

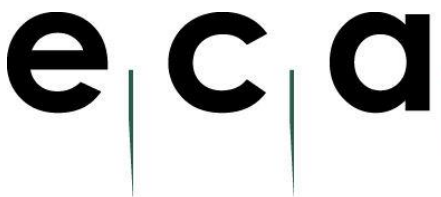
Assessment report

# European Master of Science in Occupational Therapy

Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences



Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation



european consortium for accreditation



Assessment report

# OT-EuroMaster

## European MSc in Occupational Therapy

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**European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education**



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## 1. Executive summary

On 19 and 20 January 2023 an international panel visited the European Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (OT-EuroMaster) at the Faculty of Health of the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (AUAS). The panel's remit was double: to re-establish the programme's quality of internationalisation (CeQuInt) and to assess again the intended and achieved learning outcomes of the programme according to the standards of the Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation (NVAO). This document addresses the former task, while the panel's assessment of the NVAO standards is reported in a separate document.

The OT-EuroMaster has been running since 1999 and is offered by a consortium of five higher education institutions in Europe, who agreed that AUAS would host the programme. The programme aims to further the scientific competences and research skills of professionals in occupational therapy. Its two-year part-time 90 ECTS curriculum is designed to promote international knowledge, intercultural dialogue and the mobility of staff and students. Because of its international orientation in terms of student background and consortium partnership, the OT-EuroMaster is offered in English.

The panel has established that the OT-EuroMaster programme fulfils all standards and all criteria of the CeQuInt evaluation framework. It judges one standard to be satisfactory, two standards to be good and two other standards to be excellent. As a result, the panel advises the European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education to confer the Certificate to the European Master of Science in Occupational Therapy.

The OT-EuroMaster programme breathes internationalisation and is built on solid foundations which are shared and supported by the entire consortium. The programme's primary internationalization goals are to support the development of research capacity in occupational therapy in Europe and beyond, and to enhance students' cultural competence and sensitivity. The rationale behind these ambitions is the programme's conviction that building research capacity and having adequate cultural competence and sensitivity is essential for graduates to perform their jobs as occupational therapists properly. The strategy, which is laid down in the Board Policy 2015-2020 needs an update to reflect the current situation in higher education, in occupational therapy and in the programme. When updating this strategy, the consortium is advised to pay specific attention to the vision of the programme - what makes this programme stand out and how does it express its European identity within a global

perspective - and to formulate verifiable objectives that allow monitoring progress and achievements of the internationalisation goals.

International and intercultural learning has been part and parcel of the OT-EuroMaster since its very beginning. Until 2021, the international and intercultural components of the programme were rather implicitly incorporated in the learning outcomes. Nonetheless, students were taught and assessed formatively on these elements and left the programme with a wealth of newly acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes. In the meantime, the programme outcomes and the curriculum set-up have been revised. Since September 2022, the international and intercultural components constitute an explicit and integrated part of the programme learning outcomes, of what OT-EuroMaster students are expected to learn and develop throughout the curriculum modules, and of what they need to achieve by the time they finish the programme. The panel commends the programme for explicitly integrating the international and intercultural learning outcomes in the modules' assessment rubrics and for assessing these outcomes in a summative way.

In terms of teaching and learning, the OT-EuroMaster has built up considerable experience. The commitment of the consortium partners and their staff teams to the curriculum, the students and to the teaching methods is strong. Many concrete examples demonstrate that internationalisation is essential to the programme and that students develop an intercultural awareness and sensitivity, which they continue to use in their professional career. Across all CeQulnt standards, the panel considers that programme performance excels most in teaching and learning.

The programme staff is numerous, knowledgeable, academically strong, experienced, enthusiastic and committed. Students are positive about their study experience in general and about the quality and availability of the staff in particular. The combination of staff from different partner institutions who bring their own academic, professional and cultural background allows for international and intercultural experiences throughout the programme. The recent developments in curriculum adjustment and consortium partner switch have further enhanced the attractiveness of the OT-EuroMaster programme.

The panel thinks highly of the quality of students and alumni, who form(ed) geographically and culturally diverse student cohorts. During their study, all OT-EuroMaster students benefit from a comprehensive international and intercultural experience. The programme should be commended for attracting good quality and ambitious students representing a wealth of



different cultural and national backgrounds. Students from their side deserve recognition for using the full potential of the programme in view of (the continuation of) their professional career.

In addition to all positive comments and appreciations, the panel sees room for improvement in a few areas. It advises the OT-EuroMaster to:

- update the Board Policy, and include verifiable objectives to monitor progress in achieving the internationalisation goals;
- sharpen the vision of the programme (in the updated strategy document) with regard to its European identity in a global perspective;
- expand and further diversify the staff team, possibly with colleagues from countries where occupational therapy is not yet offered at master level;
- have its ambitions in terms of student recruitment reflected in marketing campaigns and financial support schemes.

In sum, the panel considers that the OT-EuroMaster fulfils each of the five standards and all fifteen criteria of the CeQulnt assessment framework. Moreover, the programme clearly surpasses current generic quality on four standards. Therefore, the panel's overall judgement on the quality of internationalisation of the OT-EuroMaster programme 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:

- Mariëlle Klerks (NL), chair, MK Quality Assurance, CeQuint auditor
- Ursula Costa (AT), member, Health University of Applied Science Tyrol
- Claire Hart (UK), member, Northumbria University Newcastle
- Eva Delooz (BE), student-member, MSc Occupational Therapy Ghent University
- Mark Delmartino (BE), secretary and member, MDM Consultancy, CeQuint 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 the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences upon simple request. On behalf of the institution, the procedure was coordinated by the Quality and Accreditation Team at AUAS.

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 held an online introductory meeting on 19 December 2022 and an online preparatory meeting on 13 January 2023. The site visit took place on Thursday 19 and Friday 20 January 2023 at the Faculty of Health of the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences in Amsterdam. ([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 31 March 2023. It was then sent to the OT-EuroMaster programme team to review the report for factual mistakes. Following the feedback from the programme, the panel amended the report where necessary. The panel approved the final version of the report on 14 April 2023.

### 3. Basic information

<b>Qualification:</b>	European Master of Science in Occupational Therapy
Number of credits:	90 ECTS
Specialisations (if any):	–
ISCED field(s) of study:	0915 Therapy and Rehabilitation...
<b>Institution:</b>	Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences
Type of institution:	Publicly funded
<b>Status:</b>	Institution and programme are accredited by the Dutch Flemish Accreditation Organisation (NVAO)
QA / accreditation agency:	Previous programme (+ CeQuint) accreditation: Hobéon Institutional accreditation: NVAO Current accreditation organised by AUAS (with panel approval by NVAO)
Status period:	Institutional accreditation – since 2019 Programme Accreditation – until 2024

#### 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 master programme 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*.

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<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>
<b>Satisfactory</b>	<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>
<b>Good</b>	<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>
<b>Excellent</b>	<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

### Introduction

The plans for a European master programme in occupational therapy (OT-EuroMaster) go way back to the mid-Nineties. Developed by a group of international occupational therapists, the OT-EuroMaster was endorsed from the beginning by the European Network of Occupational Therapy in Higher Education (ENOTHE) and the Council of Occupational Therapists for European Countries (COTEC). Right from the start in 1999, the programme wanted to enhance the understanding of human occupation as a concept that is embedded in occupational science as well as core of occupational therapy. It also aimed at building the research capacity of the profession. Through the design of its curriculum, the OT-EuroMaster envisaged to promote international knowledge, intercultural dialogue and mobility of staff and students.

The two-year part-time 90 ECTS Master of Science programme is delivered by a consortium of five institutions in different European countries. The consortium consists of the University of Brighton in Eastbourne (UK), the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (NL), the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (CH), the University College Zealand in Naestved (DK), and the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm (SE). As of September 2022, the Danish partner is replaced by the University of A Coruña (ES). Each partner is responsible for one of the first five modules, which include a short intensive education programme on-site. The sixth module is offered by all partners: students finish the programme with a master thesis, which they conduct at home with online supervision. Because of its international professional context, the programme is taught in English. Over the years, the OT-EuroMaster has attracted more than 300 students from 34 countries, mainly in Europe but also in other continents. Until now, each cohort featured students from at least six countries.

The consortium partners agreed that the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (AUAS) would host the programme. The OT-EuroMaster therefore adheres to Dutch national rules with regard to accreditation and to AUAS institutional policies. At AUAS, the programme is offered by the Faculty of Health. Moreover, the OT-EuroMaster is recognised by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research, and Innovation. Hence, degree awarding power is held by both the Dutch partner (AUAS) for all students, and by the Swiss partner (Zurich University of Applied Sciences, ZHAW) for the Swiss and non-EEA students who are additionally enrolled at ZHAW.

From a Dutch higher education point of view, the programme stands out as it is one of few master programmes of academic orientation that are offered by a University of Applied Sciences. Furthermore, the programme's strong emphasis on internationalisation has been confirmed by the Distinctive Feature Internationalisation (received in 2010 through the Dutch Flemish Accreditation Organisation, NVAO) and the CeQuInt Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation conferred by the European Consortium for Accreditation in 2016.

## Standard 1: Intended internationalisation

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### 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 programme's highest management body is the Board. According to the Board Policy 2015-2020, the mission of the OT-EuroMaster is to be a European-centred, sustainable, world-renowned educational consortium which is respected for its ability to provide advanced level study on the complex relationship between human occupation, health and participation to benefit the individuals and ultimately the diverse communities served by occupational therapists worldwide. This mission is to be achieved by offering a global perspective on contemporary healthcare and welfare, providing research-informed education in advanced theoretical and scientific studies. The programme has elaborated its internationalisation goal more concretely. As cultural competence and sensitivity are vital for occupational therapists given the fact that many communities now comprise people from diverse sociocultural backgrounds, the programme's internationalisation goal is to enhance students' cultural competence and sensitivity. The programme defines cultural competence as the combination of knowledge, attitudes and skills for dealing with diversity and challenging inequalities. The panel noticed that until today, the content areas, overall aims and learning outcomes for the programme have been carefully designed to meet its aim, putting internationalisation and intercultural aspects at the centre of attention. The five partner institutions share and support these goals, and collaborate intensively on management level and on staff level across the consortium. Moreover, these goals are also shared and supported by the European Network of Occupational Therapy in Higher Education (ENOTHE) and the Council of Occupational Therapists for European Countries (COTEC).

The panel established that at the time of its site visit in January 2023, the programme strategy is still covered through the Board Policy document 2015-2020. This document is extensive, informative and formed the strategic basis of the programme at the time of the previous application for the CeQulnt certificate in 2016. While the document still has its merits, it is formally outdated given its explicit reference to an end date. The consortium representatives who together form the Board, as well as the programme management team, recognise that an updated version of the policy document is long overdue. The panel was informed that the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the efforts of the partnership to reformulate the programme learning outcomes, adjust the curriculum and find a new consortium partner have delayed the review of the overall OT-EuroMaster strategy. Moreover, the panel gathered during the site visit that these recent developments have further enhanced the collaboration among the consortium partners and that the resulting measures – reformulated learning outcomes, adjusted curriculum contents, new partner institution – have been fully supported and endorsed by the Board.

The discussions on-site have shown according to the panel that the OT-EuroMaster is built on solid foundations. Also in its 24<sup>th</sup> year of delivery, the initial scope and key features of the programme are still very much alive in the current OT-EuroMaster. This also goes for the programme strategy and internationalisation plans that were put forward eight years ago in the Board Policy. The programme's aim, mission, shared values and objectives described in

that document are to a large extent still valid. This also holds true for the four implementation strategy clusters: (i) maintaining a strong, co-operative organisational structure; (ii) enhancing the connections between education, research and practice; (iii) strengthening the international network and intercultural dimensions as unique selling point of the programme; and (iv) developing an annual improvement plan. In sum, the panel noticed that the fundamental features of the OT-EuroMaster are still very much present in the programme today. Students and staff continue to work together in a spirit of collaboration, reciprocity, compromise and agreement; diversity is still very much valued and respected.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on-site, **the panel considers** that the OT-EuroMaster programme has a set of documented internationalisation goals, which are shared and supported by the previous and current compositions of implementing partner institutions which together form the consortium. These goals are incorporated in the Board Policy, which is on the one hand formally outdated but on the other hand still relevant and adequate to grasp the foundations of the OT-EuroMaster. Similarly, the panel considers that the four implementation strategies – including the goal to strengthen the international network and intercultural dimension of the programme – are still valid and fully endorsed by the consortium partners.

Nonetheless, the strategic document deserves an update: the sections on recent developments in higher education and on contemporary concerns in occupational therapy need revision which, consequently, could lead to an updated vision on internationalisation. Furthermore, the actions set in 2015 to realise the above-mentioned four strategies for implementing mission and objectives have mostly been reached by now. Moreover, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2021 and 2021-2022), the programme revision (implemented as of September 2022) and the new consortium partner (who joined in 2022) need to be reflected in a new Board Policy document that sets out the strategy for the coming years.

**The panel concludes** that the OT-EuroMaster programme is built on solid foundations. While its strategy document requires an update, the Board Policy still covers the programme's fundamental goals in general and on internationalisation in particular. These goals are shared and supported by both internal and external stakeholders. When updating this strategy, the consortium is advised to pay specific attention to the vision of the programme - what makes this programme stand out and how does it express its European identity within a global perspective - and to formulating new verifiable objectives that allow to monitor the progress and the achievements of the internationalisation goals.

**Criterion 1b: Verifiable objectives**

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

Further to what has been mentioned in the previous section, one of the four strategies to implement the mission and objectives of the OT-EuroMaster addresses the international and intercultural dimensions of the programme. In the Board Policy 2015-2020, this strategy was broken down in ten actions, which have been reviewed and monitored by the Board on a

yearly basis. The panel gathered from the materials and the discussions that progress has been made on all actions and that those actions which were formulated as a target (e.g. obtain the CeQulnt certificate in 2016), have effectively been accomplished. However, as several actions were not formulated in a measurable (SMART) way, it is not possible to establish objectively whether the actions (e.g. direct marketing at under-represented nationalities / continents) have been implemented to the expected extent.

Since the adoption of the Board Policy, moreover, external committees have looked at the programme quality three times: twice (programme accreditation and CeQulnt) in 2016 and once (midterm review) in 2019. In response to the feedback and recommendations of these committees, the programme team formulated four internationalisation objectives: (i) further increase the diversity among the partnership; (ii) address and assess international and intercultural knowledge and understanding in the intended learning outcomes; (iii) recruit students from a maximum number of countries, also beyond Europe; and (iv) develop a more structured approach to recruitment of new students. The panel gathered from the self-evaluation report that each objective came with a verifiable measure and that in three out of four cases, this measure has been reached.

The panel's thoughts on the verifiable internationalisation objectives are twofold. On the one hand, the panel acknowledges the efforts of the programme team to reflect on the suggestions of external assessment committees, to identify actions and to monitor the delivery and achievement of these actions based on objectively verifiable indicators. In this regard, the panel commends the programme for its choice of a relevant new consortium partner, for its formulation of new learning outcomes and for the growing diversity in student intake.

On the other hand, the panel is of the opinion that the link between these four concrete objectives and the set of ten actions mentioned in the Board Policy is somewhat opaque. Furthermore, the panel wonders what happened to some of the other actions that also pertained to the international and intercultural dimension of the OT-EuroMaster programme. Furthermore, the self-evaluation document for the current CeQulnt accreditation referred to "the overarching objective to support the development of occupational therapy practice and education in different countries", which reportedly "was somewhat more difficult to be monitored". While acknowledging that this overarching objective is relevant as such and appropriate in the rationale of the OT-EuroMaster, it is not clear to the panel how this overarching objective is linked to a documented strategy. In this respect, it seems that the implementation strategies of the Board Policy 2015-2020 and their respective actions have been used as reference points but not – or no longer – as measurable indicators towards the development and success of the programme.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on-site, **the panel considers** that the OT-EuroMaster programme had identified in 2015 ten measures for implementation, and listed another four objectives with verifiable measures after a series of external assessment visits. Some of the former and most of the latter objectives have been reached in the meantime, which in turn have enhanced the quality of the international and intercultural dimensions and goals of the OT-EuroMaster. The panel commends the programme for these achievements.



Nonetheless, the panel wonders what has happened to the other – less verifiably formulated – measures for implementation and where the more recent – and admittedly pertinent – overarching objective has its place in the overall strategy. Hence, the panel advises the OT-EuroMaster programme, when updating the overall Board Policy document (see previous section), to formulate an updated implementation strategy on the international and intercultural dimensions of the programme, which is clearly linked to its internationalisation goals and vision. This strategy should take the current state of the programme as a baseline, including its recent achievements, and identify a limited number of actions that contribute to the achievement of the programme’s internationalisation goals and further enhance the programme’s quality of internationalisation. These actions should be operationalised by means of SMART indicators in order to be able to monitor the achievement.

**The panel concludes** that to support its internationalisation goals, the OT-EuroMaster programme has formulated different actions that to some extent were accompanied by verifiable indicators. The actions that were achieved in the meantime, have enhanced the quality of the programme’s internationalisation. However, there is room for linking both existing and new actions to a broader strategic framework, e.g. an updated Board Policy document, and for formulating these actions in such a way that they are all verifiable.

**Criterion 1c: Impact on education**

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

The programme’s primary internationalization goals are to support the development of research capacity in occupational therapy in Europe and beyond, and to enhance students’ cultural competence and sensitivity. The rationale behind these ambitions is the programme’s conviction that building research capacity and having adequate cultural competence and sensitivity is essential for graduates to perform their jobs as occupational therapists properly, given the fact that many communities now comprise people from diverse sociocultural backgrounds. Addressing the development of cultural competence and sensitivity, therefore, indisputably contributes to the overall quality of the programme’s teaching and learning. The committee fully shares this opinion and feels that students who have acquired these types of skills and attitude are indeed better equipped for their profession.

The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions that the OT-EuroMaster programme is truly and thoroughly international. It confirms in this regard the statement in the self-evaluation report that internationalisation builds the fundament of the whole programme structure and is integral to the programme learning outcomes across all competence areas. Hence, the programme can point to several measures that contribute to its internationalisation goal and to the overall quality of teaching and learning, such as the development of knowledge and understanding of international and intercultural practice within occupational therapy as well as research skills, the class work weeks at each partner organisation in five countries, the regular international staff meetings to develop the programme and foster a collaborative international staff team, the involvement of alumni as buddies/mentors and intercultural liaison for current students, and the participation of fellow students at partner universities in thesis seminars and OT-EuroMaster student presentations.

The panel acknowledges furthermore that these actions have in part been existing for a long time while other initiatives (such as the mentoring by alumni) are very recent additions following the programme adjustment. In this regard, the newly reformulated intended learning outcomes at programme level focus more explicitly than before on internationalisation and intercultural learning, and will also be monitored more explicitly.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on-site, **the panel considers** that the programme's internationalisation goal and international and intercultural dimensions have always found their way to the teaching and learning activities in the programme. The recent review of the programme and the resulting delivery in the adjusted curriculum as of September 2022 have further enhanced these dimensions.

**The panel concludes** that the OT-EuroMaster's internationalisation goal includes measures that contribute to the overall quality of teaching and learning. The programme has been and continues to be truly and thoroughly international in its strategic objective and its educational delivery. The recent changes to the programme have further enhanced the international and intercultural dimension of teaching and learning.

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

The panel concludes that the European Master of Science in Occupational Therapy meets all underlying criteria of this standard. The materials and discussions have demonstrated according to the panel that the entire programme breathes internationalisation. Across the three criteria, the panel noticed that there are documented internationalisation goals, objectives and actions, and that these components are all shared and supported by the entire consortium.

While the programme is built on solid foundations, the strategy as laid down in the Board Policy 2015-2020 needs an update to reflect the current situation in higher education, in occupational therapy and in the programme. When updating this strategy, the consortium is advised to pay specific attention to the vision of the programme - what makes this programme stand out and how does it express its European identity within a global perspective - and to formulating new verifiable objectives that allow to monitor the progress and the achievements of the internationalisation goals.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the panel 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 panel noticed that, following the advice of the previous accreditation committee and the midterm review panel, the OT-EuroMaster programme has revised its learning outcomes. This revision took place after a thorough exercise involving a consortium-wide curriculum review committee and the validation by the Board. Moreover, the programme management said they had benefited from the participation in the ENOTHE Master Competences in Occupational Therapy project, which allowed to compare and revise the OT-EuroMaster learning outcomes and assessments with eight other international programmes. The activities of this project group have been used to develop the revised content areas, aims and learning outcomes of the programme.

The panel acknowledges that the learning outcomes that were in place during the six years since the last accreditation already included an explicit focus on internationalisation, for example “reflecting and theorizing upon the impact of society, culture and diversity on occupation and participation for health and wellbeing of individuals and communities”, “creating and conducting a rigorous, ethical and coherent research project to answer questions within the discipline, situating the findings within theoretical framework(s) and national or international contexts, as appropriate” or “critically reviewing concepts such as occupation and participation from national, international and cultural perspectives”.

The new learning outcomes have placed even greater and more explicit emphasis on different cultural contexts by ensuring they are included in each competence area. As international and intercultural perspectives are relevant to most aspects of a scientifically competent occupational therapist, the programme team decided not to define a separate learning outcome related to internationalisation or interculturalism, but to embed these aspects into all five competence areas. Hence, the current set of learning outcomes include statements such as “critically review and theorise upon the national, European, and global policies and contextual structures and challenges influencing occupational therapy practice and occupational science for different population groups”, “develop and demonstrate a critical understanding of the impact of society, culture and diversity on occupation and participation for health and well-being of individuals and communities, in order to develop their vision of the expanding role of occupational therapy”, “propose well-reasoned improvements and possible innovations in occupational therapy and/or occupational science within interprofessional contexts at local, national, or international levels, based on research findings” or “critically reflect on and debate aspects of diversity relevant to professional practice and research, such as gender, ethnicity, disability, socio-economic status and citizenship, in order to inform advocacy and decolonisation in research and practice”.

The panel noticed from its detailed review of the formulated learning outcomes, that the international and intercultural dimensions are explicitly covered in four competence areas, while they are more implicitly addressed in the area “occupational perspective”. During the

visit, the programme management acknowledged this comment and announced it will look into the formulation of the two learning outcomes related to the occupational perspective.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on-site, **the panel considers** that the former set of learning outcomes – which is still used for students who started the programme in September 2021 and are likely to graduate in the course of 2023 – is a valid representation of what the programme stands for in terms of international and intercultural objectives and covers adequately the domain of occupational therapy. The new set of programme learning outcomes – which are operational as of September 2022 and thus affect the most recent cohort of students – describes explicitly the international and intercultural dimension of the OT-EuroMaster programme. The panel therefore shares the confidence which the programme team expressed in the self-evaluation report that the revision of the overall aims and learning outcomes constitutes a further step in making the internationalisation aims more explicit. Monitoring the implementation of the latter – as of the academic year 2022-2023 - will show their applicability.

**The panel concludes** that the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes clearly reflect the programme's internationalisation goals. The international and intercultural components of the OT-EuroMaster have always been part and parcel of the programme learning outcomes. In the recently reformulated set of learning outcomes, these components constitute a very explicit part of what OT-EuroMaster students are expected to learn and develop throughout the curriculum modules and have to achieve by the time they finish the programme.

#### **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 gathered from the self-evaluation report that up to and including the student cohort that started in September 2021, the main method for assessment in four modules was an extended essay. In module 5 students presented their research proposal orally and in writing, while in the sixth and final module, the research thesis was the main deliverable to be assessed. Following the curriculum review process, which took place after the midterm review and was implemented as of September 2022, the programme introduced more diversity into the forms of assessment, such as poster presentations, oral presentations, and visual products, in addition to written papers. The mixture of 'old' essays and 'new' assessment forms allows students to develop skills in knowledge translation to a wide range of audiences including occupational therapists, other professionals, occupational scientists, the target population of their research and the general public in the country and cultural setting in which the research was carried out.

Furthermore, the panel was informed that the newly revised examination rubrics for each module are directly derived from the new learning outcomes and have been carefully designed to align to the intended learning outcomes. In this way they also measure the achievement of international and intercultural knowledge, skills, and behaviour. In order to support this process, self-assessment and peer feedback are incorporated to help students

identify and assess their international and intercultural competencies. Students are therefore encouraged to not only develop a unique learning journey in their personal context of practice but also to learn about the context of others in the cohort, which in turn contributes to strengthening cultural appreciation for each other's professional practice context. During the visit, both students and staff indicated how the international and intercultural learning outcomes are taught and tested in the respective modules. The panel was informed that during the class work weeks students have always been encouraged to interact with each other and to use examples from their own professional practice in their assignments. Students from different nationalities are for instance expected to work in pairs presenting their own occupational therapy context and culture, highlighting commonalities and differences. Although it was too early to see the results, the panel acknowledges that the revised programme curriculum will feature a mentoring programme by alumni as well as an e-Portfolio to help students track their learning, two instruments that are likely to enhance the critical reflection of students about their own learning needs and journey, as well as about working together in international teams giving and receiving feedback in intercultural groups.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on-site, **the panel considers** that there has always been attention to assessing the international and intercultural aspects of the programme outcomes. In the 'old' curriculum the international and intercultural components were assessed formatively while in the 'new' programme these aspects are also assessed summatively. The panel commends the programme team for these efforts in the past and for bringing this aspect up to a much higher level in the revised curriculum. As of the academic year 2022-2023 the international and intercultural competencies of the OT-EuroMaster programme are explicitly integrated in the assessment rubrics of all modules and assessed in a variety of ways, including self-assessment and peer feedback. While it is too early to see the results of this exercise, the panel is confident that staff will be able to assess - and the most recent and future student cohorts will be able to demonstrate - the newly formulated international and intercultural learning outcomes.

**The panel concludes** that the methods used for the assessment of OT-EuroMaster students are suitable for measuring the achievement of the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes. While the international and intercultural component of both assessment methods and learning outcomes were rather implicitly interwoven in the 'old' curriculum, they have now been made an explicit and integrated part of the 'new' programme. The panel commends the programme on this development.

#### **Criterion 2c: Graduate achievement**

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

The sixth and final module of the OT-EuroMaster requires students to demonstrate that they have achieved the aims of the programme through the completion of a research thesis. During this module, students conduct a research project in the form of an article under the supervision of a staff member from one of the consortium partners. Students show that they have the competences to integrate conceptual, theoretical and research issues in occupational therapy/occupational science. Thesis topics can – and often do – address a specific research

that needs to be identified by the student in his or her particular area of practice, operationalised through a research project e.g. together with local employers, service users, carers, and/or policy makers.

As part of its external assessment, the panel reviewed a representative sample of fifteen master theses and their evaluation forms. These final products had been produced at a time (2021 – 2022) when students were still following the 'old' curriculum with the 'old' learning outcomes. The panel established that across the sample, every thesis was of (more than) sufficient quality to pass with the quality of the individual theses ranging from more than sufficient to excellent. It found the breadth of the thesis topics to be excellent and appreciated that the research project deliverable took the form of an article. Students conducted their research on internationally resp. nationally relevant topics. Moreover, the panel noticed with satisfaction that theses paid proper attention to the ethical aspects of research and that many topics were of relevance to the student's professional practice environment. Having also looked at the thesis evaluation forms, the panel established that the learning outcomes related to internationalisation were assessed and were integral to the overall learning experience and success of the students.

Another way to demonstrate the achievement of programme learning outcomes is to look at the professional whereabouts of the graduates. A dedicated survey in 2022 showed that most alumni (71% of the respondents) changed position or job after obtaining the MSc degree. These changes often related to more research-related tasks or leadership / management roles. Moreover, one third of the respondents had started to teach in an occupational therapy education programme while one fifth took on tasks or positions in research. In addition to getting higher salaries, several respondents indicated that their job satisfaction had increased after the OT-EuroMaster. The survey also showed that one third of the respondents had published their research in peer reviewed journals while 60% had presented their thesis at a professional conference. Many respondents had also advanced in academia by completing, studying or applying for a PhD. The discussion on-site with alumni and employers confirmed the findings of the above survey. Alumni were very satisfied with the programme and indicated it had advanced their career and brought them more job satisfaction. The employers the panel spoke to mentioned that they had noticed the increased level of competence of their employees after having attended the OT-EuroMaster. The panel gathered from these inputs that students/graduates leave the programme with a broader perspective on the international situation of occupational therapy and with a greater intercultural awareness and understanding of how the occupational therapy profession is practiced in the partner countries and in the countries of their fellow students.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, **the panel considers** that the research theses, the alumni survey and the testimonials from students, alumni and employers constitute ample evidence that the programme delivers on its promises in general, and with regard to its international and intercultural dimensions in particular. The research projects covered a broad range of interesting and relevant topics, adopting a variety of methodologies and often addressing issues from an international and/or intercultural perspective. The panel commends the programme for giving students the opportunity to tailor their thesis towards their own (international and intercultural) interests, practices and professional contexts.

Moreover, the panel considers that attending and completing the programme has a direct impact on the profession, as is demonstrated by the professional, educational and academic careers of alumni, as well as their research publications and presentations. Students/graduates leave the programme with a broader perspective on the international situation of occupational therapy as well as with a greater intercultural awareness and understanding of how the occupational therapy profession is practiced. Hence, the high academic standards of the programme impact not only on the future careers of the students, but also on the professional practice of students / alumni during and after the programme.

**The panel concludes** that graduates leave the programme with a wealth of newly acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes not only in the domain of occupational therapy/occupational science but also from an international and intercultural perspective.

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

The panel concludes that the European Master of Science in Occupational Therapy meets all underlying criteria of this standard. The materials and discussions have demonstrated according to the panel that international and intercultural learning has been part and parcel of the OT-EuroMaster since its very beginning. While the international and intercultural components of the programme were rather implicitly incorporated in the learning outcomes of the 'old' programme, students have been taught and formatively assessed on these elements. Moreover, the thesis review and the professional whereabouts of the latest cohorts of graduates (who still followed the old programme) have shown clearly that they left the programme with a wealth of newly acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes not only in the domain of occupational therapy but also from an international and intercultural perspective.

In the meantime, the consortium partners have revised the programme outcomes and the curriculum set-up and started implementing the 'new' programme as of September 2022. The international and intercultural components constitute a very explicit and integrated part of the programme learning outcomes, of what 'new' OT-EuroMaster students are expected to learn and develop throughout the curriculum modules and have to achieve by the time they finish the programme. The international and intercultural components are now explicitly integrated in the modules' assessment rubrics and also summatively assessed. The panel commends the programme on these developments. Although it is too early to see the results of the revised programme, the panel is confident the most recent and future student cohorts will be able to demonstrate the newly formulated international and intercultural learning outcomes.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the panel assesses *Standard 2. International and intercultural learning* as **good**.

## Standard 3: Teaching and Learning

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### Criterion 3a: Curriculum

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

The two-year part-time 90 ECTS programme is delivered by a consortium of five institutions in different European countries. Each partner is responsible for one of the first five modules of 12 ECTS each, which include a short intensive education programme at the partner location on-site. The sixth module is offered by all partners: students finish the programme with a 30 ECTS master thesis, which they conduct at home with online supervision.

During the visit, the panel discussed at length the particular set-up of the curriculum and its unique feature that students attend one module in each of the five partner institutions and countries. The panel gathered from the discussions that students who have chosen to study in this programme are appreciating this format because it befits very much their own personal situation: in line with the entry requirements of the programme, all students are working as occupational therapists and many students do so full-time. Spending one or two weeks of class work per module is for most students the maximum period they can be absent from work. Moreover, the family situation of some students does not allow to be away from home for much longer. Hence, the panel acknowledges that it would not be feasible for these students to spend more time abroad, nor to hold the programme on one location as this would change the format of the OT-EuroMaster and have impact on aspects of international and intercultural dimensions.

Furthermore, the panel gathered that there is a logical order in the planning and delivery of the modules. All partners are very much aware of each other's contribution in the respective modules. This is not an easy accomplishment, according to the panel, and good advancement was made on this point since the midterm review. The panel commends the consortium in general and the programme management in particular for this. The panel also noticed that in recent years the connections between modules have been further enhanced. The discussions on-site revealed for instance that key staff from the first module (in the UK) and the second module (in the Netherlands) are discussing regularly about each other's module contents, which in turn leads to a smooth transition between the modules, which is highly appreciated by the students. The new partner from Spain is in charge of the fourth module, which used to be delivered by the University College Absalon from Denmark and is offered for the first time in 2022-2023 at A Coruna. The panel obtained positive feedback on the substantial contribution of the Danish partner to the programme and was impressed by the way the new member had managed to integrate seemingly flawlessly in this long-standing consortium.

Having established that the 'new' OT-EuroMaster programme is (more) explicit (than before) about international and intercultural learning outcomes, the panel also noticed to its satisfaction that these elements are well-translated into the learning goals of the respective modules. The fact that every module is taught in a particular country by staff with different nationalities and backgrounds further facilitates and contributes to students reaching the international and intercultural learning goals and learning outcomes. Moreover, the panel acknowledges that the curriculum set-up strengthens the ambition of the programme to



combine theories from the international disciplines of occupational therapy and occupational science with scientific theory and methods. In this way students are critically exposed to international and intercultural considerations of both perspectives.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, **the panel considers** that the curriculum set-up of the OT-EuroMaster is unique. It befits both the international structure of the consortium and the professional needs and possibilities of the students. While the international and intercultural component has always been a distinguishing factor of the curriculum with students acquiring and demonstrating international and intercultural competences throughout their study period, this feature has become even more explicit in the revised programme outline. According to the panel, the programme structure, the curriculum delivery and the acquisition and demonstration of explicitly international and intercultural learning goals and outcomes would not have been possible without the strength of the consortium and its individual partners that together form this programme, and the solid management axis between AUAS and ZHAW.

**The panel concludes** that the content and structure of the curriculum very much befits the profile of the programme, its partnerships and student audience. Moreover, the learning goals at module level provide a strong basis for OT-EuroMaster students to acquire the overall programme learning outcomes. Moreover, in the adjusted curriculum which is operational as of September 2022, the international and intercultural learning goals and outcomes are an explicit part of every module and every competence area, which in turn ensures that students do achieve 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.*

The panel gathered from the materials that teaching and learning in the OT-EuroMaster programme is based on a “socio-cultural model” of learning and teaching, in which the personal and cultural knowledge and experiences of all learners is highly valued and purposely used and built on in the teaching and learning activities. In the first module, students and module staff discuss what they need to create a supportive learning environment. These reflections are documented and re-discussed/updated in the following modules. In this way, students reflect not only on their own needs for a productive learning journey, but also learn about each other’s needs and different learning styles. According to the panel, this socio-cultural model is highly appropriate for this specific programme.

In line with the socio-cultural model, the core educational method used in each module is problem-based learning (PBL). Students work together in international groups, supported by the module staff team from the host institution. PBL presents the student groups with carefully designed, realistic, internationally relevant and recognised professional or research problems. Students share their experiences, and this enables further intercultural learning to occur. The composition of the PBL-groups is changed after the first two modules to give students the opportunity to cooperate in different international team settings. During the discussions on-site both students and staff were highly enthusiastic about the PBL-approach and the

opportunities this offers for getting to know a wide range of fellow student-professionals from different countries, cultures and backgrounds.

The panel gathered from the materials and discussions that the consortium has been reflecting extensively on the teaching methods following the pandemic and the curriculum development process. The panel endorses the decision of the consortium to maintain on the one hand a minimal amount of class week encounters and to continue some of the online activities in-between class work weeks. The panel welcomes in this regard the plan of the new partner to adopt PBL in settings that are very close to real life problems by working with community-based projects where students will get in direct contact with local problems and work towards possible solutions in an international context. Similarly, the panel thinks highly of the increased number of structured online sessions in module six in order to give students more opportunities for discussing the topics they are researching and writing about in their respective international contexts.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on-site, **the panel considers** that the teaching methods are very much suitable for the purpose and set-up of the programme, as well as for the geographically and culturally diverse student audience and staff teams. The panel commends the programme for its didactic choices, which it considers to be an important element in the successful performance of the OT-EuroMaster programme. Teaching methods, learning outcomes, learning goals, team composition and student audience align very nicely with each other in delivering an international and intercultural master programme of academic orientation in the domain of occupational therapy.

**The panel concludes** that the educational underpinning of the programme fully aligns with the purpose of the programme and allows OT-EuroMaster students to achieve 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 materials and the discussions that - despite the diversity in consortium partners and student audience - the OT-EuroMaster is one programme that is designed, delivered, and taken together by partner staff and students from Europe and beyond. During the programme – in class work weeks and when students are at home - the programme does not only pay attention to students acquiring the necessary disciplinary competences, but also emphasises the social and cultural experience of students and their interactions with each other and the staff. At the start of the programme, for instance, students are invited to introduce themselves on the online learning environment Brightspace (hosted by AUAS) before they meet in-person. When abroad, some students form groups to share housing, and every host institution organises at least one social activity. The panel endorses the statement in the self-evaluation report that the learning environment is geographically and culturally diverse and provides the means for achieving the intended international and intercultural learning outcomes.

The discussion with students and alumni showed, moreover, that they are/were highly satisfied with the learning experience: currently enrolled students and alumni confirmed that the programme is/has been living up to their expectations and has been delivering what students came for.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, **the panel considers** that the learning environment which is provided throughout the two-year study period strongly reflects the purpose of the programme. It aligns neatly with the objectives of the international partner consortium and student audience. Moreover, the partnership as a whole and the respective module hosts manage to offer the students a highly appreciated multinational and multicultural experience.

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

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

The panel concludes that the European Master of Science in Occupational Therapy meets all underlying criteria of this standard. The long-standing programme has built up a considerable experience which it demonstrates very strongly in the curriculum, the teaching methods and the learning environment. The panel thinks highly of the passion of the consortium partners and their staff teams for the curriculum, for the students and for the way they support students in acquiring the programme objectives.

According to the panel it was obvious from the materials but above all from the discussions and the many concrete examples that internationalisation is a key feature of the programme in general, and in the curriculum, teaching methods and learning environment in particular. Moreover, all three criteria contribute to students developing also an intercultural awareness and sensitivity and prepare students for a (continuation of their) professional career in which they will have the opportunity to use the acquired intercultural competencies. In sum, across all standards of the CeQulnt scheme, the panel considers that the programme performance excels most in its teaching and learning.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the panel assesses *Standard 3. Teaching and learning* as **excellent**.

## Standard 4: Staff

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### Criterion 4a: Composition

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

The panel gathered from the staff overview that the OT-EuroMaster can rely on a considerable number of lecturers belonging to one of the consortium partners. At the time of the site visit, half way the academic year 2022-2023, a total of 22 staff from eight different nationalities is involved in teaching the programme while another eight external staff representing two more nationalities are called upon as thesis supervisors. About a quarter of the programme team is male, which is higher than their share in the occupational therapy workforce in most countries. Most staff are European women, although there are also a few lecturers with a background in South America and one Filipino thesis supervisor.

The number of programme staff is increasing in accordance with the growth of the student cohorts which requires first and foremost more PBL-tutors, thesis supervisors and examiners. When recruiting, the consortium tries to promote diversity among the internal staff (employed at one of the partner universities), external staff and guest lecturers. The mixture of nationalities and cultural backgrounds allows the programme to nourish the diversity of staff, which in turn diversifies the learning experience of students. The panel was informed that the current occupational therapy workforce in Europe, however, is not yet representative of the diversity in society, notably in so far as immigrants are concerned. Hence, the programme tries to contribute its share by emphasising the intercultural nature of the curriculum and by attracting non-European students, who in turn might join the programme as teaching staff upon graduation.

Having read the CVs and spoken to a representation of programme staff, the panel established that the OT-EuroMaster leadership, internal lecturers and external contributors have excellent professional and/or academic credentials. Individually and as a team they display a breadth of experience, and the list of staff (CVs) reads as a 'who's who' of occupational therapy/science in Europe. Moreover, the diversity of PhD trained faculty from different countries and universities leads to a heterogeneity of scientific approaches, attitudes, and understandings of science. This heterogeneity is cherished by the programme and appreciated by the students.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, **the panel considers** that the staff composition and the balance in the team is strong. Their combined experience constitutes a considerable asset to the programme. While the diversity in staff is not necessarily strong in each of the individual partner institutions, the combination of staff who is allocated by each of the consortium partners to this programme is definitely diverse. Acknowledging that there is still room for improvement, the panel recognises the programme efforts to diversify the staff pool. The inclusion of alumni in programme delivery is a way to enhance the diversity.

The panel endorses the ambition of the programme to become truly European while at the same time allowing – and attracting - students from outside Europe to enrol on the programme. In this regard, it welcomes the integration of a new consortium partner from

Southern Europe. Apart from bringing in additional expertise, the partner institution also opens the consortium and the programme to those parts of the world and the occupational therapy profession where a different sociocultural perspective prevails. Nonetheless, the panel considers that the staff on the programme can be further expanded and diversified to potentially represent the entire European continent. The efforts should first and foremost be targeted at those countries - for instance in Eastern Europe - where occupational therapy has not yet a master programme.

**The panel concludes** that the number of staff is sufficient for the delivery of the programme and their academic quality is excellent. The international dimension of the consortium brings diversity in the nationality and cultural background of the staff, which in turn constitutes an added value for this OT-EuroMaster programme with distinctive international and intercultural dimensions.

**Criterion 4b: Experience**

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

Further to what was mentioned in the previous criterion, the staff involved in delivering the curriculum is highly experienced as academics and often has relevant professional credentials. The panel gathered from the materials that the majority of regular staff teaching in the modules either have a PhD already or are currently doctoral students. This means that the rate of international publications and conference presentations by teaching staff is high.

The panel noticed from the CV's that many of the programme staff have extensive international experience, either by having lived and/or studied abroad, or through regular international collaboration. Moreover, several staff is or has been involved in international research, development projects or networks. The panel appreciates very much this attention to academic excellence in the consortium and the efforts of the curriculum developers to expose students to staff sharing state-of-the-art developments in occupational therapy / occupational science worldwide. Students, in turn, appreciate the efforts and the specific expertise of the partner staff in the modules, as well as (internal or external) supervisors of their master thesis.

The panel gathered from the discussions that students think positively about the level of English of the staff members; also non-native English-speaking staff members are praised for their level of English. The majority of students and staff are non-native English speakers. This master programme is often the students' first comprehensive exposure to an interactive form of education in English language

In addition to language skills, students indicated that they very much like the passion and commitment of staff to the domain of occupational therapy, the programme and the students. Across all national and cultural differences, students and alumni indicated that the programme team and the host institution manage(d) to create a safe atmosphere for students to acquire new disciplinary, international and intercultural competences.

Furthermore, staff regularly contributes on behalf of the OT-EuroMaster programme to international research events. For instance, the programme's curriculum review process was presented at the WFOT Congress in 2022, while in that same year, the team conducted a workshop at the ENOTHE Annual Conference on the way problem-based learning promotes student-centred learning. Two staff members from different consortium partners, as well as the external Chair of the programme Board are involved in the ENOTHE Tuning Task Force which is revising the European guidelines on curriculum and standards for occupational therapy education at bachelor, master and PhD level. The panel commends the consortium for its efforts in (re)presenting the OT-EuroMaster at international educational/research events.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, **the panel considers** that the expertise of the staff members on the OT-EuroMaster is extensive. This expertise relates to their work as academics, sometimes as professionals, and to their involvement in international and/or intercultural exchanges, collaborations and projects. Moreover, the panel thinks highly of the enthusiasm and commitment of the programme staff towards the programme and the students.

**The panel concludes** that the staff members invariably have relevant international experience, intercultural competences and appropriate 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.*

Each consortium partner offers one module, while faculty from all five institutions work as a team in the development and delivery of the programme. Staff development and team consistency is achieved through regular staff meetings including workshops and training, shared curriculum development activities, master thesis examiner calibration workshops, inter-examiner reliability meetings for module assignments, and thesis supervision briefings for new colleagues.

Moreover, the panel was informed that since the last external assessment, the majority of Dutch and international staff completed the Basic or Senior Examiner Qualification (BEQ/SEQ) at AUAS as this is a requirement for all examiners who operate in programmes managed by AUAS.

AUAS also puts at disposition the online facilities (Brightspace, MS Teams, Sharepoint) for the entire programme. Module handbooks and guidelines are developed in the same format to help students and staff find their way as easily as possible. Moreover, it is an important task of the Programme Management to make sure that all staff receives relevant information in due time to be able to offer the modules.

In addition to the activities offered by the programme, each partner institution bears responsibility for the professionalisation of their staff involved in the programme. The panel

was informed that a joint staff development plan had been formulated but needs revision and updating in view of the new member in the consortium and the plans for an updated overall strategy (Board Policy).

While appreciating the range of services on offer, the panel noticed that these services tend to exist also in other 'regular' programmes that do not pursue quality in internationalisation. Hence the panel suggests the consortium to extend the service offer with for instance opportunities for staff training in the pedagogics of the international classroom or in teaching intercultural competencies.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, **the panel considers** that staff services are well developed at the level of the consortium and the individual partners. In addition to staff development planning, the panel appreciates the attention of the team for calibration in delivery. The discussion with the programme management and the module coordinators has demonstrated, according to the panel, that the OT-EuroMaster can rely on a strong and committed team that speaks with one voice in so far as programme delivery is concerned. The panel commends both the consortium representatives and the programme management for bringing this about.

**The panel concludes** that the services provided by the programme and the respective consortium partners are consistent with the staff composition. The combination of the service offer and the enthusiasm of the staff allow the programme to give students both a pleasant and thorough study experience. The panel does advice the programme to diversify the training offer by including sessions that enhance the international and intercultural competences of the staff.

#### **Overall conclusion regarding Standard 4: Staff**

The panel concludes that the European Master of Science in Occupational Therapy meets all underlying criteria of this standard. The current staff on the programme is numerous, very knowledgeable, academically strong, highly experienced, enthusiastic and committed. Hence, it comes as no surprise that students are very positive about their study experience in general and about the quality and availability of the staff in particular.

Moreover, the panel considers that the combination of staff from different partner institutions bringing their own academic, professional and cultural background allows for an international and intercultural experience during the programme. According to the panel, the recent developments in curriculum adjustment and consortium partner switch have made the OT-EuroMaster programme even more attractive. If anything, the panel advises the consortium to offer more services that address the international and intercultural competences of the staff.

The panel therefore judges that the quality of the programme staff clearly surpasses the current generic quality for this standard. Nonetheless, the panel also sees room for further improvement, notably in so far as the further diversification of the staff team is concerned. The panel understands that it is the ambition of the programme to become truly European while at the same time allowing – and attracting - students from outside Europe to enrol on the programme. Recognising the efforts of the programme team to successfully attract a

partner institution from Southern Europe with complementary expertise, the staff on the programme can be further expanded and diversified to potentially represent the entire European continent, notably from those countries where occupational therapy has not yet a master programme.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the panel 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 panel gathered from the written materials that since its inception, the OT-EuroMaster has attracted students from all over the world: according to data provided by the programme 58% of the students live in one of the consortium partner countries, 30% are residents in other European countries and 12% is living outside Europe. The panel was informed that the group of non-European students would have been larger if all admitted students had obtained their visa in time. Nonetheless, every cohort features students from at least six countries; the twenty students in the most recent cohort are living in ten different countries. Moreover, several students have either a multicultural background or have been living in different countries. It is expected that the arrival of the new consortium partner from Spain, who has a network in Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries, will lead to more interest in the OT-EuroMaster from student-professionals from the Iberic peninsula and Latin-America.

In order to be admitted, students should have completed a bachelor's degree in occupational therapy and have well-defined English language skills (minimum 6.5 academic IELTS score). The panel gathered from the materials and discussions that students who live up to this common baseline nonetheless represent a wide variety of practice contexts, educational backgrounds, levels of professionalization and academic development. This diversity creates not only challenges in every cohort, but also increases the learning opportunities of all students in the group.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, **the panel considers** that the OT-EuroMaster attracts a very heterogenous group of students, who on the one hand share a passion for – and an undergraduate level education in – occupational therapy, yet bring on the other hand their own locally rooted assumptions of the profession to the programme. The panel acknowledges that this diversity is both challenging and enriching for the individual participant, the student cohort and the teaching staff.

The panel commends the programme for attracting students well beyond the consortium partner countries. The diverse cohorts with their considerable share of European students underline, moreover, that this is a truly European master programme. In line with its considerations on staff composition, the panel encourages the programme to continue focusing its marketing/recruitment efforts on those (European) countries with no tradition of master-level education in occupational therapy.

**The panel concludes** that the composition of the student cohorts is very much in line with the internationalisation goals of the programme. The panel thinks highly of the efforts of the programme to attract students well beyond the consortium partner countries, an endeavour that is fully in line with the Board Policy actions to “direct marketing at under-represented nationalities / continents to support the development in countries where occupational therapy is a new discipline”, and to “monitor recruitment to assure an international cohort”.

### **Criterion 5b: Experience**

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

The internationalisation dimension is embedded in the design of the programme as all students are required to travel to five different countries. This experience provides students with the opportunity to not only experience the respective culture of the host countries, but also to interact with the diverse student group on academic and social activities. In this way all OT-EuroMaster students learn to cooperate in international groups of different composition, have access to international staff and research networks, are supervised by staff with different cultural and scientific backgrounds, and experience what it means to deal with heterogeneity, cross-cultural communication and uncertainty.

The panel gathered from the discussion with students and alumni that they consider(ed) this international and intercultural dimension of the programme structure as a key selling point, which in the case of the alumni had a considerable impact on the continuation of their professional career upon graduation. Moreover, students and alumni underlined that the different national and cultural backgrounds of the staff and the way they used this diversity in and beyond class increased the connection between staff and students. It made students relate to staff as individuals, as educational professionals and as occupational therapists.

The panel was also informed that the initiative to involve alumni as students mentors is highly appreciated. Students very much like to have a person they can talk to, who has gone through the programme and whom they consider to perform almost on an equal level: alumni-mentors are perceived more as friends than as supervisors. At the start of the programme, mentors help students in documenting their work, reflecting on the progress they make, and in providing feedback on their study/research-related ideas.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, **the panel considers** that the OT-EuroMaster offers an international and intercultural educational experience to all students that is very much in line with the purpose of the programme. The student experience is still reflecting the original aim, mission, values and objectives of the programme as described in the Board Policy. Moreover, the panel thinks highly of the way in which the consortium partner staff – and recently also the alumni – manage to translate these programme features as described in the strategy document in very concrete experiences that are highly valued by the students.

**The panel concludes** that the student experience in the OT-EuroMaster is positive, relevant and effective, and moreover fully in line with the international and intercultural aspirations of the programme.

### **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.*

All OT-EuroMaster students are enrolled at AUAS. They follow the same registration process as other students in the institution and can rely on the same support services. The OT-EuroMaster website and the online course catalogue, which are hosted on the AUAS website, provide detailed information about the programme, including the expectations regarding workload, classwork and assignments. If OT-EuroMaster students experience difficulties that interfere with their studies, they can make use of the AUAS Student Counselling service.

Since September 2022, students are allocated to a mentor who will support them throughout the two years of their study through small group meetings (one per module) and at least three individual contacts. In addition, students are allocated to learning groups in which they act as critical friends to fellow students when discussing ideas for assignments and the master thesis.

At the end of the programme, each student receives a diploma from AUAS including an international Diploma Supplement stating the level of the degree and describing the achieved competences. Moreover, Swiss and international students who are additionally enrolled at ZHAW receive also a diploma issued by the Swiss consortium partner.

During the visit, the panel was informed that there are plans within the consortium to intensify the alumni network and give alumni who want to spread the word about their OT-EuroMaster experience an ambassador-like role. Moreover, the programme is considering options to facilitate the enrolment of non-European students by giving them more time to procure a visa and by looking for scholarships to cover the class work weeks.

Based on the written materials and the discussions on site, **the panel considers** that OT-EuroMaster students can rely on a range of services before, during and after their study that are relevant to their position and facilitate their education trajectory. The panel welcomes in particular the alumni-mentor scheme, which is highly appreciated by the students. Moreover, the panel encourages the consortium to look for scholarships that would allow students from lower income countries within and beyond Europe to participate in person to class work weeks and thus be part of this highly valued international and intercultural experience.

**The panel concludes** that the student services correspond to the composition of the student group.

#### **Overall conclusion regarding Standard 5: Students**

The panel concludes that the European Master of Science in Occupational Therapy meets all underlying criteria of this standard. The panel appreciates the programme efforts to attract students well beyond the consortium partner countries. This has resulted in geographically and culturally diverse student cohorts where individual students bring their own locally rooted assumptions of the occupational therapy profession to the programme. In line with its considerations on staff composition, the panel encourages the programme to continue focusing its marketing/recruitment efforts on those (European) countries with no tradition of master-level education in occupational therapy.

The panel thinks highly of the international and intercultural experience OT-EuroMaster students go through during their study, both in class work weeks and at home. Among the many services on offer, the panel welcomes in particular the initiative to involve alumni as student mentors.

In addition to the programme structure, student service and learning experience the OT-EuroMaster is offering, the panel is very impressed by the quality of the students and alumni. While the formal admission criteria are relatively minimal, the students who enrol in the programme display a good level of ambition and are keen to use the opportunities offered by the programme to the full.

Based on the interviews and 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
1. Intended internationalisation	1a. Supported goals	Satisfactory
	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	Good
	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	
• Ursula Costa	X	X	X	X	
• Claire Hart	X	X	X		
• Eva Delooz	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;

### **Mariëlle Klerks, chair**

Mariëlle has her own consultancy company providing advice and support in quality assurance and internationalisation in higher education. Mariëlle is certified by NVAO and by ECA (CeQuInt) and has extensive experience in chairing assessment panels.

### **Prof. Dr. Ursula Costa, member**

Ursula is head of the bachelor and master programmes in occupational therapy and occupational science in Innsbruck, Austria. Ursula chaired the midterm review of the OT-EuroMaster programme.

### **Dr. Claire Hart, member**

Claire is teaching at Northumbria University in undergraduate, postgraduate and apprenticeship programmes related to occupational therapy.

### **Eva Delooz, student-member**

Eva has a professional bachelor in Occupational Therapy and is now attending the inter-university MSc in Occupational Therapy Sciences. Eva has been student representative.

### **Mark Delmartino, member and panel secretary**

Mark is managing director of MDM CONSULTANCY bv and has worked with accreditation panels since 2006. He is certified by NVAO and by ECA (CeQuInt) and belongs to the AUAS pool of certified external secretaries.

**Coordinating body:** AUAS Quality and Accreditation Team

## Annex 2. Documents reviewed

*Self-evaluation report* European Master of Science in Occupational Therapy, 2022.

- Part 1 – introduction and background information about the programme
- Part 2 – programme accreditation by NVAO standards 1 & 4
- Part 3 – programme accreditation by ECA for CeQulnt

*Annexes to the self-evaluation report*

- Overview of intake and study success 2016-2022
- Quality care plan
- Memorandum of Cooperation (including Transition addendum)
- Module Coordinator reports
- Annual Report 2021
- Programme structure: old (until 2021) and new (as of 2022)
- Student handbook 2022-2024
- Module guides
- Action plan 2015-2019
- NVAO accreditation report 2016
- Midterm review report 2019
- Report on curriculum review
- Learning outcomes and module learning goals
- Examination forms and marking grids per module
- Intake and success rate since 1999, including students' countries of residence
- Thesis titles 2020-2021 and 2021-2022
- Alumni survey 2022
- Board policy
- Overview of thesis publications and PhD tracks
- Motivation letter new partner A Coruña
- Aims, learning outcomes and marking grids new modules (2022-2023)
- Staff list and CV's
- Staff development plan
- International Diploma Supplement (2021-2022)
- Student chapter – video message
- Examination Board annual report 2021
- Programme Committee annual report 2021-2022
- Teaching and Examination Regulations 2022-2023

*Graduation projects*

The panel reviewed a representative sample of 15 master theses and their evaluation forms submitted by OT-EuroMaster students who graduated between August 2021 and October 2022. A list of the selected theses is available from the programme on request.





## Annex 3. Site visit programme

### Overview

<b>Date:</b>	19-20 January 2023
<b>Institution:</b>	Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences
<b>Programme:</b>	European Master of Science in Occupational Therapy
<b>Location:</b>	School of Health Professions, Tafelbergweg 51, Amsterdam

### Programme

#### Thursday 19 January 2023

11.00h	Arrival panel and internal meeting, including Open consultation hour (online)
13.30h	Session with Programme Management and Dean
14.45h	Session with Strategic Body (online)
15.30h	Session with Module Coordinators and Teaching Staff
16.45h	Session with Advisory Committee, Alumni and Employers (online)
17.45h	Internal panel meeting and wrap-up with Programme Management
18.30h	End of day 1

#### Friday 20 January 2023

08.30h	Internal panel meeting
09.00h	Session with Students (online)
10.15h	Session with Examination Board
11.30h	Session with Programme Management
12.00h	Internal panel deliberations and lunch
14.00h	Plenary feedback
14.30h	End of site visit

An overview of the persons interviewed is available from the programme on request.

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