaluation report states that IB does not work with separate internationalisation goals, but that all the programme's goals have an international, intercultural and global dimension. The report lists three separate goals: (1) develop and offer an internationally oriented curriculum that is distinctive, relevant, contextual and above all student-centred, (2) ensure that the composition and skillset of the teaching staff reflects the diversity of the student population, and (3) provide an international, culturally diverse and inclusive educational environment.

The self-evaluation report shows that the programme involves different stakeholder groups at regular intervals. These include professionals from the international business field, internship companies, managers of other IB programmes in the Netherlands, the Research Center Business Innovation (Kennis Centrum Business Innovation, KCBI) and student representatives. The panel especially appreciates the strong engagement of the members of the Advisory Board, some of whom have been involved in the programme for a long time. The involvement of alumni is a point for improvement, which was also stressed by various stakeholders during the site visit.



The self-evaluation report describes that “internationalisation is at the heart of the entire programme” and that RBS is RUAS’s most international institute. The panel recommends that the programme conducts a benchmark to compare itself with other IB programmes in order to investigate which parts of the programme stand out and which aspects require further development.

Conclusion and recommendations

The panel concludes that the internationalisation goals for the programme are documented and related to RBS’s strategy and vision on internationalisation. The goals are supported by stakeholders within and outside the programme. The panel notes that the goals themselves remain somewhat implicit and therefore recommends to reformulate them. According to the panel, it will be worthwhile to involve alumni and work field partners in this process because they could make the goals more tangible based on their own experiences in the programme and after graduation. This might also strengthen the programme’s position among the economics and business programmes at RUAS.

Criterion 1b: Verifiable objectives

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

The self-evaluation report includes a translation of the three programme goals to international objectives. Each goal has one to four related objectives, up to five Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and related targets. The targets are clearly linked to the goals and formulated in quantitative and qualitative terms, for instance ‘at least 75% of the lecturers have completed the intercultural development training’ or ‘broad support of the Advisory Board for the international dimensions of the curriculum’. The panel believes that the objectives and related KPIs and targets enable the programme management and lecturers to put the internationalisation agenda into practice. Nevertheless, the panel thinks it would be useful if the targets are formulated in a more SMART way and if the programme explains the rationale behind them.

The panel appreciates the appointment of a specific course director who is in charge of internationalisation. This person oversees internationalisation activities, safeguards the implementation of strategic objectives and develops relationships with existing and new partner institutions.

Conclusion and recommendations

The panel concludes that objectives have been formulated and that these objectives are verifiable. They allow for monitoring the achievement of the programme’s internationalisation goals. Still, the panel recommends reviewing the objectives and to formulate them in a more SMART manner to make it easier to measure results.

Criterion 1c: Impact on education

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



The programme considers internationalisation to be an instrument to enhance the quality of education for both students and staff. During the site visit, the panel discussed this aspect in all sessions and understood that representatives mainly see the international curriculum and the development of intercultural skills as assets for the employability of graduates. The learning environment enables students to work in culturally diverse project groups, exposing them to the benefits and pitfalls of international project work. Thus, they develop the relevant professional skills as well as language skills, that are necessary to pursue a career in international business.

The programme's learning goals are related to the quality of teaching and learning because they focus on the curriculum, staff and learning environment. The programme has translated the goals to concrete activities and projects that support their implementation. Although the panel understands the value added by the goals and measures, the panel is of the opinion that the programme could elaborate more on the positive impact of internationalisation and a diverse learning environment on education, and on how the programme safeguards this.

Conclusion and recommendations

The panel concludes that the internationalisation goals are linked to the quality of teaching and learning, especially regarding the development of intercultural skills within a diverse learning environment. All representatives and stakeholders presented a consistent picture, relating internationalisation to improved employability of graduates. The programme has translated the overall goals to measures that may improve the quality of education. Nevertheless, the panel recommends communicating more clearly how internationalisation may have a positive impact on education.

Overall conclusion regarding Standard 1. Intended internationalisation

Based on the information gathered from the self-evaluation report, its annexes and the site visit, the panel concludes that the programme has formulated and documented internationalisation goals that are linked to the quality of teaching and learning, especially regarding the development of intercultural skills within a diverse learning environment. The goals are widely recognised and supported by stakeholders within and outside the programme. The panel especially appreciates the strong engagement of the members of the Advisory Board. The involvement of alumni is a point for improvement.

The goals are derived from RBS's vision on internationalisation and have been translated into concrete activities at programme level. Each goal is related to objectives, KPIs and targets that allow for monitoring of their achievement. The panel is of the opinion that the programme could strengthen its communication about the intended internationalisation by reformulating the goals in a more explicit way. It may be beneficial to present the international strategy as one intention, instead of dividing it into smaller pieces. The panel also recommends to rephrase the objectives in a SMART manner to make it easier to measure results. Overall, the panel deems the underlying criteria of this standard to be met and therefore assesses *Standard 1. Intended internationalisation* as **satisfactory**.



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 self-evaluation report describes that the IB programme aims to prepare students for a career in international business. Graduates are globally engaged, responsible and innovative business professionals with a wide frame of reference. The programme follows the national framework International Business and its 24 programme learning outcomes (PLO). Half of these PLOs contain international elements and are therefore called international or intercultural learning outcomes (ILO). The other twelve PLOs are more generic but gain an international dimension because they are taught in an international context or focus on transversal skills. According to the panel, this is a rather artificial divide, because all PLOs together form an integrated whole. The panel recommends to review the learning outcomes and link them directly to the four key areas of the RBS strategy and the profile of the globally engaged professional.

The programme categorises the ILOs in several ways. Firstly, by means of four categories: (1) Ways of Working, (2) Living in the World, (3) Ways of Thinking, and (4) Tools for Working and Management. Secondly, via eight themes – (1) International Business Communication, (2) Collaboration, (3) Management of Information as Digital Citizen, (4) Intercultural Proficiency, (5) International Business Awareness, (6) Marketing & Sales, (7) Finance & Accounting, and (8) Business Research. Finally, the programme distinguishes five ILOs that focus on business skills and knowledge from seven ILOs that aim to develop international and intercultural skills.

Together, the ILOs and other PLOs are the foundation of the internationally oriented curriculum and enable students to function in a diverse environment – in line with the programme's goals. Each learning outcome is addressed multiple times throughout the curriculum, and in different contexts. The panel appreciates that the learning outcomes refer sufficiently to the development of professional skills, which the panel deems essential for business professionals operating in an international context.

Conclusion and recommendations

The panel concludes that the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes correspond with the programme's internationalisation goals. They are the foundation of the internationally oriented curriculum and enable students to function in a diverse environment. The panel appreciates that the learning outcomes refer to the development of professional skills. The panel recommends to review the learning outcomes and link them directly to the four key areas of the RBS strategy and the profile of the globally engaged professional. Thus, the programme could strengthen its profile.

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 self-evaluation report describes that IB students are assessed in professional and intercultural contexts, both on an individual and on a group level. The development of ILOs is mainly concentrated in the first three years of the programme and integrated in all modules. Their assessment is part of the regular assessment of projects or business assignments. The panel considers this a suitable approach. All assignments are graded on the basis of rubrics, which include a section on ILOs. In addition to summative assessments, students receive 360 degree (formative) feedback from lecturers, coaches, company supervisors and peers. Students are also asked to reflect on the development of their intercultural competences via a portfolio.

The programme uses the Global Mind Monitor (GMM) to measure students' intercultural proficiency in terms of ethnocentrism, multicultural personality and cultural intelligence. The GMM is a means to make cultural awareness less abstract. Students participate in the GMM twice: at the beginning of year 1 and before they go abroad for an internship or exchange. During the site visit, the panel learnt that students use the outcome of the GMM as a starting point to reflect on their own intercultural development and to formulate personal intercultural learning goals. They are not assessed on the results of the GMM themselves but on the way they reflect on them. The panel considers it valuable that the programme uses this standardised instrument and that it has integrate it adequately in the programme. The panel stresses that the second GMM measurement should not be an endpoint for students, but rather an opportunity to see where they stand in developing their intercultural and international skills.

The panel studied projects and assignments from students of all four study years. It encountered works with a clear international topic, but also works that lacked an international perspective. The panel discussed this with the Exam Board and recommends to integrate the international dimension more explicitly in all assessment rubrics, in order to ensure that all assignments have an international orientation. Such a requirement could be included in the assessment plan that the programme intends to develop for the assessment of ILOs.

Conclusion and recommendations

The panel concludes that methods used for the assessment of students are in general suitable for measuring the achievement of the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. The panel commends the programme for the use of the GMM. The assessment of ILOs is integrated in projects and business assignments in years 1, 2 and 3. The panel advises to strengthen the link to the ILOs in year 4. Because the panel encountered works that did not have a clear international perspective, the panel recommends to integrate the international dimension more explicitly in all assessment rubrics.

Criterion 2c: Graduate achievement

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

Students demonstrate the achievement of the ILOs throughout the IB programme, in projects, assignments and during an internship in year 3. For each student, minimally ten of



the twelve ILOs are summatively assessed at level 3 of the Aucom Framework, corresponding with bachelor level; the other two ILOs are assessed at level 2. At the end of the internship, students and their internship supervisors evaluate whether the student is prepared to work in an international business setting. During the site visit, the panel learnt from representatives of the professional field that they are impressed with students from the IB programme because of their flexibility, knowledge of languages and professional skills.

In the self-evaluation report, the programme remarks that it could strengthen its ties with alumni of the programme. The self-evaluation report did not include figures about the careers of IB graduates, but the panel spoke with alumni who indicated that they were well-prepared for a job in international business. Staff members mentioned that alumni are usually involved through the personal connections of lecturers and that they see opportunities to include alumni in guest lectures and/or as ambassadors in the pursuit of new partner organisations. The panel agrees and advises to structurally involve alumni in the programme.

Conclusion and recommendations

The panel concludes that the graduates achieve the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. The panel recommends strengthening the ties with alumni in order to follow the future careers of graduates and to create connections between past and current students.

Overall conclusion regarding Standard 2. International and intercultural learning

The panel established that the programme's ILOs correspond with the programme's internationalisation goals. They originate from the national framework International Business. The panel appreciates that the learning outcomes refer to the development of professional skills. In order to strengthen the programme's profile, the panel recommends linking the learning outcomes directly to the RBS strategy.

The ILOs are, in general, adequately assessed through projects and business assignments. Still, the panel recommends to integrate the international dimension more explicitly in all assessment rubrics to ensure that all study work includes a clear international perspective. The panel commends the programme for the use of the GMM as a reflection tool. All in all, the panel deems the underlying criteria of this standard to be met and therefore assesses *Standard 2. International and intercultural learning* as **satisfactory**.

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 self-evaluation report and its annexes describe the structure and contents of the IB curriculum. The programme of 240 ECTS credits consists of eight semesters. Each year has a specific theme. All students follow core modules in the first year ('Discover') and choose a specialisation in their second year ('Practice'). In their third year, they do an internship ('Experience') and in the fourth year, they finish the programme with a minor or international



exchange and a thesis project ('Become an IB Professional'). By means of a matrix, the programme shows that all ILOs are addressed in the curriculum. The ILOs are also mentioned in the course descriptions, where they are translated into specific learning outcomes on module level.

Three learning lines run throughout the curriculum: (1) business (BUS), (2) languages (LAN), and (3) professional and academic skills (PAS). Six focal points are related to these three learning lines: (1) Leadership, (2) Circular Economy, (3) Purpose Economy, (4) Digital Economy, (5) Intercultural competence, and (6) Language and Culture. Whereas the first four focal points are also used in other economics programmes at RUAS, the last two are specific to the IB programme. While reading the self-evaluation report, the panel had the impression that the programme follows a standard IB curriculum. However, during the site visit, the panel learnt that the two learning lines BUS and PAS are intertwined, providing a strong international backbone. The panel attended a lesson and saw concrete examples of how the two are integrated in practice.

The PAS learning line consists of multiple parts. Firstly, modules on intercultural competences run from year 1 to year 3. The aim of these modules is to familiarise students with the concept of intercultural sensitivity and intercultural competences. Students are introduced to the theory behind these concepts, and stimulated to reflect on them and to apply them to their own behaviour in intercultural contexts. They work on a portfolio and determine their personal intercultural development goals. During the site visit, the panel learnt that the concept of the 'cultural lens' plays an important role: students become aware of how their own cultural lens can both benefit and impede the way they collaborate in an international and culturally diverse work context. The panel appreciates this approach. Secondly, modules on Personal Professional Development (PPD) also addresses intercultural competence development. Students reflect on their own intercultural competence development and their behaviour in international and culturally diverse contexts. They may use the outcome of the GMM as input for reflection reports and discuss the results with their PPD coach.

The curriculum also contains practical components related to international and intercultural competences. Students are immersed in international and intercultural learning situations and work on business assignments and projects in culturally diverse project teams. The panel considers it a strength that this stimulates the integration of the BUS and PAS learning lines. All in all, students participate in nine projects: four in year 1 and year 2, and one in year 3. In year 3 and year 4, students spend one or two semesters abroad (see also criterion 5b). Internships take place in another country or at an international company in the Netherlands. At the start of their internship, students formulate personal learning goals – at least one of these goals has to be related to the development of intercultural competences. During the internship, students work on two internship assignments related to the development of intercultural competences. They reflect on the assignments during interviews with their PPD coach. The thesis process consists of a practice-oriented research project for an internationally operating company in the Netherlands or abroad.



Cultural aspects are also addressed in the learning line on foreign languages. All students study one European or Asian language² during the IB programme. The panel agrees with the programme that knowledge of related cultures to be indispensable to communicate appropriately and effectively, although it is not necessarily enough on its own. The panel advises to investigate how the LAN learning line can be integrated with the BUS and PAS learning lines.

Conclusion and recommendations

The panel concludes that the content and the structure of the curriculum provide the necessary means for achieving the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. The panel appreciates the integration of the BUS and PAS learning lines and advises to investigate how the LAN learning line can be further integrated, too. The panel commends the programme for the use of the 'cultural lens' approach in the development of intercultural competences.

Criterion 3b: Teaching methods

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

The self-evaluation report and the Course Profile describe the teaching methods used. The international classroom is central to the IB programme. In addition, the programme works with collaborative learning, contextual learning and integrated learning. Students work on realistic cases in culturally diverse project teams, in order to stimulate intercultural learning. During the site visit, students explained how they learn from each other and how they are supported in the learning process by teaching staff who take up a role as mentor.

The panel appreciates how students gradually work on the ILOs and develop their intercultural competences. The complexity of (professional) contexts increases over the years, starting with theory and small simulated cases to real-life assignments for international companies. Theoretically, students start looking through their own cultural lens, then consider the lenses of others – preparing for an internship in a different country.

Conclusion and recommendations

The panel concludes that the teaching methods are suitable for achieving the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. Students work together in culturally diverse project teams, where they can directly apply their newly developed intercultural skills. Throughout the curriculum, the complexity of (professional) contexts increases, preparing students for a career in international business.

Criterion 3c: Learning environment

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

² Students may choose from Dutch, French, German, Indonesian, Mandarin, Korean, Vietnamese, Japanese, Spanish or Russian.



The panel agrees with RBS that the IB programme is situated in a very international environment: Rotterdam is one of the most culturally diverse cities in the Netherlands and hosts a vast amount of internationally oriented companies due to the presence of the biggest port in Europe. This offers many opportunities for cooperation between education and the professional field. The panel recommends that the programme explains how it deploys its location to intentionally and structurally improve the quality of its international education. The programme attracts students and staff members from all over the world, creating an intercultural learning environment within RUAS. This allows students to become aware of cultural differences and to develop their intercultural sensitivity and proficiency. English is used as the language for instruction and for all communication with students and other stakeholders.

The programme is currently hosted in a former office building, but will move to another building in Rotterdam in September 2023. The new building offers students more space to meet each other as well as students from other programmes in the economic domain. The panel followed a short virtual tour and concludes that the new building will provide all necessary facilities. Students may use the RUAS library as well as subscriptions to international journals and international business databases.

Conclusion and recommendations

The panel concludes that the learning environment provides students with excellent opportunities to achieve the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. The programme is situated at a very international location and attracts a diverse population of students and staff. The new building will stimulate the interaction between students. The panel recommends that the programme explains how it deploys its location to intentionally and structurally improve the quality of its international education.

Overall conclusion regarding Standard 3: Teaching and Learning

According to the panel, the IB programme has a curriculum that is in line with the ILOs. The integration of the BUS and PAS learning lines provides a strong international backbone to the curriculum and the use of the 'cultural lens' approach in the development of intercultural competences can be regarded as a good practice. Students directly apply what they have learnt in culturally diverse project teams and the panel considers it a strength that this further stimulates the integration of BUS and PAS. Throughout the curriculum, the complexity of (professional) contexts increases, gradually preparing students for a career in international business.

The learning environment provides adequate facilities and the city of Rotterdam offers many opportunities for international cooperation. The panel recommends that the programme explains how it deploys its location to intentionally and structurally improve the quality of its international education. Overall, the panel is of the opinion that the programme surpasses the generic quality for this standard and assesses *Standard 3: Teaching and Learning* as **good**.



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.

IB's international staff team contributes considerably to the international learning environment. One of the programme's goals relates to the composition of the teaching staff, which should reflect the diversity of the student population. The self-evaluation report mentions that the diversity among staff is not as high as that among students, but overall the management and students are satisfied with the diversity within the lecturer team. New staff members need to have relevant international experience and demonstrable intercultural competences.

The self-evaluation report and its annexes provided more details about the composition of the staff team. The panel learnt that the lecturer team consists of 125 FTE and has a substantial international component: 41% of the staff members are non-Dutch. The vast majority of them are from the EU, other European countries or North America. Only a small percentage is from Asia (3.6%), Africa (1.4%) or South America (0.7%). The panel was pleased to hear that the programme intends to attract more staff from these areas.

During the site visit, the panel spoke with enthusiastic staff members who showed a strong commitment to the programme. They feel sufficiently supported by the IB programme management and appreciate their international work environment. They enjoy working with internationally operating companies, because it keeps them informed about trends and developments. Students also praised the international composition of the staff team and the support they receive from their lecturers.

Conclusion and recommendations

The panel concludes that the composition of the staff contributes considerably to the achievement of the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. The panel appreciates the programme's intention to attract more staff from underrepresented regions.

Criterion 4b: Experience

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

The panel studied an overview of the qualifications and experiences of all staff members connected to the IB programme. The data in the overview support the figures in the self-evaluation report: 64% of the staff members have international experience, many staff members worked at international companies within the Netherlands (61%) or have obtained an internationally oriented master degree (64%). The majority of staff members have more than five years of international experience abroad. Relevant international experience and intercultural competences are selection criteria that the programme applies when hiring new staff members. Lecturers who are not native speakers of English or who did not follow a master programme in English need to follow a Cambridge English course up to level C1



(CEFR³). All staff members are expected to follow a training on intercultural competences (see criterion 4c).

Conclusion and recommendations

Based on the information received in the self-evaluation report, its annexes and during the site visit, the panel concludes that staff members have ample internationalisation experience and intercultural competences, as well as a good command of the English language. The programme management takes these aspects into account when hiring new staff members.

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.

During the 2021-2022 academic year, 82% of the lecturers, managers and support staff participated in an intensive training programme on intercultural competence development, which is now also part of the onboarding process for new lecturers. The aim of the training is to familiarise staff with the main principles behind intercultural competence development, ways to make education more inclusive and recognise possible exclusion mechanisms that could stand in the way of an inclusive learning environment. The panel appreciates this service because it gives staff members a good understanding of their own cultural lens and it will likely support the development of intercultural competences among students. The programme notes that lecturers who followed the training improved significantly in terms of the multicultural personality and cultural intelligence constructs of the GMM. The panel suggests to assess the impact of the training on the quality of the programme as well. Participation in the training and performance in terms of intercultural sensitivity are evaluated in the yearly reviews with lecturers. Apart from this training, staff members organise sessions about giving feedback and intercultural aspects of the curriculum.

Lecturers may also participate in courses offered by RUAS's HR Academy. The course 'Internationalisation in the classroom' is offered in English, while the courses on inclusive communication and on the added value of diversity are only available in Dutch. The self-evaluation report mentions that the RBS management has addressed this issue in its communication with the RUAS Board and the HR Department. The panel urges the programme management to follow-up on this request.

The self-evaluation report mentions that IB lecturers may participate in international staff mobility programmes or attend guest lectures by professors from partner universities. During the site visit, the panel learnt that staff mobility mainly consists of attending international conferences and events to present research projects. Mobility related to teaching dropped during the covid-19 pandemic. The panel encourages the programme to stimulate international teacher exchange in the coming years and to explore opportunities for virtual mobility and online collaborative formats.

Conclusion and recommendations

³ Common European Framework of Reference for Languages



The panel concludes that the services provided to the staff are consistent with the staff composition. The panel commends the programme for its staff training programme on intercultural competence development. The panel recommends to make all trainings available in English and to stimulate lecturers to engage in international teaching, business and research activities.

Overall conclusion regarding Standard 4: Staff

The panel spoke with enthusiastic and qualified staff members who showed a strong commitment to the programme, the students and each other. They represent a wide range of nationalities and cultures and have ample international experience. The panel commends the programme for its staff training programme on intercultural competence development, which can be regarded as an exemplary practice. The panel recommends to make all staff trainings available in English and to stimulate lecturers to go abroad for teaching activities. The panel considers the programme to surpass the generic quality for this standard and therefore assesses *Standard 4: Staff* as **good**.

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.

The programme strives to attract a diverse student population, both in terms of nationality and cultural background. Concretely, the internationalisation goals specify that the programme aspires to a ratio of 30-40% of international students and a minimum of 100 incoming exchange students. The programme's current student population meets these goals: 37% of the 2,859 students are international students (50% in years 1 and 2) and yearly, well over 100 students from institutions abroad join the IB programme for at least one semester. In addition, the self-evaluation report mentions that the student population is a good reflection of the cultural diversity within the Rotterdam metropolitan area: approximately 50% of all domestic students have a non-western background.

At the moment, the programme's degree-seeking students represent over eighty nationalities. In the self-evaluation report, the programme notes that incoming exchange students tend to come from different countries than degree-seeking students and therefore add to the variety of cultural backgrounds. Overall, the majority of international students comes from the EEA (75%). Since the covid-19 pandemic, the programme has seen a sharp increase in both EEA and non-EEA students and a significant decrease in domestic students. The panel invites the programme to investigate the reasons for these changes.

The department Centre of International Affairs (CoIA) is responsible for the recruitment of international students and aims to ensure that the influx of international students is sufficiently diverse. This department also checks the applications of potential students. The panel recommends formulating the programme's ambitions regarding the geographical origin of students, which will also support the work of CoIA.

Conclusion and recommendations



The panel concludes that the IB programme attracts a very diverse student population and that the composition is in line with the programme's goals. The panel recommends formulating the ambitions regarding the geographical origin of students in order to support the recruitment of students.

Criterion 5b: Experience

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

The IB programme places a strong focus on the use of the international classroom. Throughout the site visit, all representatives stressed the value of working in culturally diverse project groups. The panel appreciates that the programme spreads cultures and nationalities as much as possible, and that the composition of project groups changes regularly. Students work on international business related assignments, follow guest lectures and participate in field trips to international companies. Thus, all students gain a thorough international experience while studying in Rotterdam.

Depending on their specialisation, students spend one or two semesters abroad for an internship and/or exchange. International students are exempted from exchange and internship abroad because they already study in a foreign country. Instead, they may follow an internship at an internationally-oriented company in the Netherlands and choose from a number of international RUAS minors. The panel considers this a logical choice. In addition, students also need to write their thesis for an internationally operating company, which may be located abroad.

During an international internship, students work on two assignments related to intercultural development. These assignments stimulate students to reflect on their own behaviour in an international and intercultural work environment and to maximise their intercultural learning experience. A semester abroad at a partner university lets students study in a different academic setting, learn from local and international students and develop their language and intercultural skills. Historically, the programme has strong ties with partners in Asia and a relatively large number of students do their internships with companies in Malaysia, China or Indonesia. The panel was pleased to hear that the programme is investigating cooperation with partner institutions and companies elsewhere.

The programme also organises optional extracurricular events and activities – such as network events, workshops with international companies and international student trips – that offer students the opportunity to develop their international network and work on their international and intercultural skills. IB students may also participate in the yearly NIBS⁴ Worldwide case competition, where they meet students from other business institutes. The panel agrees with students that it would be valuable if the programme created more spots for students to participate in those activities because it would further broaden their horizon. The panel also encourages the programme to investigate whether short study trips abroad can be made mandatory for all students.

⁴ Network of International Business Schools



The panel met with enthusiastic and ambitious students with different cultural backgrounds during the site visit. They told the panel that they appreciate the truly international environment, which lets them work with students and lecturers from different countries, using different theories, perspectives and business cases from around the world. The programme meets and even exceeds the expectations they had before they started.

Conclusion and recommendations

The panel concludes that the IB programme offers students a truly international experience. The programme mixes cultures and nationalities as much as possible in project groups, and that the composition these groups changes regularly. The panel appreciates that the programme offers many different options for students to spend part of their time in another country. The panel recommends investigating whether extracurricular activities and short study trips can be made available to more students.

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 programme's objective is that all students feel a sense of belonging at IB and the programme offers several services to create a safe and inclusive learning environment. These include activities that support the integration of international and exchange students, including an onboarding programme, study career coaching, and a buddy programme. The buddy programme connects international and exchange students to domestic students during the first academic year or exchange period. During the site visit, students mentioned that the introduction days and weeks in year 1 are important to get to know different cultures. They were very positive about the amount of constant support and learning opportunities that the programme provides.

Students may also call on the support of the international student counsellor, student welfare advisors, the Student Affairs Office, the External Relations Department and CoIA. Applicants to the programme need to prove they meet the programme's English language requirements. Students can get additional language support from the English Language Centre, which has a team of business communication lecturers. The RBS dean mentioned that the new location will make it easier to cooperate with partner institutions (e.g., Erasmus University Rotterdam) and RUAS departments (e.g., CoIA) that are hosted at the same campus. The programme promotes the use of external funding schemes such as Erasmus+ to financially support international mobility. Graduates receive a Diploma Supplement, explaining the contents of their curriculum and the Dutch grading system.

Conclusion and recommendations

The panel concludes that the programme offers ample services that meet the needs of the student population.

Overall conclusion regarding Standard 5: Students

The panel found that the IB programme attracts students from very diverse backgrounds, creating a truly international and intercultural student community. The percentage of



international students – both degree-seeking and exchange students – is in line with the programme's goal. Students are required to follow an internship at an international company abroad (domestic students) or in the Netherlands (international students) and may additionally go on exchange in another country. The panel appreciates that the programme offers many different options for students to spend part of their time abroad and has several services in place to make students feel at home in Rotterdam. All in all, the panel concludes that the IB programme surpasses the generic quality for this standard and therefore assesses *Standard 5: Students* as **good**.



6. Overview of assessments

Standard	Criterion	Level of fulfilment for each standard
1. Intended internationalisation	1a. Supported goals	Satisfactory
	1b. Verifiable objectives	
	1c. Impact on education	
2. International and intercultural learning	2a. Intended learning outcomes	Satisfactory
	2b. Student assessment	
	2c. Graduate achievement	
3. Teaching and learning	3a. Curriculum	Good
	3b. Teaching methods	
	3c. Learning environment	
4. Staff	4a. Composition	Good
	4b. Experience	
	4c. Services	
5. Students	5a. Composition	Good
	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>
Joep C. de Jong	X	X	X	X	
Natalia Ribberink	X	X	X		
Joost Haandrikman	X		X		
Eva Delooz				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.

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

- Joep C. de Jong (*panel chair*), lecturer Business Transformation at Hotelschool The Hague (the Netherlands), lecturer Appreciative Inquiry Certification Programme at the David L. Cooperrider Center of Champlain College (USA) and guest lecturer Entrepreneurship & Appreciative Inquiry at ESCP (Germany);
- Natalia Ribberink, Professor of Foreign Trade and International Management, Hamburg University of Applied Sciences (Germany);
- Joost Haandrikman, Head of Education at International Business School Hanze University of Applied Sciences (the Netherlands);
- Eva Delooz, master student Occupational Therapy at Ghent University (Belgium).

On behalf of NVAO, Anne Klaas Schilder was responsible for the coordination of the procedure. The secretary, Anne Martens MA, drafted the panel report in close cooperation with all panel members and in agreement with the panel chair.



Annex 2. Documents reviewed

- Self-evaluation report
- Appendices:
 - o Appendix A RBS 2022-2023 Vision on Internationalisation within IB
 - o Appendix B Programme Learning Outcome & End Level
 - o Appendix C1 Diagrammatic overview foundation IB Curriculum
 - o Appendix C2 Detailed overview of the IB Curriculum
 - o Appendix D ECT course catalogue
 - o Appendix E1 PLO matrix with highlighted ILOs
 - o Appendix E2 PLO matrix with end levels
 - o Appendix F Student work on ILOs
 - o Appendix G Diploma Supplement IB
 - o Appendix H Student population IB
 - o Appendix I International Characteristics RBS Staff based on their CVs
 - o Appendix J RBS 2022-2023 Implementation of Internationalisation within IB
 - o Appendix L1 Minutes of meeting with Advisory Board of 20 October 2020
 - o Appendix L2 Minutes of PAC meeting on 11 January 2022
 - o Appendix M Student Journey IB
 - o Appendix N List of internship countries

Annex 3. Site visit programme

Overview

Date:	18 April 2023
Institution:	Rotterdam Business School, Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences
Programme:	Bachelor of Business Administration in International Business
Location:	Posthumalaan 120, Rotterdam

Programme

Monday 3 April 2023

14.00 - 16.30: Preparatory meeting of the panel

Tuesday 18 April 2023

08.30 - 09.00: Arrival of the panel, internal panel meeting

09.00 - 10.00: Meeting with the Dean of RBS and Course Directors

10.15 - 11.00: Meeting with students

11.15 - 12.00: Meeting with members of the Exam Board and Preview Committee

12.45 - 13.00: Visit to a lesson (Sustainable Business Innovation)

13.00 - 13.50: Meeting teachers (two groups: year 1-2 and year 3)

14.15 - 15.00: Meeting with officers from the External Relations Department, Thesis Committee, supervisors and assessors

15.15-16.00: Meeting with representatives of the Advisory Board

16.00 - 17.15: Panel discussion on the outcomes of the assessment

17.15 - 17.30: Presentation of the panel's preliminary assessment



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