MSc Verandermanagement

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Advisory report of the assessment of the existing programme
Site visit: 12 – 14 November 2024

Summary

From 12 to 14 November 2024 an assessment panel of AeQui visited the School of Business and Economics (SBE) at VU Amsterdam to perform a quality assessment of eight degree programmes in Business Administration. This external assessment is part of a broader cluster evaluation of wo-bedrijfskunde programmes in the Netherlands. The underlying document reports on the panel assessment of the Master of Science (MSc) Verandermanagement (VM) according to the NVAO framework for limited programme assessment. The panel's overall judgement of the programme is positive.

Intended learning outcomes

The MSc VM is a part-time 60 EC programme taught in Dutch. It trains professionals to become change managers, providing them multidisciplinary knowledge and skills to perform behavioural and business research for science, practice and society. Assuming a neat connection between personal and professional development, the curriculum pays attention to personal growth, participation in the public debate, and contribution to a sustainable world. The master VM has a clear and distinctive profile, features proper learning outcomes, and is well connected to the professional field. Its profile and learning goals are very much in line with the mission and educational vision of the university and the school. Students enrol precisely because of the multiple perspectives, interdisciplinarity, societal relevance, personal and professional development, and staff expertise. The formulation of the intended learning outcomes is adequate and reflects the domain, level and orientation of the programme. The MSc VM involves the professional field in different ways, thereby enhancing the learning experience of its students and maintaining the relevance of its profile and (learning) objectives. The contacts with alumni and the Advisory Board, moreover, ensure a structural connection to the world of work. The panel concludes that the programme **meets** this standard.

Teaching-learning environment

The post-initial master VM has a strong teaching-learning environment featuring a coherent curriculum, a befitting didactic concept, and well-qualified teaching staff. Since the start in 2016, the MSc VM has been a small-scale programme with three core teaching staff and an average yearly intake of 12 students. The modular structure of the curriculum allows students to study in a flexible way. The didactic concept is well motivated, reflects the educational vision of both VU and SBE, and befits the specific profile and objectives of the programme. In addition, the teaching staff is well qualified to apply these educational principles to the substance of their courses, the different teaching formats and the diverse group of students. The VM programme has a positive vibe: the team created a community of students with different backgrounds and interests who are taught and supported by equally competent and enthusiastic staff. The panel concludes that the programme **meets** this standard.

Student assessment

The post-initial master VM can rely on a robust system of assessment. Both course and thesis assessments are embedded in well-established policies and frameworks at the level of the university and the school, while the VM assessment plan safeguards that course learning goals are assessed adequately and cover the programme objectives. Course and thesis assessments have

changed since the previous accreditation, and these adjustments are for the better. The Examination Board for privately funded degree programmes has the capacity and competency to assume a variety of assessment tasks and safeguards the assessment quality of the post-initial master. The thesis review demonstrated that the newly designed thesis evaluation form is relevant, well used, and completed in a comprehensive and insightful way. The panel commends the programme and its thesis assessors for their efforts and skills: the extra work to meet the NVAO conditions of the previous accreditation is definitely paying off in terms of thesis assessment quality. The panel concludes that the programme **meets** this standard.

Achieved learning outcomes

Students who graduate from the post-initial master VM have effectively acquired all intended learning outcomes. The selected and reviewed VM theses are of good quality and meet the expectations for a final project of academic orientation at master level. The programme team managed to successfully fulfil the NVAO conditions following the previous accreditation: it described clear expectations with regard to the end-level of students but also proved during the current accreditation that students live up to these expectations. The thesis review has shown that students fulfil all academic criteria of the intended learning outcomes and cover the entire empirical cycle in the thesis. Furthermore, VM graduates are well prepared during their studies to use their newly acquired competencies in a higher-level position with their employer. The programme boosted their professional and personal development, which in turn increased their recognition as professionals on the job. The panel concludes that the programme **meets** this standard.

Recommendations

With an eye on the future, the panel offers the following points for development:

- review the length and/or study credits of the three modules in view of an equal study load across the programme;
- increase the student intake to enhance the learning experience of all participants;
- expand the core team and divide management and coordination tasks over more staff;
- reduce the number of individual assessments, notably in the first module;
- grade also the smaller components in the thesis module;
- strengthen the connection in the thesis evaluation form between individual criteria scores and the overall thesis result;
- include all three research methodological perspectives in the thesis;
- involve both Advisory Board and alumni more actively in promoting the programme.

All standards of the NVAO framework have been positively assessed. On this basis, the panel provides a positive recommendation for the accreditation of the MSc Verandermanagement.

On behalf of the entire site visit panel,
Utrecht, April 2025

Eric Dooms   Mark Delmartino
Chair   Secretary

Introduction

Institution

Vrije Universiteit (VU) Amsterdam is a university with nine faculties. Since its foundation in 1880, VU Amsterdam has stood for scientific and value-driven education, research, and knowledge transfer. Its education and research are closely linked and have a strong social orientation. All education is provided on one campus in the heart of the Zuidas Knowledge District.

The School of Business and Economics (SBE) is one of VU's faculties and offers five BSc, ten MSc, and 15 postgraduate programmes in economics and business administration. Since its establishment in 1948, SBE has evolved into a school with over 9,000 students and over 500 academic and non-academic staff members.

The school is governed by the SBE faculty board under the leadership of the dean. The academic staff is divided in departments; each head of department assigns the teaching, research, and administrative tasks. SBE has a well-established system of quality assurance of teaching and assessment, which is based on the VU Manual for Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning and to which all programmes adhere. SBE has three examination boards: one governing all government-funded programmes, one for accredited postgraduate programmes, and one joint board with the University of Amsterdam for the master Entrepreneurship. Since the last accreditation in 2018-2019, the school obtained both AACSB and EQUIS accreditation, which has further improved the quality assurance process.

SBE Executive Education (EE) is an integral part of the faculty, but operates autonomously in terms of strategy, operations, finances and educational support. It is among others in charge of ten accredited part-time master programmes. SBE EE is led by the Associate Dean, who is line-managed by the SBE dean and reports to the Faculty Board. Each post-initial degree programme has a dedicated programme director who is responsible for content, organisation and quality assurance. The director ensures that the curriculum is adjusted to the intended learning outcomes and that the learning environment meets the quality requirements of SBE.

Programme

The Master of Science (MSc) in Verandermanagement (Change Management, VM) is a part-time 60 EC programme taught in Dutch. After its initial accreditation, the programme started in September 2016. The MSc VM aims to train working professionals to become change managers, providing them multidisciplinary knowledge and skills to perform behavioural and business research for science, practice and society. The post-initial master explicitly starts from the assumption that there is a neat connection between personal and professional development, hence the attention in the curriculum to personal growth, participation in the public debate, and contribution to a sustainable world. Since the start, the MSc VM has been a small-scale programme with three core teaching staff and an average yearly intake of 12 students.

The previous accreditation panel who visited the programme in 2018 issued a conditionally positive advice. Early 2022, it concluded that the VM master in the meantime also fulfilled the NVAO conditions regarding the explicitly formulated end-level of students and the demonstration by students that they fulfil all academic criteria and cover the full empirical cycle in the master thesis.

Assessment

The external assessment of this programme is part of a wider wo-Bedrijfskunde cluster visit involving 20 degree programmes at eight higher education institutions in the Netherlands. VU Amsterdam has commissioned AeQui to carry out the assessment. At VU, the cluster assessment features eight bachelor, master and post-experience (executive) master programmes.

In the run-up to the visit, a preparatory meeting was held with representatives of SBE to exchange information and plan the dates and programme of the site visit. In collaboration with the programme, AeQui assembled an independent and knowledgeable panel (see Attachment 1). The panel explicitly oriented itself to the cluster in which the programme is placed. The visit was carried out from 12 until 14 November 2024 according to the programme presented in Attachment 2.

The assessment was conducted based on the Accreditation Framework for Higher Education in the Netherlands. VU Amsterdam has a positive institutional audit decision, and therefore the panel assessed four standards of the framework. During the previous accreditation round, the then panel made recommendations for further development. The actions taken in response by the programme are listed in Attachment 3. The panel has integrated this follow-up into its considerations for the current assessment.

The MSc VM programme put at disposition many relevant materials, which served as background information before and during the visit. An overview of these materials is listed in Attachment 4. In the run-up to the site visit, the panel studied the programme's self-evaluation report and reviewed a sample of 15 theses. Their first impressions on the report and the thesis (evaluations) formed the basis for discussion during an online preparatory meeting on 7 November 2024, and guided the panel's questions during the visit.

An Open Consultation Hour for students, teaching and support staff was organised in connection with the preparatory meeting; eventually, nobody used the opportunity to speak individually and confidentially with the panel. At the initiative of VU Amsterdam, a Development Dialogue will take place in Spring 2025. The results of this meeting will not affect the assessment presented in this report.

The panel conducted the assessment independently. At the end of the visit, the chair informed the programme and institutional representatives about the panel findings, considerations and conclusions. A draft version of the underlying report was sent to the programme, whose response was incorporated into this final version of the report.

Intended learning outcomes

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

Findings

Profile

The master VM aims to train working professionals to become change managers, providing them multidisciplinary knowledge and skills to perform behavioural and business oriented research for science, practice and society. The programme is connected to – and draws expertise from – evidence-based management, (social) psychology, sociology, cultural anthropology, ethics, philosophy, domains which all have their own paradigms, methods, methodologies and techniques. The programme sets out to train its students to consider change management from different perspectives.

The MSc VM has its own tagline: 'Better Change for the Good", which aligns with the vision of the university 'A Broader Mind' and the goal of SBE "Science with Purpose". The programme looks for ways to work together change management-wise and learn about societal issues by bringing in research themes of the staff and connect these with the topics brought forward by the participants/students.

The VM programme has a specific profile, based on a clear vision on the development of both professional and academic knowledge and skills. In fact, the programme emphasises three perspectives and their methodological variants for research:

- Describe is about doing literature research on change and related topics: the evidence-based perspective is leading, and master thesis students go through the entire systematic literature review process;
- Design is about design and development of change and intervention: the design perspective related to business administration and social sciences is leading, and master thesis students work on the entire empirical cycle;
- Reflection on the social construction of change and intervention: the research cycle and frameworks of philosophy, ethics, cultural anthropology and sociology are leading, and master thesis students use discourse analysis, ethnography or qualitative methodology.

Acknowledging that programme developers do not propose a standard change management curriculum, the panel appreciates the emphasis of the programme on the contribution to the change management profession. This vision/approach emphasises the professional orientation, which in turn befits nicely the post-initial character of the programme. Moreover, the panel thinks that the three methodological research variants are both interesting and ambitious.

Furthermore, the panel gathered from the written materials that the aspirations of the VM programme are aligned with the educational vision of both VU and SBE. This vision is formulated along two axes: the (1) behavioural component is firmly embedded in the core values Responsible, Personal and Open of the VU; and (2) the content component consists of the roles Academic, Professional, and Citizen. During the discussions on site, the panel noticed that these

components are not mere theoretical constructs on paper, but are effectively underpinning the profile, design and implementation of the VM programme. Hence, the panel endorses that integrating the academic, professional and citizen roles with the behavioural components responsible, personal and open creates a unique profile for both SBE and for the post-initial master students that graduate from the VM programme.

The panel read in the interesting benchmark section that several comparable programmes in the Netherlands target senior professionals who want to develop in the domain of change management and organisational development. Most programmes pay explicit attention to theory and research, application and reflection, knowledge and process skills. The VM programme at VU, however, is the only part-time programme that leads to an MSc degree. Moreover it stands out for its multi- and interdisciplinary approach, its focus on the functional perspective, its orientation on science, profession and society, its attention to evidence-based management, and its comprehensive view on professional development where participants not only acquire knowledge, but also learn to make a bridge towards their own practice and develop an individual profile.

The panel noticed in the written materials and during the discussions on site that the unique profile of the VM programme is well known to students. In their dedicated section of the report, students mentioned that they chose for the MSc VM because of the diversity in themes and perspectives, the multidisciplinary approach, the evidence-based approach and scientific underpinning of the domain, the connection between practice and theory, the societal relevance of the topic, the personal and professional development, the combined academic

and practical expertise of the core teaching staff, and the attention to the hard and soft side of change management.

Intended learning outcomes

The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that SBE has developed a single – and according to the panel relevant – framework to guide the formulation of the learning outcomes of its degree programmes. This framework also applies to the post-initial programmes under the responsibility of SBE EE. The intended learning outcomes of the master VM consist of learning goals and learning objectives: the goals refer to what graduates are or have and are set SBE-wide; the objectives refer to what graduates can do or make and are specific to the VM programme. The panel observed that there is a direct link between the respective goals and objectives, and that both goals and objectives are clustered around five dimensions: academic and research skills, bridging theory and practice, social and professional skills, broadening your horizon, and self-awareness.

The VM programme features five learning goals and six learning objectives. While their formulation essentially remained the same, the intended learning outcomes have been reorganised in view of the initial AACSB accreditation: the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business is a highly reputed accreditation body whose international quality standard SBE managed to obtain in 2022. The panel has studied the intended learning outcomes and noticed that they are aligned with the Dublin Descriptors, formulated at the appropriate master level and reflect the academic orientation of the programme.

The panel appreciates the explicit link of the different learning objectives to the specific domain of change management. Moreover, the

reference to stakeholders, social dynamics, and the combination of ethical, social and societal perspectives befits the vision and profile of the programme, the school and the university. In addition, the panel noticed that the programme vision regarding the study, application and development of different methodological perspectives (describe – design – reflect) is taken up in the learning outcomes: students are trained and assessed on each of the three perspectives during their study, and choose the most relevant one to implement fully in their thesis.

Professional Field

The panel noticed that all degree programmes under review adopt a similar yet programme-specific approach in their structural connections to the professional world. These contacts invariably serve to improve the learning experience of students, to understand the needs of corporations and organisations, and to enhance the quality and relevance of the respective programmes. The contacts of the VM programme with the professional field have led to the involvement of companies and organisations in several courses through guest lectures, assignments and cases. Moreover, students contribute knowledge, experience and cases from their own professional practice in class, which in turn leads to knowledge exchange among students, and between students and teaching staff.

Furthermore, the panel was informed that the programme features a long-standing dedicated Advisory Board (Curatorium), which consists of four members who represent both the academic and the professional world and have managerial expertise in different sectors. In fact, the four members together reflect the target group of VM student-professionals. Since its establishment, the board has been meeting at least twice per year and provided valuable advice on the

needs of the professional field, which in turn has led to different or sharper module contents. A very recent and concrete example of the discussions with the Curatorium is the decision of the programme management to include the topic "bias in organisational change" in one of the curriculum modules. During the site visit, the chair of the Curatorium informed the panel that the board plays an important role in monitoring the learning outcomes of the programme.

The panel welcomes the role of the Curatorium as a structural tool to monitor and ensure the continued relevance and alignment of the VM programme with the needs of the professional field. Given the specific post-initial and small-scale character of the programme, the panel sees room for an even bigger role of the Advisory Board as ambassador of the programme, both internally through a greater visibility towards students and alumni, and externally in generating impact on the professional field.

Finally, the panel noticed that programme management keeps track of the professional whereabouts of its graduates. These efforts ensure that there is ample contact between the programme and its alumni, who are also solicited to speak out on the continued relevance of the programme contents and learning objectives.

Considerations

Based on the above-mentioned findings, the panel thinks highly of the overarching way in which the mission and educational vision of the university and the school are underpinning the profile and the learning goals of all degree programmes under review. This common approach, which is also visible in the contacts with the professional world, ensures consistency and recognition across programmes.

In this regard, the panel considers that the VM programme has a clear and distinctive profile, features proper learning outcomes, and is well connected to the professional field. The panel appreciates the specific vision of the programme and its emphasis on different research methodological perspectives and the change management profession. Students recognise this particular approach and have enrolled precisely because of the programme's multiple perspectives, interdisciplinarity, societal relevance, personal and professional development, and staff expertise.

The panel endorses the way the intended learning outcomes have been adjusted since the previous visit. Their formulation in both learning goals and learning objectives is adequate, does justice to the unique profile, and reflects explicitly the domain of change management, as well as the master level and academic orientation of the programme.

The panel appreciates the different ways in which the VM programme is involving the professional field and its alumni. By doing so, it enhances the learning experience of its students and maintains the relevance of its profile and (learning) objectives. The Advisory Board is an important structural tool and systematic source of information for the programme, which according to the panel could become even more visible and impactful as ambassador of the VM programme.

Taking these considerations into account, the panel assesses that the programme **meets** this standard.

Teaching-learning environment

Standard 2: The curriculum, the teaching-learning environment and the quality of the teaching staff enable the incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Findings

Programme

The post-initial master Verandermanagement is a part-time programme. The curriculum of 60 EC consists of three modules of 20 EC, which are spread in such a way that the programme can be completed in two years. The first module, Advanced Programme, lasts one year and deepens the knowledge on three core themes: Strategie, Technologie & Verandering; Organiseren, Besturen & Veranderen; and Leren, Ontwikkelen & Leiderschap. This module works 'outside in' and 'from macro to micro'. The second module, Interventionist Programme, takes six months and addresses the necessary skills to function and intervene as a professional in complex situations of change. This module covers themes such as system dynamics, organisation development, coaching and teamwork. The third module, Research Programme, can also be completed in six months and is dedicated to scientific research for the master thesis.

The modular structure allows students to study in a flexible way and include breaks in-between modules. Several students who already have an MSc degree in fact decide to follow only one or two modules as they are looking for specific content know-how. While this modular and flexible structure has the advantage that the initial student intake is relatively good, the disadvantage is that the (nominal) throughput is relatively limited, as several students who envisage to follow the entire programme do indeed take at least one break in between modules.

The panel gathered from the student chapter and the discussion with VM students on site that they are very satisfied with the curriculum. They appreciate the high level of education and the expertise of the teaching staff, which is stimulating and allows to develop their own academic level of thinking. Moreover, the programme pays a lot of attention to the feasibility of the curriculum and is supportive to the group and its individuals. VM students like the variety in teaching styles, teaching formats and professional identity of the teaching staff. Each module and block have its own coordinator, who is very approachable for individual or group requests. Hence, VM students feel heard when they raise concerns, inside and outside of the programme committee, and notice that there is willingness among the management and the staff to change/improve. When they were asked what can be improved, VM students did not have very concrete points. The study load is heavy, in combination with a job and a family, and the programme is challenging and long, certainly if one also has to pass the pre-master programme. However, the flexibility of a modular programme is highly appreciated, and used for career or family breaks in-between. If anything, students would like a few more fellow students in class to discuss and share experiences, which in turn would allow the programme to build a broader basis of like-minded alumni and thus enhance its impact on the broader professional field.

The panel is aware that the programme team has gone to lengths to adjust the programme and bring it up to standard in line with the recommendations and conditions of the previous panel. While the changes mainly focused on topics related to NVAO standard 4, the adjustments have also impacted on the programme

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curriculum and assessment. In so far as the curriculum is concerned, major changes relate to the above-mentioned research perspectives and the 'Better Change for the Good' course in the first two modules where students and staff work together on societal issues and personal identity. In addition, the thesis module is organised as a structured process to help students stay on track and finish the thesis in time.

Moreover, the panel noticed that all degree programmes including the MSc VM have worked hard on the constructive alignment between programme learning outcomes, course learning goals and assessments. The preparations for the initial AACSB accreditation brought along a re-organisation of the intended learning outcomes at programme level, while adjustments to the curriculum entailed changes in the course learning objectives. The curriculum map shows which learning objectives are addressed per course. The curriculum assessment connects the respective courses to the types of assessment. The VM assessment plan brings together all programme, course and assessment elements, which in turn allows to monitor and evaluate the level of constructive alignment in the programme. Students are informed about this connection / alignment in the course descriptions of their study guides. The materials and discussions demonstrated convincingly, according to the panel, that there is a clear connection between the VM programme learning outcomes and the VM course objectives.

In sum, the panel thinks that MSc VM has a very interesting and relevant curriculum to offer, which aligns with the profile of the programme, the vision of the university and the school, and the needs and interests, as well as the personal/professional situation of the students. Compared to the situation at both the initial and re-accreditation phase, the programme has

changed considerably and these changes are clearly for the better. Moreover, students are very satisfied with the programme, both in terms of contents, staff expertise and support.

During the visit, the panel advised the programme team to look into the length and/or study credits of its three modules: the VM programme is spread over two years, but the number of study credits is currently not allocated equally over this period, with module one taking up the entire first year but accounting for only 20 EC.

Didactics
The panel gathered from the highly informative written materials and the discussions on site that the VM programme features an educational concept that aligns with the behavioural (values responsible, personal and open) and content components (academic, professional and citizen roles) of the university wide vision on education.

For the VM programme, this means that theory and practice are in constant interchange, not only in the modules but also in the minds of the students. Hence, during the intake students get clear and reasonable indications of the time investment this programme requires. Throughout the programme, moreover, students change their working approach and replace practice, monodisciplinary and day-to-day knowledge by methodology, multi/inter-disciplinary and scientific knowledge. In addition, evidence-based working is an important component as students acquire specific skills to collect, understand and use evidence when supporting change management trajectories in organisations.

The panel noticed that the teaching staff adopt different teaching styles during their interventions, including evidence based learning or flip-the-classroom. Moreover, the programme

makes use of active-blended learning, thereby reflecting the vision of the university to develop online teaching tools with the ambition to combine on-campus teaching with technological opportunities that enhance teaching effectiveness.

The panel gathered from the discussions on site that the didactic concept of the VM programme has been well thought through and is implemented meticulously. It goes to the credit of the programme management and the teaching staff that students and alumni are highly positive about the variety of relevant approaches inside and outside the classroom.

Student admission, intake and success rate
The panel was informed that VM students should have a bachelor degree to be admitted, and at least three years of work experience. Students with a professional bachelor degree follow a pre-master programme of 23 EC, which consists of disciplinary courses, methods, techniques and statistics, and a pre-master paper. Other students may be asked to take part of the pre-master programme to do away with possible deficiencies in content or statistics. According to the students and alumni, these admission requirements allow all participants to enter the programme on a more or less equal footing whereby all students have a decent level of disciplinary knowledge and academic skills.

Prior to enrolment, students have an intake meeting with the programme management to check whether the programme fits the learning goals and learning approach of the student, and inform about the needed time investment. Moreover, interested students can contact a programme alumnus to get first-hand information and experience about the programme. Students indicated to the panel that the admission procedure allowed them to gain a proper understanding of what the programme is about and how it would affect their work-life balance.

The programme attracts a wide diversity of students in terms of professional positions, sectors and aspirations. They all share an interest – and often a need – to get more knowledge about change management because their organisations/employers are dealing with change management questions. The students the panel spoke to were a fair representation of this diversity and represented societal sectors that currently undergo complex changes, such as the care sector. Students see the diversity of the intake as an important value added of the programme as it allows to gain interesting and comparative insights on how fellow students in other sectors deal with change.

The panel read in the self-evaluation report and the appendix on student data that the programme team strives for 12 participants in module 1, of which 10 move on to the second module, and 8 eventually graduate following the master thesis. The panel is not in a position to assess the drop-out, throughput and success rate of the programme, as the modular approach allows students to also enrol for one module and/or take a break in-between modules. Adding up the participants in a given module, the programme seems to be doing fine in module 1, reaches more or less the envisaged intake in module 2, and is slightly behind predictions for module 3.

Acknowledging that the modular structure is a value added for busy student-professionals, the panel noticed that this approach does affect the student throughput and to some extent also the learning experience of the respective cohorts. After all, the programme currently is doing about right in terms of intake, but does not reach its envisaged student numbers in module

3. The programme team is aware of this situation and plans to step up its communication / marketing efforts to attract – and retain - more students for the entire programme.

Staff

The panel gathered from the self-evaluation report that the VM programme consists of three full professors and one staff member who supports the student-related processes. They are all linked to VU SBE and together spend 1,6 FTE on the programme. In addition the programme involves three academic teaching staff from SBE and 16 external teachers. The VM professors and the academic staff all belong to the Management & Organisation department of SBE.

The VM programme relies on a relatively big group of external teachers who address the multidisciplinary aspects of the programme and cover domains such as technology and strategy, society and policy, ethics and change, leadership, and system dynamics. The SBE colleagues, whose major involvement is with the Business Administration programmes, provide education and supervise theses, and ensure the connection with the initial education programmes at SBE. The panel noticed during the visit that there are numerous formal and informal discussion moments between the core team and the teaching staff to ensure coherence in teaching, assessment and grading. Students the panel spoke to emphasised that they appreciate the variety of teaching staff, each with a particular domain of expertise and a specific teaching style. All teachers know the position of their intervention within the overall programme, are dedicated to the domain of change management, and available for students.

As all SBE EE programmes aim to match science with practice, the teaching staff involved in EE programmes such as VM either connect their academic background with change management practice, or combine their practice with involvement in research and science. All teaching staff in the VM programme can connect these two elements and are aware of change management issues that are important for the post-initial students. Moreover, the VM core staff has participated in design, execution and supervision of scientific research connected to spearhead research areas of the SBE department Management & Organisation, such as boardroom dynamics. In this way, they contribute to the domain of change management as scientific discipline, and ensure that the knowledge and insights are disseminated towards the professional field. The panel acknowledges that staff dedicated to the VM programme has good research credentials.

Further to a comment in the previous accreditation report, the panel noticed that the three core academic staff (still) do not have a university teaching qualification (BKO). The panel was informed that they have started their BKO-trajectories but had to temporarily suspend their involvement due to the long-term absence of one VM professor. While it understands the temporary suspension, the panel urges the core staff to resume the BKO-trajectory as soon as possible. The teaching staff from SBE and other universities, however, have a teaching qualification.

In addition to all positive findings, the panel noticed that the core team is very dedicated to the programme but in its smallness also potentially vulnerable. While other teaching staff are certainly also committed, the VM programme is seen internally and externally as essentially thriving on the two founding fathers who set up a non-accredited version of the programme already in 2004. The core staff agreed to this analysis of the panel and is aware that they need to extend the team, work on succession planning

and make the programme team future-proof. In this regard, the panel advises the team to expand not only the core team but also the programme in order to attract (some) more students, keep the research-education nexus, and recruit additional PhD students.

Considerations

Based on the above-mentioned findings, the panel considers that the MSc VM has a strong teaching-learning environment featuring a coherent curriculum, a befitting didactic concept and well-qualified teaching staff.

The panel thinks highly of the efforts of the programme team to enhance the curriculum in line with the recommendations of the previous accreditation panel and the internal developments at university and school level. The current curriculum is coherent, reflects the profile and objective of the programme, and underlines the unique features of the VM programme at VU. Moreover, the VM course objectives in the curriculum are clearly aligned with the programme learning outcomes.

The panel is impressed by the didactic concept that underlies the programme. Together the different components reflect the educational vision of both VU and SBE and befit the specific profile and objectives of the VM programme. In

addition, the teaching staff is well qualified to apply these educational principles to the substance of their courses, the different teaching formats and the diverse group of students.

During the site visit, the panel felt a positive vibe among all stakeholders it spoke to. The panel commends the programme management for creating in this programme a community of students with different backgrounds and interests who are taught and supported by an equally competent and enthusiastic staff team.

In addition to these positive considerations, the panel advises the programme team to look into the length and/or study credits of its three modules as these are currently not allocated equally across the programme. Furthermore the panel suggests to increase the student intake, possibly by expanding the programme, as this will enhance the learning experience of all cohorts. A somewhat bigger intake, moreover, would allow the programme to expand the core team and divide crucial management and coordination tasks over more staff.

Taking these considerations into account, the panel assesses that the programme **meets** this standard.

Student assessment

Standard 3: The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.

Findings

Assessment system

The panel gathers from the extensive written materials and the discussions on site that the VM programme operates an assessment system that complies with the assessment policy and procedures of SBE, which in turn are based on a university-wide policy on assessment quality. The programme has put at disposition both policy documents, the Manual for Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning – VU Assessment Framework and the SBE Policy Plan – Assessment Policy. Moreover, every degree programme has a dedicated Assessment Plan, which is updated every year and describes the assessment vision, the programme and course objectives, the curriculum map and curriculum assessment, and the forms of testing. Both programme director and examination board use the assessment plan to control the relationship between the programme's intended learning outcomes, the course-level objectives and their assessment.

The panel has looked into the most recent Assessment Plan for the master VM and established that the elaborate document does justice to both central policies and the specificity of the degree programme, ensuring constructive alignment between goals, objectives and assessment. It is programme-wide policy that every course includes different forms of assessment and that a substantial part of the grade is based on an individual exam component. The MSc VM fully complies with this policy: the three modules (advanced, interventionist and research) each consist of several components with their own assessment format and evaluation approach. The panel noticed that the programme features 21 assessments, in a variety of formats, several of which are evaluated with a pass/fail mark for a total of 12 EC. Students and staff indicated during the visit that the pass/fail mark is adopted in those cases where it is most relevant, e.g. when the deliverable itself is important (such as in reflection fieldnotes, or a motivation letter for the interventionist module) but its contents allow no objective form of scoring differentiation. Nonetheless, the panel invites the programme to explore if ways for objective scoring exist also for these assessments.

During the visit, the panel discussed on several occasions and with different stakeholders the developments in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its impact on course delivery and assessment. The Examination Board included regulations on the use of (Generative) AI in its Rules and Regulations, which have been further specified by the respective programme directors. Across the school/programmes, these regulations follow the principle that they should instigate awareness and action rather than punishment, and that they should foster autonomous and critical thinking while recognising that AI can also be a support for learning. Hence, all course coordinators address AI in their manuals and choose from a menu of AI usage options for assignments. These options range from AI not being allowed at all to AI being mandatory. Students from their side must sign an Own Work Declaration affirming the authenticity of their deliverables. Both staff and students indicated to the panel that the rules are clear at the level of the individual assessment/course. In addition, programme and SBE management mentioned that the university and

the school are working on comprehensive policies, which are likely to affect the contents of the courses, the delivery of education, the organisation of assessment, and eventually the intended learning outcomes of the respective programmes. Currently, there is a focus on the acquisition of AI skills, which differs at bachelor and master level. This specific area of attention is very new, and its implementation differs per programme. In sum, the panel found that the different degree programmes including VM are addressing issues of (Generative) AI in a mature and appropriate way. Nonetheless, it is clear to the panel – and the programme – that the developments regarding (Generative) AI require ongoing attention not only in terms of thesis writing and assessment, but also in didactics.

Course assessment
At the level of individual modules, coordinators select the most appropriate assessment methods for testing the learning goals. They do so in close collaboration with the programme director who ensures that across the programme a variety of assessment methods is used. Each module has its assessment file. This file contains a test blueprint, the exam, resit exam and/or assignments, a model answer plus scoring guide, a test and item analysis, the results of the course evaluation, and a short reflection report by the examiner. Course coordinators are free to tailor the different exam components to the requirements of their course, provided they inform the programme management accordingly. The teaching staff is encouraged to experiment with innovative forms of teaching and testing; in every course, however, the individual student performance should be the decisive factor in the assessment. The panel agrees to the emphasis on individual exam components and the promotion of diversity and innovation in assessment formats. It welcomes the elaboration of assessment files, which constitutes a good basis

for the Examination Board to monitor the quality of assessment per course and disseminate the good practice examples they come across in their reviews.

The panel gathered from the assessment plan that the VM programme features many different forms of assessment for the numerous course components. The core deliverables test knowledge and application of knowledge, and take the format of an individual, group or combined assignment. Several fieldnote reflections test the capacity of students to reflect. Moreover, the panel noticed that VM students and alumni appreciate(d) the programme's approach to assessment. In their dedicated section of the report, students mentioned that each assessment form befits the learning goals and competences of the module, while the variety in assessments caters to students with different learning styles. The panel was informed that the core deliverable of the Advanced Programme module, the manifest, does not have a set format: while initially viewed as peculiar and out-of-comfort zone, students do see towards the end of the module that the free format is suitable for the scope of the assignment, i.e. to develop one's personal and professional identity. Furthermore, VM students and alumni indicated that they are overall positive about the quality and amount of feedback, even if some staff are more forthcoming than others. The students who followed a pre-master programme describe this phase as an excellent yet tough preparation for the master VM.

In sum, the panel appreciates the meticulous approach of the programme team, the course coordinators and the examiners in implementing an assessment system that does justice to the university, the school and the programme. Although course assessment seems to work effectively in the MSc VM, the panel advises the

programme to look for ways to reduce the number of individual assessments, notably in the first module, and assess bigger units within this module.

Assessment of graduation works

The master thesis is the culmination of the VM programme. The thesis process is governed by clear rules and procedures, which are explained in an information session to students and in the thesis manual. The master thesis is conceived as a course with learning goals and a detailed assessment grid. A dedicated VM thesis coordinator oversees the entire process, which is very similar to other master programmes at SBE. Master theses at SBE can only be supervised and assessed by academic staff members with a PhD. The VM thesis coordinator proposes a second reader who is knowledgeable of the thesis topic and / or its methodology and can offer an independent assessment. The panel acknowledges that the entire thesis process is well structured and includes a proper manual for students and an instruction for supervisors. Students from their side indicated that the thesis manual is comprehensive and the thesis process clear.

As part of its external assessment, the panel reviewed a sample of 15 VM master theses, as well as the corresponding completed evaluation forms. The theses were submitted in the academic years 2021-2022, 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. Given the limited number of graduates, the panel looked at the 15 most recently submitted and approved theses. The sample included several theses which had also been reviewed by the previous panel as part of the repair trajectory in 2022. The quality of the VM theses will be addressed under the next standard.

In so far as thesis assessment is concerned, the panel noticed that the thesis evaluation form is relevant as it contains a well-developed rubric that allows students to understand the assessors' appraisal of the different thesis components. Moreover, the panel found that the rubrics were being used by both assessors and that the final scores were very much in line with the respective appreciations of the panel members. Compared to some of the other degree programmes under review, the panel noticed with satisfaction that the VM programme had provided not only the joint rubric, but also the individual evaluation forms of the respective assessors.

Students and alumni indicated to the panel that the assessors generally provide useful feedback both at an intermediate stage (by the supervisor) and upon submission of the final version (by the second reader and the supervisor, separately). In all cases the panel thought the evaluation forms had been completed in an insightful way; nonetheless, some forms could have contained more feedback to motivate (each of) the respective criteria scores.

As a point for attention, it was not clear from the evaluation form how the scores on the various criteria lead to a final grade. The panel understood from the discussions on site that across several degree programmes including VM there is no fixed or calculated weighting of the evaluation criteria that automatically lead to a final score. Such decisions are left to the discretion of the programme director and/or the individual assessors. While it understands this argument, the panel nonetheless invites programme directors and Examination Board(s) to check if there are ways to link the sub-scores on evaluation to the overall score on the thesis. This is all the more important as most criteria cover several thesis components.

Moreover, the panel noticed that the third module – Research Programme – consists of a thesis, a rapid evidence assessment and a poster/peer review assignment. While the thesis is evaluated properly, it seems that the two other deliverables (3 EC and 1 EC, respectively) are not graded at all.

Quality assurance

The panel gathered from the written materials that different stakeholders are involved in assuring the quality of assessment: there is first and foremost the Examination Board, but also the programme director and individual examiners play a role. The Examination Board supervises the examination process and carries final responsibility for safeguarding the quality control of assessment and examinations. It investigates systematically whether the process of assessment within SBE (EE) is carried out according to predefined criteria. These criteria are well established and include the reliability and validity of the tests. In the event that tests are not up to standard, the Examination Board reports to the programme director and the examiner and issues interventions for improvement.

During the site visit, the panel met with representatives of all three Examination Boards. It gathered from the written materials and the discussion that these Boards – there is one for all publicly funded degrees, one for privately funded programmes, and one joint Board for the joint programme with the University of Amsterdam – fulfil their legal tasks adequately and have relevant expertise regarding assessment, fraud and legal issues. The external member has extensive assessment expertise. It is a conscious decision of SBE to have several programmes supervised by one Examination Board as this leads to greater uniformity, clarity and authority. Because the entire assessment process is a complex chain of processes, products, procedures,

and agreements, the Examination Boards at SBE not only guard the quality of assessment, but also look into assessment policy, assessment plans, assessment construction, and organisation. The discussion with representatives from all three Examination Boards demonstrated according to the panel that three boards consult each other regularly, that the board members are knowledgeable about the different degree programmes they monitor and committed to their quality assurance tasks. Moreover, the panel noticed with satisfaction that the external members are highly valued members of the respective boards because of their assessment expertise.

The Examination Board for privately funded degree programmes (EE) is in charge of assuring the assessment in the VM programme. The panel noticed from the materials and discussions that the Examination Board EE has extensive experience and follows-up attentively on any issue that may pop up in the programme. On average the board selects two VM courses per year for further examination. Programme management is informed about this decision, supports course coordinators in submitting the dossier, and includes the received feedback in course coordinator conversations.

The panel gathered from the discussions on site that the Examination Board EE has played an important role in ensuring that the VM programme would meet the conditions set by the previous panel. It wants to compliment the Examination Board EE for its expertise and efforts in this regard, as the VM master is still benefiting from the noticeable leap in assessment quality between 2019 and 2022. According to the panel, the quality assurance of VM assessment is in competent hands of the Examination Board EE.

Considerations

Based on the written materials and the discussions on-site, the panel considers that the master VM can rely on a robust system of assessment. This appreciation is based first and foremost on the fact that both course and thesis assessments are embedded in well-established policies and frameworks at the level of the university and the school. The VM assessment plan, moreover, demonstrates that course learning goals are assessed adequately. This, in turn, ensures that the learning outcomes at programme level are covered.

Course and thesis assessments have undergone several changes since the previous accreditation round, and these adjustments are for the better, according to the panel. It wants to compliment all programme stakeholders involved in assessment for their efforts over the past few years to bring the assessment quality of the VM programme up to standard. According to the panel, the extra work that had to be put in meeting the NVAO conditions is now paying off in terms of thesis assessment quality. In fact, its review of the VM master theses demonstrated that in terms of assessment, the thesis evaluation form is relevant. Moreover, the panel agreed in all cases to the thesis scores and found that all VM thesis evaluation forms were completed in a comprehensive and insightful way. The panel therefore wants to commend the VM programme and its thesis assessors for their efforts and skills.

Furthermore, the panel is positive about the capacity and competency of the Examination Board, as is demonstrated by the variety of assessment tasks it is assuming. The Examination Board for privately funded degree programmes has demonstrated over the past few years that it is very capable of assuring the assessment quality of the MSc VM programme.

In addition to these positive considerations, the panel sees room for further adjustments in three areas: first, a reduction of the number of individual assessments, notably in the first module; second, a form of grading for the two smaller components in the thesis module; and third, a connection in the thesis grading between the individual criteria scores and the overall thesis result.

Taking these considerations into account, the panel assesses that the programme **meets** this standard.

Achieved learning outcomes

Standard 4: The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Findings

There are two ways to establish whether the intended learning outcomes have been achieved: by reviewing the quality of the graduation projects and by looking at the professional whereabouts of the alumni after their graduation. The panel has looked at both elements when assessing the quality of the programme.

Quality of graduation projects

The achievement of the intended learning outcomes is assessed by the cumulative results of the exams and the thesis. The VM master thesis is the culmination of the programme and as such assesses most of the learning objectives. As part of its external review, the panel looked at 15 master theses that had been submitted since 2021-2022.

The panel found that the VM theses were generally of a good standard. The research questions were interesting and related to specific change management topics that are close to the professional domains of the respective students. Most students pay a lot of attention to the literature and also the empirical side tends to be well developed. Some students had access to a strong network of respondents, which in turn allowed them to produce original and well-founded empirical studies. As points for attention, the panel noticed that topics are sometimes very broad and could do with some limitations, that the research gaps are not always strongly embedded in recent literature, that students tend to use a lot of Dutch-language material, and that several theses were based on relatively limited empirical/survey data.

While the overall quality of the theses was good – and very much in line with their final scores – the panel found that the VM theses did not differ much from final products of comparable master programmes: the distinctive feature of VM students producing a thesis using one of three methodological research perspectives (describe – design – reflect) did not materialise explicitly in the reviewed theses. The programme team indicated during the site visit that the choice for these perspectives was made after the previous accreditation. While all three perspectives are present in the curriculum, the current set-up of the second module trains students in qualitative research, interviews and literature review, which in turn makes students opt mainly for a similar approach in the master thesis. According to the panel, the three perspectives should be taught separately in the programme but could then be included together in the thesis. After all, the scope of a final academic master is about the combination of describing the situation, designing a change management trajectory using the empirical research cycle, and reflecting on the research results.

In sum, the panel is positive on the overall level of the VM master theses as it reviewed several good quality research projects and only a few that were merely sufficient but still clearly beyond the pass/fail threshold. The panel wants to compliment the programme team for its efforts to enhance the quality of the master theses in the framework of the repair trajectory that was eventually concluded positively. The panel clearly sees that the current programme benefits from these efforts, that students are brought to the expected end-level qualifications and

demonstrate these in a final product at master level and of academic orientation. Hence, it is fair to conclude that through the master thesis, VM students demonstrate that they have reached the (intended) learning goals and objectives.

Performance of graduates

The panel gathered from the written materials and the discussions on site that the programme brings a clear added value to the VM students and graduates. As part of the student chapter, recent graduates indicated that they were satisfied with the competences they acquired during their study and which they can now use in their job. Students liked in particular that the programme was/is both broad and deep, which eventually makes them develop in different ways: they feel better practitioners and have grown both professionally and personally. The panel gathered from the discussion on site that students/alumni do not necessarily envisage a career switch to another employer, but rather want to make internal promotion based on their acquired additional competencies. Several students and alumni provided evidence that this is exactly what is happening after (or even during) their studies.

The panel welcomes the efforts of the VM programme to keep track of its graduates. Several alumni are now involved in the programme, among others as guest lecturer, and share their experiences on doing research and producing a master thesis. Some student theses were later on published as scientific articles and one graduate has in the meantime finished a promotion trajectory. While alumni occasionally bring on new students/colleagues because they are enthusiastic about the VM programme, the management is aware that such word-of-mouth publicity can be enhanced.

In sum, the panel thinks highly of the impact of the VM programme on its students and graduates. The programme delivers on its promises and students/alumni indicate that their expectations are/were surpassed. Alumni are very satisfied with the acquired competencies as professionals and with their personal and professional development, which in turn allowed them to gain more recognition on the job. If anything, the panel gathers from discussions with students, alumni, staff, advisory board and management that this impactful programme should be spread more widely. The programme management is fully aware of this priority task ahead, which it wants to realise in cooperation with the advisory board and the alumni.

Considerations

Based on the above-mentioned findings, the panel considers that students who graduate the master VM have effectively acquired all intended learning outcomes. According to the panel, the reviewed VM theses are of good quality and meet the expectations for a final project of academic orientation at master level.

Moreover, VM graduates are well prepared during their studies to use their newly acquired competencies in a higher-level position with their employer. The programme has boosted their professional and personal development, which in turn has increased their recognition as professionals on the job. Programme graduates clearly show according to the panel that they now operate at academic master level.

The panel thinks highly of the efforts of the programme team to successfully fulfil the conditions set by the previous accreditation panel/NVAO. The programme did not only describe clear expectations with regard to the end-level of students but also proved in this accreditation that students live up to these expecta-

tions. Moreover, the thesis review has shown that students fulfilled all academic criteria of the intended learning outcomes and covered the entire empirical cycle in the thesis.

In addition to all positive considerations, the panel has two suggestions for the programme team: to consider including all three research methodological perspectives in the thesis, and to involve both Advisory Board and alumni more actively in the promotion of the MSc VM.

Taking these considerations into account, the panel assesses that the programme **meets** this standard.

Attachment 1: Assessment panel

dr. Eric Dooms, chair
Associate Professor of Strategy-TIAS

dr. Johanna Vanderstraeten, expert
Associate professor Entrepreneurship at University of Antwerp, Belgium

em.prof.dr. Hans van Ees, expert
Professor of Corporate governance and institutions, Faculty of Economics & Business, University of Groningen.

Karen Taselaar, student-member
Student BSc International Business Administration, University of Twente

The panel was supported by Mark Delmartino MA, certified secretary.

All panel members and the secretary have completed and signed a statement of independence and impartiality, and these have been submitted to NVAO.

Attachment 2: Site visit programme

<u>Location</u>: NU Building, VU campus, De Boelelaan 1111, Amsterdam

Tuesday 12 November 2024

Time	Activity
09.00	Arrival panel and internal meeting
10.00	Faculty Board
10.45	Programme Management BSc Bedrijfskunde & BSc International Business Administration
11.45	Students/Alumni BSc Bedrijfskunde & BSc International Business Administration
12.45	Lunch and internal meeting
13.30	Lecturers BSc Bedrijfskunde & BSc International Business Administration
14.30	Break
15.00	Programme Management MSc Digital Business and Innovation
15.35	Students/Alumni MSc Digital Business and Innovation
16.10	Lecturers MSc Digital Business and Innovation
16.40	Internal deliberations
17.45	Preliminary feedback programmes day 1
18.15	End of day 1

Wednesday 13 November 2024

Time	Activity
09.00	Arrival panel and internal meeting
09.30	Programme Management MSc Verandermanagement
10.05	Students/Alumni MSc Verandermanagement
10.40	Lecturers MSc Verandermanagement
11.10	Break
11.30	Examination Boards all programmes
12.30	Lunch and internal meeting
13.15	Programme Management MSc Business Administration fulltime
13.50	Programme Management MSc Business Administration parttime
14.25	Students/Alumni MSc Business Administration parttime
15.00	Lecturers MSc Business Administration parttime
15.30	Break
15.40	Students/Alumni MSc Business Administration fulltime
16.15	Lecturers MSc Business Administration fulltime
16.45	Internal deliberations
17.45	Preliminary feedback programmes day 2
19.00	End of day 2

Thursday 14 November 2024

Time	Activity
09.00	Arrival panel and internal meeting
09.30	Programme Management MSc Transport Supply Chain Management & MSc Entrepreneurship
10.30	Students/Alumni MSc Entrepreneurship
11.05	Lecturers MSc Entrepreneurship

11.35   Break
11.55   Students/Alumni MSc Transport & Supply Chain Management
12.30   Lecturers MSc Transport & Supply Chain Management
13.00   Lunch and internal meeting
14.30   Preliminary feedback programmes day 3
15.00   Internal deliberations
16.30   Plenary feedback all programmes
16.30   End of site visit

The names of the participants are available with evaluation agency AeQui.

Attachment 3: Recommendations from previous assessment

De opleiding is na een TNO in 2015 in 2018 opnieuw geaccrediteerd. Eerder dan de gebruikelijke heraccreditatietermijn van 6 jaar, om aan te kunnen sluiten bij de accreditatiecyclus van het cluster Bedrijfskunde. Echter, gezien het gegeven dat het een parttime Master betreft met een relatief geringe instroom, waren er op het moment van deze heraccreditatie nog weinig eindwerken beschikbaar ter inzage voor het panel. Op basis van de visitatie in 2018 heeft het panel in maart 2019 een positief advies onder voorwaarden uitgebracht. Het advies is in december 2019 bekrachtigd door de NVAO. De hersteltermijn bedroeg twee jaar. Echter, vanwege het lage aantal studenten en vertraging van het thesisproces vanwege COVID-19 is de uiterste inleverdatum van het rapport vastgesteld op 1 mei 2022. Binnen deze termijn moest de opleiding aan de volgende voorwaarden voldoen:

> (1) De NVAO stelt als voorwaarde dat de opleiding duidelijke eisen stelt aan het eindniveau van studenten en dat vastlegt in de OER.
>
> (2) In de eisen moet terugkomen dat studenten moeten voldoen aan alle beschreven academische criteria in relatie tot de beoogde leerresultaten en in de master-thesis moeten aantonen dat zij een volledige empirische cyclus kunnen doorlopen.

Het panel heeft op basis van de documentatie en de gesprekken tijdens het locatiebezoek in maart 2022 geconcludeerd dat aan beide voorwaarden is voldaan en daarmee standaard 4, gerealiseerde leerresultaten, voldoende is en daarmee het eindoordeel over de accreditatie positief.

De opleiding heeft aan de twee eerder gestelde voorwaarden voor een positief advies voldaan door het implementeren van de volgende zes maatregelen:

1. **Uitwerken van een opleidingsvisie in drie onderzoeksmethodologische perspectieven**. De opleidingsvisie is geëxpliciteerd in drie methodologische onderzoeksperspectieven. Deze doorlopende onderzoekslijn is beschreven in de studiegids van de modules Advanced Program en Interventionist Program (bijlage 2) en in de thesismanual (bijlage 3C). Zo wordt inzichtelijk gemaakt aan studenten hoe de perspectieven en de onderzoekslijn uiteindelijk leidt tot de thesis.

2. **Het (her)bepalen van de verhouding tussen masterthesis en de andere examenonderdelen tegen de achtergrond van de visie en eindtermen**. De verhouding van de verschillende toetsproducten per module binnen de huidige structuur is duidelijk beschreven in relatie tot de drie methodologische onderzoeksperspectieven en in relatie tot de eindtermen. De drie methodologische onderzoeksperspectieven zijn in het gehele programma verweven. Hierdoor nemen de studenten kennis van de academische cycli en methoden die bij elk van de drie perspectieven passen en leren ze deze toe te passen. Studenten worden op deze manier voorbereid om in de thesis één van de drie onderzoekscycli te doorlopen passend bij het vraagstuk van hun thesis.

3. **Evalueren van opleidingsprogramma en examenonderdelen** in lijn met de (aangescherpte) visie.

4. **Aanpassen van het opleidingsprogramma, kernopdrachten en eindproducten** in lijn met de (vertaalde) visie op basis van de evaluatie. Het opleidingsprogramma, de eindproducten en de overige opdrachten zijn geëvalueerd in lijn met de herijkte opleidingsvisie. In lijn met de visie zijn gerichte aanpassingen gedaan in het opleidingsprogramma en de toetsing. Dit heeft met name geleid tot een aantal gerichte aanpassingen ten behoeve van het derde methodologische onderzoeksperspectief (het reflecteren op de sociale constructie van verandering en interventie). Deze zijn met name zichtbaar in Module

2 (het Interventionist Program) waar lerend evalueren en actieonderzoek een expliciete plek hebben gekregen.

5. **Thesis manual aanpassen** in lijn met maatregel 1 en 2, inclusief expliciteren en structureren thesis-proces, overige formele documenten actualiseren.

6. **Voorzien in periodieke interne evaluatie en kwaliteitsborging**, mede door verdere samenwerking met de afdeling Management & Organization. Vanaf het cohort 2020 (start februari 2020, met thesistraject in de tweede helft van 2021) is voorzien in versterking van interne evaluatie en kwaliteitsborging, dit ook door verdere samenwerking met en inzet van docenten (uit de voltijdsmaster Business Administration) van de vakgroep Management & Organization (M&O), waar de docenten van Verandermanagement sinds 1 januari 2020 ook deel van uitmaken). In de aanloop naar de visitatie in 2022 zijn een aantal scripties ook beoordeeld door een UHD van M&O en de voorzitter van de examencommissie van onze School (SBE). In 2024 zal een steekproef van scripties van na voorjaar 2022 op vergelijkbare wijze worden geëvalueerd.

In het paneladvies naar aanleiding van het locatiebezoek in november 2018 gaf het panel, naast de hiervoor genoemde voorwaarden, ook nog de volgende aanbevelingen mee:

• **Beperk de studievertraging**. Studenten liepen vooral vertraging op in het thesistraject. Door de modulaire opzet (met de mogelijkheid een studiepauze tussen modules in te lassen) en de verdere structurering van het thesistraject met meer plenaire sessies is de vertraging afgenomen. De opleiding hanteert een zekere tolerantie ten opzichte van vertraging en ondersteunt daar waar nodig. Onze studentenpopulatie heeft relatief vaak te maken met levens veranderende momenten (ziekte, geboorte, verlies of verandering van werk) met soms een studievertraging als gevolg.

• **Bewaak de risico's voor het programma in termen van het aantal studenten**. De instroom in de eerste module van de master, het Advanced Program, ligt meestal tussen de 10 en 16 deelnemers. De minimale instroom in de eerste module is zowel vanuit didactisch als bedrijfseconomisch oogpunt 8 deelnemers en de maximale instroom 20 deelnemers. Van de deelnemers in module 1 (het Advanced Program) stroomt 80% of meer door naar module 2 (Interventionist Program). Door de modulaire opbouw (die aansluit bij de behoeften van studenten) 'verliest' de opleiding in de overgang naar de 3e module (Research Program) studenten die er bewust voor kiezen om niet op te gaan voor de thesis (meestal omdat ze al in het bezit zijn van een academische titel). De werving van nieuwe studenten ligt voornamelijk bij de opleiding zelf, waarbij binnen SBE recentelijk meer marketingcapaciteit en kennis beschikbaar is waar de opleiding de vruchten van verwacht te plukken de komende periode.

• **Stimuleer docenten om deel te nemen aan BKO-trajecten**. De opleiding/vakgroep heeft drie hoogleraren in vaste dienst van de VU. Voor hen ligt het (verkorte, individuele) BKO-traject binnen bereik en in de planning. Een van de hoogleraren is gestart met het BKO-traject in 2022, echter door persoonlijke omstandigheden die leidde tot langdurige uitval is dit stil komen liggen. De opvang van deze uitval heeft er ook bij de overige twee hoogleraren voor gezorgd dat er weinig ruimte was voor een BKO-traject. Inmiddels zijn de individuele BKO-trajecten (voor docenten met meer dan 10 jaar onderwijservaring) opgestart.

Attachment 4: Reviewed documents

Self-evaluation report
MSc Verandermanagement, Zelfevaluatierapport NVAO accreditatie cluster Bedrijfskunde, VU Amsterdam 2024.
- Algemene informatie
- Beoogde leerresultaten
- Onderwijsleeromgeving
- Toetsing
- Gerealiseerde leerresultaten
- Sterkte- en zwakteanalyse
- Studentenparagraaf

Appendices
- Intended Learning Outcomes
- Programmamodules
- Studiegidsen
- Toetsplan VM
- Thesishandleiding VM en beoordelingsformulier
- Toetsbeleid SBE
- Toetsbeleid VU
- Onderwijs- en Examenreglement 2023-2024
- Regels en Richtlijnen Examencommissie Executive Education
- Jaarverslag Examencommissie Executive Education SBE 2022-2023
- Overzicht van academische staf – kernteam en externe docenten
- Lijst van afgestudeerden
- Instroom en uitval
- AACSB Memorandum

Additional materials
- Cluster bedrijfskunde – curriculumwijzigingen 2024-2025
- Cluster bedrijfskunde – instroom 2024-2025
- Cluster bedrijfskunde – Raden van advies

Thesis review
A representative sample of 15 graduation works and their assessment forms, selected among students graduating the MSc Verandermanagement in 2021-2022, 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. Names and student numbers are available with evaluation agency Aequi.