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## International Supply Chain Management

### Breda University of Applied Sciences

Advisory report of the assessment of the existing programme  
17 September 2025

## Summary

On 17 September, the bachelor's programme International Supply Chain Management (ISCM) of Breda University of Applied Science was assessed. The panel's overall judgement is [positive](#).

### Intended learning outcomes

The MSc International Supply Chain Management (ISCM) at Breda University of Applied Sciences (BUas) is a one-year, full-time English-taught professional master of 60 EC, that prepares students to become strategic leaders in complex and international supply chain business environments. Central to the programme is the T-shaped graduate profile: a specialist in process optimisation who also possesses strong social and analytical skills. The intended learning outcomes (ILOs) were developed in close collaboration with industry stakeholders. They are formulated as competencies and set out in a dedicated competency framework. The ILOs reflect the strategic master's level and are aligned with national and international reference frameworks, including the EMLog framework, the Dublin Descriptors, and the NLQF/EQF at level 7. The ILOs are reviewed periodically with input from students, alumni, staff, and industry. Students recognise and understand the relevance of the ILOs in reaching the final master level of the programme. The panel thus concludes that the programme meets this standard.

### Teaching-learning environment

The curriculum of the ISCM programme is built around the T-shaped professional profile and has a coherent and logical structure. The curriculum effectively enables students to combine and apply analytical, managerial, and social competences in order to lead change and make informed, strategic decisions in complex international supply chain environments. The programme is student-centred and practice-oriented, with a strong emphasis on collaboration

with industry experts and the application of theoretical knowledge to complex supply chain challenges. The panel notes that the programme has integrated contemporary themes such as change, innovation, and digitalisation. It encourages BUas to further strengthen the incorporation of digitalisation and data-driven approaches throughout the curriculum, as these skills are essential for future supply chain leaders to make sound, evidence-based decisions. During the site visit, the panel had some difficulty finding explicit learning outcomes related to intercultural competencies. Lecturers explained that these competencies are addressed within several modules and in the graduation project. However, during discussions with lecturers, the panel found that they used different definitions of intercultural learning outcomes. The panel therefore recommends developing a shared definition and embedding intercultural competencies more explicitly and consistently throughout the programme and its assessments.

Learning is organised in learning communities, where students, lecturers, researchers, and industry professionals collaborate, exchange ideas, and share experiences. The programme employs activating and student-centred teaching methods, including masterclasses, workshops, guest lectures, and real-life supply chain cases. Students appreciate the programme's practical orientation and international character. The teaching staff is highly qualified, combining academic credentials with relevant international industry experience. Lecturers are actively involved in applied research and work closely as a

team. Students described their lecturers as knowledgeable, committed, and approachable. Each student is assigned a personal mentor at the beginning of the programme, who also serves as the thesis supervisor later in the year. Student progress is monitored closely, allowing for early identification of potential study delays. BUAs also offers additional support through student counsellors, particularly for students who face personal challenges or require additional assistance. Students value the accessibility and proactive attitude of their mentors and counsellors. They also emphasised that the small-scale set-up of the ISCM contributes to a personal and supportive atmosphere, where individual needs are recognised, and guidance feels tailored to each student's situation. The panel thus concludes that the programme meets this standard.

#### Student assessment

The ISCM programme has an adequate and well-structured assessment system that aligns with the educational vision of BUAs and ABEL. Assessment is viewed as an integral part of the learning process. Assessment methods are varied, combining formative feedback with summative assessments such as written exams, individual and group assignments, and the final graduation project. Rubrics are used to ensure transparency and alignment with learning outcomes, and new rubrics introduced in 2023 have improved clarity and consistency. The panel observed that in the documentation the alignment between learning outcomes, module objectives, and assessment criteria could be made more user-friendly. Information is currently spread across several documents, which can make it difficult to trace how specific learning objectives, particularly those related to intercultural competence, are assessed. The panel advises BUAs to develop a clear alignment matrix and make assessment criteria more explicit across the curriculum. The quality and reliability

of assessments are safeguarded by ABEL's Board of Examiners (BoE). The panel advises the BoE to become actively and structurally involved in the ISCM master's programme, paying particular attention to safeguarding aspects such as the assessment of international and intercultural competences. The panel is confident that the BoE has the capacity and commitment to strengthen its role accordingly. It therefore concludes that the programme meets this standard.

#### Achieved learning outcomes

The graduation projects of the ISCM programme achieve the learning outcomes and are at master's level. The graduation project combines applied research for an external organisation with students' reflection on their personal leadership development and implementation of an improvement plan. The reviewed theses and leadership reports demonstrate that graduates are capable of conducting applied research and developing innovative solutions for complex supply chain challenges. Topics are up to date and well aligned with developments in the supply chain industry. The panel acknowledges that rubric use for the thesis could be further refined to enhance consistency across assessors, especially in balancing holistic judgement with objective criteria. Industry representatives stated that graduates are well prepared for strategic and change-oriented roles. Alumni emphasised the value of the programme's focus on leadership, strategy, and personal development for their professional growth. The panel thus concludes that the programme meets this standard.

#### Facilities

BUAs offers high-quality facilities that align well with its educational concept. The campus stimulates interaction and collaboration between students, lecturers, and industry professionals. Students reported being highly satisfied with both the physical and digital facilities. The panel

acknowledges the nationwide challenges related to student housing and notes that BUAs is addressing this proactively. An on-campus residence for international students is scheduled to open in 2028. The panel considers this to be a positive and strategic development to further strengthen BUAs's international positioning. The panel thus concludes that the programme meets this standard.

### Quality assurance

The quality assurance system of the ISCM programme is adequate and well-integrated into BUAs's broader institutional framework. BUAs applies the PDCA cycle at all organisational levels and promotes ownership through its decentralised structure. Within the ISCM programme, educational quality is monitored through frequent evaluations, including surveys and round-table discussions. Students feel comfortable providing feedback, which is taken seriously and leads to visible improvements. The panel recognises the strong commitment of staff to continuously improve the programme and values the open culture that supports these efforts. At the same time, it notes that part of the quality assurance process still relies on informal structures and the personal dedication of individual staff members. As the programme transitions toward a more formalised quality assurance

model, the panel encourages further strengthening of documented procedures and improvement actions. The panel thus concludes that the programme meets this standard.

### Recommendations

In order to bring the programme to an even higher level of quality in the future, the panel gives the following recommendations:

- Prepare for transformative change – Expand the programme's international and forward-looking perspective by strengthening international partnerships with universities and companies, and by learning from global developments beyond the traditional domain of supply chain management.
- Internationalisation and intercultural competences – Define a shared and explicit understanding of internationalisation and intercultural learning outcomes, in dialogue with relevant stakeholders, and integrate this understanding into the curriculum and quality assurance cycle.
- Enhance involvement of the Board of Examiners – Strengthen the BoE's role in safeguarding the assessment quality at master's level by ensuring greater familiarity with the ISCM programme and more structural involvement in monitoring final qualifications.

All standards of the NVAO framework have been positively assessed. On this basis, the panel provides a [positive recommendation](#) regarding the accreditation of the ISCM programme.

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

Ab Groen  
Chair

Yvet Blom  
Secretary

## Introduction

### Profile

Breda University of applied sciences (BUAs) is an international university of applied sciences with more than 7.000 students. The institution consists of five academies and offers programmes within nine domains: Built Environment, Data Science & Artificial Intelligence, Facility, Games, Hotel, Leisure & Events, Logistics, Media & Creative Business, and Tourism.

BUAs's mission is to inspire students and staff to develop and use their talents and innovative capacities to provide innovative solutions to complex challenges. A distinctive BUAs feature is the small-scale education, which takes shape in learning communities. Within these communities, gaining meaningful learning experiences is key. Students work together with lecturers, researchers and industry professionals on projects aimed at finding solutions to social and sectoral issues.

### *The programme*

The full-time one year MSc International Supply Chain Management (ISCM) consists of 60 ECTS and is offered by the Academy for Built Environment & Logistics (ABEL). Alongside the ISCM master-programme, ABEL offers three bachelor's programmes: Logistics Management, Logistics Engineering, and Built Environment. The academy has a strong connection to industry and research through its department of Research and Business Innovations (RBI) and active participation in Logistics Community Brabant (LCB) and the Centre of Expertise (CoE) KennisDC. In these partnerships, students, lecturers, researchers, and companies collaborate on

practice-oriented research and innovation projects, ensuring a close link between education, research, and professional practice.

The ISCM programme is a professional master programme expanding on bachelor-level logistics or supply chain backgrounds. Students are trained to become innovative supply chain leaders. The ISCM-curriculum is designed according to a T-shaped profile: students gain both specialist supply chain knowledge and skills, as well as broad generalist knowledge and skills in supply chain management, including leadership in an international context, change and innovation, research and business intelligence. The programme has a strong international focus and is taught entirely in English, reflecting both the nature of global supply chains and the international composition of its staff and students. The professional orientation of the ISCM programme is evident from the strong integration of real-life cases, guest lecturers from industry, and the graduation project carried out within companies.

### The assessment

BUAs has commissioned AeQui to carry out the current assessment. For this purpose, AeQui, in collaboration with the programme, has assembled an independent and knowledgeable panel. A preparatory meeting with representatives of the programme has taken place.

The assessment was conducted based on the Accreditation Framework for Higher Education in the Netherlands, according to the programme outlined in Appendix 2. The institution

does not have a positive institutional audit decision, and therefore six standards were assessed.

Recommendations for further development were made during the previous assessment. The programme has taken action in response (see Appendix 3). The panel has integrated this follow-up into its considerations for the current assessment.

The panel conducted the assessment independently; the panel received the necessary information to arrive at a judgement. At the end

of the assessment, the programme was informed of the findings and conclusions.

This report was sent in draft to the programme; the programme's responses have been incorporated into this final report.

At the initiative of the programme, a development meeting will take place in 2026. The results of this development meeting will not affect the assessment presented in this 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

The MSc International Supply Chain Management (ISCM) programme at Breda University of Applied Sciences (BUas) delivers professionals who are equipped to operate effectively within complex, international, and rapidly evolving supply chain environments. Essential to the programme is the development of supply chain leaders with a T-shaped profile. Graduates are highly trained process optimisation specialists (the vertical bar of the T), who approach supply chain challenges from a generalist and multidisciplinary perspective (the horizontal bar of the T).

Graduates are bridge-builders between strategic, tactical, and operational levels. They are pragmatic and solution-oriented thinkers, combining analytical, and collaborative skills. As such, they can initiate and guide process improvements within organisations and respond effectively to changes in the international supply chain context.

### *Intended learning outcomes*

The master's programme has, in close consultation with industry experts, translated the T-shaped profile of the supply chain leader into a competency framework. The competencies in this framework form the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of the programme. The ILOs are well formulated and explicitly refer to the master level. By displaying strategic, analytical, design, implementation and leadership competencies, by using justified chosen research methods and techniques, while taking into account organisational conditions, data complex-

ity, social and ethical responsibilities, cross-cultural differences and (technological) developments in a changing international environment, graduates are able to:

- A. Analyse and evaluate supply chains from a strategic perspective.
- B. Develop a supply chain improvement plan that supports a sustainable business model.
- C. Create an approach for implementation, including change management and stakeholder engagement.
- D. Demonstrate leadership skills in influencing improvement processes and reflecting on professional growth.

Besides acquiring the above competencies, students will also create a basis for autonomous personal growth and lifelong learning.

The ILOs are aligned with the European Master Logician (EMLog) framework and with the competency profiles of Dutch professional master's programmes in supply chain management. The ILOs also align with relevant national and international reference frameworks such as the Professional Master Standard of the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (based on NLQF and EQF level 7), and the Dublin descriptors. Programme management indicated to the panel that it regularly discusses trends and developments with the Logistics Industry Committee (LIC) to ensure the master's programme remains up to date and graduates are future-ready. The rapidly changing markets in a dynamic and disruptive global environment have further increased the importance of, for example, supply chain digitalisation, sustainability,

and supply chain resilience. As a result, leadership in steering supply chains in turbulent times has become even more critical.

To ensure the curriculum remains up to date, the ILOs are periodically reviewed and revised by multiple stakeholders, including students, alumni, staff, and industry experts. Drawing on the analysis of the Landelijk Platform Logistiek (LPL) concerning the professional competencies for logistics bachelor's programmes in the Netherlands, led ISCM to conclude that the master's programme corresponds well with the bachelor's final qualifications. Students recognise and understand the ISCM competencies and their importance for achieving the final level of the programme.

In 2024, the LPL conducted a national review of logistics master's programmes, which included the ISCM programme. The LPL concluded that the competencies of the ISCM master are well aligned with the required professional master's level. The intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of logistics bachelor's programmes were also found to connect logically with the entry level of the ISCM master's programme.

#### *BUas' educational vision*

BUas aims to "empower young professionals on their journey to shape a better world". In line with their vision, BUas sets out to deliver versatile T-shaped professionals: graduates who acquire expertise within their own domain while also being able to think and work transdisciplinary across different domains.

Learning at BUas takes place in a small-scale setting in learning communities. These learning communities bring together industry partners, lecturers, students, and researchers to collaborate on complex, real-life challenges. Many of the projects addressed within the learning communities are international and cross-domain in

nature. This enables students to interact with peers and staff from diverse cultural and professional backgrounds.

#### *Industry*

During the site visit, the panel noted a need for graduates who can act as strategic supply chain leaders. BUas' industry partners confirmed that with the programme's ILOs, BUas is really preparing students to be so-called change agents at a strategic level. Professionals who help organisations to implement necessary changes. The industry representatives like the fact that students learn to interact with stakeholders and deliver solutions aligned with their expectations. They recognised that themes such as resilience and agility are addressed in the curriculum, for example through industry cases, but encouraged the programme to further strengthen these aspects to meet the evolving demands of the logistics and supply chain sector.

BUas works actively together with industry experts to ensure the ILOs remain up to date. At an institutional level, this is done by the BUas-wide Industry Board. At the programme level it is the LIC that has been assigned this task. Both the BUas-wide Industry Board as well as LIC meet at least twice a year to keep the ISCM informed on current trends and developments within the supply chain industry. Industry representatives expressed their appreciation for the strong connection that BUas has created between the theory and the industry and highlighted the openness of lecturers to receive feedback. They also value the opportunities to collaborate with BUas through real-life projects, professional events, and guest lectures.

#### *International perspective*

The ISCM programme prepares students for international careers. The programme is taught in English and uses the mixed classroom concept. The ISCM programme recently started working

with the Mixed Classroom Educational Model (MCEM) developed by the Vrije Universiteit (VU) in order to further support the professionalisation of lecturers and the curriculum in developing internationalisation and intercultural competencies. BUAs explicitly focuses on bringing students from different backgrounds together to study and work on assignments and projects in mixed teams.

Mixed classrooms consist of students from various nationalities, which allows for a rich exchange of cultural perspectives and encourages students to develop intercultural skills. The lecturers have different nationalities and extensive international working experience. Internationalisation is not only reflected by the diverse student population but also by the content of the modules, assignments and graduation projects, which frequently address global supply chain challenges.

### Considerations

The panel believes that with the ISCM programme, BUAs offers a practical hands-on master's programme focused on delivering strategic and innovative supply chain leaders. The practical nature of the programme, the small-scale set-up of the education, and the international orientation of the ISCM programme make the master attractive to students.

The panel finds that the ILOs of the ISCM programme are formulated at master's level and meet the industry and academic framework requirements such as the EMLog, the Dublin descriptors, NLQF, and EQF level 7. The ILOs are in

line with the expectations of the industry partners and the supply chain sector as a whole.

It is positive that the ISCM works closely with industry experts, both through the LIC-board as well as broader industry networks, to formulate and periodically review the ILOs. These collaborations ensure that the intended learning outcomes reflect industry developments and future trends. Students and alumni indicate that they understand in which way the ILOs contribute to the final level of the ISCM.

The panel stresses that the supply chain sector is undergoing rapid and fundamental transformation. It emphasises the importance of preparing students for the changes ahead, which go beyond gradual developments and require new ways of thinking and leading. The panel acknowledges the crucial role of artificial intelligence and data-driven leadership as essential elements of the programme's profile to ensure that graduates are well equipped for the future. To further strengthen this international and forward-looking profile, the panel encourages BUAs to strengthen its international partnerships with universities and companies abroad. It also recommends exploring new areas that reach beyond the traditional domain of supply chain management.

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

The MSc International Supply Chain Management (ISCM) is a one-year, full-time, English master's programme (60 EC). The curriculum is derived from the competency framework and built around the T-shaped supply chain professional profile. To ensure coherence, the programme uses a competency matrix that specifies the learning objectives of each module and shows how these objectives connect to the overall programme skills. The programme is student-centred and practice-oriented, with a strong emphasis on collaboration with industry experts and the application of theoretical knowledge to complex professional challenges.

### Curriculum

The curriculum consists of two semesters (40 weeks in total). The programme starts off with the module Supply Chain and Research Fundamentals (5 EC) in week 1 to 4. The aim of this module is to ensure that all students have a similar level of knowledge and skills in operations, logistics and supply chain management, quantitative research methods, and academic and professional writing.

In week 5 to 19, students follow five modules of 5 EC each: Supply Chain Strategy, Leadership in an International Context, Business Intelligence in Supply Chain Management, Change and Innovation in Supply Chain Management, and Research Methods in Supply Chain Management. These five modules build on the Fundamentals module and together provide a solid theoretical foundation while fostering essential supply chain skills and personal development. During the first semester, students are also expected to find a suitable company for their graduation

project and to formulate a thesis topic. Thesis topics and company placements must be formally approved by the thesis coordinator before week 18.

The second semester is centred around graduating. In week 20 to 23, students follow the Integrated Supply Chain Cases module (6 EC), designed to prepare them for the complexities of a professional supply chain environment. During those weeks, students spend 50 percent of their time on location, at their graduation company, conducting a contextual company analysis. The other 50 percent is spent on two supply chain modelling cases at BUAs. The contextual company analysis comprises of internal and external elements. The internal part focuses on the organisational maturity of the graduation company in the areas of strategy, business intelligence, change and innovation, cross cultural dynamics and leadership. The external part focuses on the graduation company's business environment, including their supply chain positioning and market dynamics

The modelling cases that students conduct at BUAs focus on supporting efficient and effective decision-making in supply chains using appropriate analytical and simulation tools. Students learn to model and analyse complex supply chain problems, apply quantitative techniques, and use relevant software to explore and evaluate alternative solutions.

Students who do not yet have an approved thesis topic can complete a contextual company analysis based on a case study, combined with up-to-date company information from literature and online sources. By allowing students to

do this, they have the option to complete the Integrated Supply Chain Cases module without delay.

Week 23 to 27 consists of the Research Proposal module (6 EC). The contextual analysis students completed in week 20 to 23, provides the foundation for the Research Proposal module. The Research Proposal module integrates knowledge from previous courses on an interdisciplinary level and prepares students for their thesis. The module reflects the iterative nature of a research project. Once a topic is selected, initial investigation may reveal the need to refine or adjust its focus based on feasibility, relevance, or timeliness. Within the learning community, students, lecturers, and industry professionals engage in discussions, ask questions, and provide feedback to strengthen initial research ideas. Building on the insights gained during the Integrated Supply Chain Cases, students develop a research proposal that forms the starting point and guiding document for their graduation project.

The graduation project (18 EC) takes place in weeks 28 to 38. It forms the final step in the programme. During the graduation project, students conduct an applied research study for their graduation company. Students have to analyse a supply chain challenge, develop an evidence-based solution for this challenge, and deliver a coherent and well-founded implementation approach that includes a critical reflection. The graduation project requires students to integrate strategic, analytical, and social skills to demonstrate leadership and personal growth at a strategic level. Every thesis has to include relevant literature and resources as well as a separate leadership report. Students notice a clear link between several modules such as Leadership in an International Context, Business Intelligence, and Change and Innovation, and their thesis topics.

#### *AI and data-driven*

During the site visit, the panel discussed how AI and data-driven leadership are addressed in the curriculum. Lecturers explained that the Business Intelligence module covers data modelling, critical use of information, and strategic decision-making, supported by cases on IoT, blockchain, and AI. Students are encouraged to critically assess whether emerging technologies, such as digital twins or blockchain, can add tangible value within specific supply chain contexts.

#### *Intercultural learning outcomes*

The panel noticed that the curriculum contains many international elements, while intercultural learning outcomes are less prominently embedded. Lecturers explained that intercultural aspects used to be addressed more implicitly within the programme, but this has changed in recent years. These elements are now incorporated in several modules but require more explicit mention in assessment rubrics and thesis final work. Small group discussions are used to encourage reflection on different cultural perspectives within supply chain contexts. In doing so, students learn to analyse the cultural dimensions that influence supply chain management.

Lecturers explained to the panel that their own international experience plays an important role in how they model intercultural learning for students. While theoretical frameworks such as Hofstede's cultural dimensions are used in the programme, lecturers emphasise that genuine intercultural competence goes beyond theory. They highlighted empathy and diplomacy as essential skills for future supply chain leaders. These skills are developed by creating a safe and supportive learning environment, within the learning communities, where students are encouraged to practise, interact across cultures, and learn from mistakes. According to the teaching staff, students become noticeably

more reflective and diplomatic as the year progresses.

Students explained that they engage with intercultural perspectives primarily through working in mixed teams, where they learn from one another and reflect on their own viewpoints. Coaching and mentoring help them to interpret these experiences and apply the insights to their professional development. Alumni confirmed that considering intercultural aspects is essential for producing a strong and relevant thesis.

To broaden the international dimension, ISCM collaborates with Fulda University of Applied Sciences in Germany, engaging students in cross-country research on human behaviour in supply chains. BUAs also partners with Cranfield University with guest professors contributing to modules and students and industry professionals participating in the Supply Chain Contracting Game.

#### *Literature*

The panel established that the ISCM programme generally uses relevant and up-to-date literature that reflects current developments in the field of supply chain management. During the site visit, the lecturer responsible for the Leadership module mentioned that he is considering updating the mandatory literature to better reflect the continuous evolution of leadership theory and practice.

#### *Learning environment*

The ISCM programme is embedded in BUAs's vision of learning, which emphasises small-scale and practice-oriented education through learning communities and the mixed classroom concept. Within these communities, students, lecturers, researchers, and industry partners to work together on complex, supply chain issues. This setup allows students to collaborate with

professionals from different disciplines and cultural backgrounds.

During the site visit, the panel received a presentation showing how the learning communities link students to both industry and research. Learning communities offer valuable opportunities for students to participate in applied research projects with industry. Most of the projects are in collaboration with Dutch companies and, increasingly, with international partners. Around half of the teaching staff is involved in externally funded projects, many of which include small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Lecturers use a PDCA cycle to update research themes each year, ensuring that student projects remain relevant and aligned with current industry developments. Students apply both quantitative and qualitative research methods to explore the research topics.

The ISCM uses a variety of activating didactic education methods, including masterclasses, training courses, workshops, guest lectures, and real-life supply chain cases. Before the programme starts, students participate in an introduction (study) week. Part of the introduction week is a business game in which students work together in culturally mixed teams to develop sustainable global supply chain solutions. The programme also includes a Contracting Game, the Lumina personal development training on leadership, and the Supply Chain Business Case. By taking on different leadership roles during the business game, students get acquainted with the collaborative and intercultural character of the ISCM programme. Students also visit each other's graduation companies to exchange insights and gain a broader understanding of how supply chain challenges are addressed across different companies.

According to students, they specifically chose the ISCM programme because of its strong ties

with the supply chain industry, its small-scale education, and the international orientation. Students indicate that the programme has contributed significantly to their personal and professional development. They feel that the programme prepares them with the skills to lead change and make strategic decisions when addressing complex supply chain issues.

Students appreciate in particular the Lumina training. During the two-day Lumina training, students learn to recognise both conscious and unconscious behavioural patterns, to reflect on their responses in different types of situations, and to familiarise themselves with different communication styles. The training helps students to build self-awareness and develop the leadership skills required for future roles in the supply chain industry.

#### *Language*

The ISCM programme is solely offered in English. This is in line with the international orientation of the programme as well as the BUas Language Policy. Programme management and lecturers indicate that choosing English as the official course language reflects both the international character of the supply chain industry. Supply chains almost always cross borders, and professionals are increasingly required to operate within English speaking organisations and teams. The academic domain is equally international, with most research publications written in English, and the demand for English speaking graduates is high.

Having an English programme also enables BUas to attract international students and lecturers. Approximately half of all lecturers are non-Dutch speakers, and the student population comprises of both Dutch as well as international students. This diversity is further enhanced by the application of the Mixed Classroom Educational Model. This model focuses on

bringing together students from different cultural backgrounds.

#### *Enrolment*

The ISCM programme is open for students who have a relevant business or logistics bachelor's degree (hbo/wo). Ideally, applicants also have some type of professional experience in logistics or supply chain management. All applicants must have proven English language skills. In addition to the formal admission requirements (degree and language), applicants are invited to a mandatory intake interview to assess their suitability for the programme. The outcome of the interview is communicated with applicants within three business days, provided that all required documents have been submitted. The admission process is finalised when the maximum of forty students is reached.

Based on the interview BUas determines whether applicants are required to do some form of course preparation prior to starting the ISCM programme. Preparation consists of several hybrid online packages. The catch-up packages cover subjects such as operations, logistics and supply chain management, statistics, English, or accounting.

#### *Staff*

During the site visit, the panel had the opportunity to speak to the knowledgeable and committed teaching staff. The team consists of lecturers who have a combination of academic and professional experience in (international) supply chain management or similar areas. Lecturers hold a combination of doctoral degrees, master's degrees with senior professional experience, and senior management experience in the supply chain industry. All lecturers are required to be experts in their respective disciplines, have recent experience within the supply chain industry (either by means of a job or participation in

research projects), cross-cultural and international experience, and a minimum of CEFR level C1 in English. The programme aims to bring all lecturers to C2 level within three years.

Some of the lecturers are involved in applied research studies on topics such as sustainability, supply chain resilience, and digital transformation. These lecturers specifically maintain and reinforce the link between the theoretical side of education and the practical side, i.e. research and the supply chain industry. External (industry) experts complement the core team in specialised areas such as supply chain finance, contracting, and business intelligence.

Lecturer allocation, recruitment, management, and staff support are organised at academy level (ABEL). The number of staff members assigned to the ISCM programme is reviewed each year and adjusted to the student intake, which has ranged between 25 and 45 students in recent years. The student range corresponds with 2.2 to 2.9 FTE in total, of which 1.5 to 2.1 FTE is dedicated to lecturing. The lecturer-student ratio for the ISCM programme is consistently between 1:18 and 1:23. Staff planning follows BUAs workload standards (150–200 hours per module, 25 hours per student for supervision), and takes into account the available financial resources. These parameters ensure that the programme remains both educationally and financially sustainable.

Professional development is a key element of BUAs's personnel policy. All lecturers are required to obtain a didactic qualification through the Teaching Qualifications Programme (TQP) offered by the Vrije Universiteit (VU). This training includes components such as pedagogy, assessment design, and supervision skills, and serves as the basis for all teaching roles at BUAs. Beyond this required qualification, the ISCM programme management actively supports

staff development through additional training in e-didactics, research, artificial intelligence, cross-cultural skills, and project management. Lecturers are also offered the opportunity to attend external training abroad, such as an advanced English course in Brighton. Furthermore, ABEL encourages lecturers to experiment with new didactic teaching approaches, such as the Mixed Classroom Educational Model and AI-supported learning activities.

During the site visit, students described the lecturers as motivated, passionate, engaged, empathetic, and fair. Staff explained how they work in complementary profiles under a team-based structure that reflects the BUAs-wide personnel policy. Responsibilities such as programme development, internationalisation, assessment quality, and student well-being are shared between lecturers. New lecturers are paired up with a more experienced lecturer (a so-called buddy) and co-teach their classes during their first year of employment. The master's lecturing staff has monthly meetings where they discuss topics such as internationalisation. The lecturers document the outcomes of said meetings to ensure transparency in communication with students.

#### *Support*

The student support system within the ISCM programme is designed to help students develop into self-managing professionals who take responsibility for their own learning process. Within ABEL, the small-scale setup, personal approach, and individual coaching of students are guiding principles in achieving this goal.

Each student is assigned a mentor at the start of the programme. The mentor supports the student in settling into the programme ("soft landing") and provides ongoing personal and academic guidance. Mentors also assist students in

identifying and preparing a suitable thesis topic and in finding an appropriate company for their graduation project.

During the graduation phase, the mentor continues in the role of thesis supervisor, providing individual guidance throughout the research process. Thesis supervision covers feedback on the research design, data analysis, and reporting. Supervision is complemented by three graduation tables where students present their progress, exchange feedback with peers, and receive input from lecturers and industry professionals.

The small-scale nature of the ISCM programme enables close monitoring of student progress. All students are discussed monthly, and after each examination round, during meetings between the programme coordinator and the lecturers. When study delays are identified, the supervisor follows up with the student to identify underlying causes and to help develop a recovery plan.

In addition to this academic supervision, BUAs provides access to specialised student counsellors for students who require more comprehensive or specialised support than mentors can provide. This includes, for example, students with personal circumstances or functional impairments such as dyslexia. Such students are granted appropriate facilities, such as extra time during exams, to ensure fair and equal treatment during assessments.

During the site visit, students expressed strong appreciation for the accessibility and proactive attitude of their mentors and counsellors. They explained that lecturers and counsellors actively approach students when signs of difficulty arise. Students also valued the open feedback culture, noting that their input is collected through

roundtable meetings and frequently results in concrete programme improvements.

International students particularly appreciated the guidance provided by the BUAs International Office, both upon arrival and throughout their studies. They described the overall learning environment as inclusive, supportive, and conducive to both academic success and personal growth.

### Considerations

The panel finds that the ISCM curriculum is well designed, with a coherent and logical structure around the T-shaped supply chain professional profile. The curriculum effectively enables students to combine and apply analytical, managerial, and social competences in order to lead change and make informed, strategic decisions in complex international supply chain environments. Leadership development is clearly and consistently embedded across the programme. The panel supports the lecturer's intention to update the Leadership module literature to reflect ongoing developments in the field.

The panel notes that the programme has integrated contemporary themes such as change, innovation, and digitalisation. It encourages BUAs to further strengthen the incorporation of digitalisation and data-driven approaches throughout the curriculum, as these skills are essential for future supply chain leaders to make sound, evidence-based decisions in complex and rapidly evolving environments.

The panel values the use of the mixed classroom concept, the international composition of both staff and students, and the collaboration with a wide range of international supply chain partners. Lecturers explained that intercultural aspects are addressed in the Change and Innovation module as well as in the thesis projects. However, the panel noted that lecturers do not

yet have a shared definition of intercultural competences. Consequently, lecturers may interpret and assess these competences differently, which can make it difficult for students to understand how they are expected to demonstrate them. The panel therefore advises BUAs to clearly define what these concepts mean within the context of the ISCM programme, preferably in dialogue with relevant stakeholders. Once the definition is established, the panel recommends embedding the intercultural competences more explicitly and consistently throughout the curriculum and its assessment practices.

The panel believes that the educational learning environment of the ISCM programme is stimulating and aligns well with BUAs's vision of small-scale, practice-oriented education. It particularly values the use of learning communities, in which students, lecturers, researchers, and industry professionals collaborate on real-life supply chain challenges. Within these communities, research and industry are closely intertwined, allowing students to apply theoretical insights to real-life authentic cases from the supply chain industry.

The ISCM programme is taught in English and uses an English name. The international orientation of the supply chain industry, combined with the strong global demand for graduates in this field, fully justifies the programme's choice to be offered in English, to welcome international students, and to adopt an English title. The panel supports this choice.

The panel finds that the teaching staff of the ISCM programme is knowledgeable, committed, and strongly connected to both industry and research. During the site visit, the panel observed that lecturers demonstrate a high level of expertise and enthusiasm for their field. Their professional experience in supply chain management and ongoing involvement in applied research contribute directly to the quality and relevance of the education provided. The panel was particularly impressed by the team's energy, openness, and collaborative spirit. The language skills of the lecturers are adequate, according to the panel.

The panel considers student support to be one of the strengths of the ISCM programme. Students receive personal guidance from a mentor who supports them throughout the academic year and later continues as their thesis supervisor. Study progress is closely monitored through regular meetings between lecturers and programme management, allowing early identification of potential study delays. BUAs counsellors provide additional support to students facing personal challenges. Students particularly value the accessibility and proactive attitude of their mentors and counsellors. They also emphasised that the small-scale set-up of the ISCM contributes to a personal and supportive atmosphere, where individual needs are recognised, and guidance feels tailored to each student's situation.

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

The ISCM programme has an adequate assessment policy in line with BUAs's and ABEL's vision on education. The assessment policy is formulated in ABEL's Assessment Policy Plan (APP). The APP describes the principles and procedures for how assessments are designed, organised, implemented and evaluated. The APP principles and procedures ensure that the system of assessments is valid, reliable and transparent. The assessment policy for the ISCM is further detailed in the ISCM Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER). The TER outlines students' rights and obligations with regard to education and examination. To ensure the smooth and proper running of exams and procedures, ISCM has developed an Exam Procedure Plan (EPP) to put ABEL's APP into practice. The quality and reliability of assessments are safeguarded by ABEL's Board of Examiners (BoE).

### *Vision on assessment*

The programme views assessment as an integral part of learning rather than a separate, summative activity. Each module has specific learning objectives that contribute to the four core competencies of the curriculum. Transparency, feedback, and authenticity are key principles: students are made aware of assessment criteria through rubrics and test blueprints, and continuous feedback from lecturers, peers, and industry, supports their learning process. The final demonstration of competence takes place in the master's thesis, where students integrate knowledge and skills in a professional context.

### *Assessment methods*

The programme applies a balanced mix of formative and summative assessments that are directly linked to the learning objectives of each module. Formative assessments are used to provide students with feedback on their progress and to support their ongoing learning process. Summative assessments determine whether students have achieved the required final level, and include written exams, individual assignments, or group assignments with an individual component. The graduation project (18 EC) is the final and most comprehensive assessment (see Standard 4). Lecturers explained that due to continuous feedback, students can identify areas for improvement and make adjustments throughout the learning process. As a result, grades rarely come as a surprise to students.

Each assessment method in the ISCM programme is aligned with the intended learning objectives as outlined in the test blueprint. Student performance is evaluated using rubrics that describe achievement levels and assess the four core competencies. The rubrics are designed to make assessment criteria transparent and are shared with students at the start of each module. According to lecturers, new rubrics were introduced in 2023 to improve structure, traceability, and consistency between assessors.

The panel noted that in the documentation, the constructive alignment between the intended learning outcomes, module objectives, and assessment criteria could be improved. The documentation provided to the panel was spread across several documents, which made it difficult to trace how specific learning objectives,

such as those related to intercultural competences, are assessed. Lecturers acknowledged that some of these objectives and criteria were initially implicit but indicated that they have since been made more explicit in the documentation and assessment rubrics.

During the site visit, students stated that assessment criteria are transparent and that the rubrics help them understand what is expected. They reported receiving frequent and detailed feedback on their assignments and assessments, particularly during the thesis phase. Students described the lecturers as approachable and willing to provide additional clarification on feedback whenever needed.

#### *Examiners*

Lecturers responsible for designing, administering, or grading assessments are formally appointed as examiners by the BoE. They are required to demonstrate and continuously develop their assessment expertise, for example through assessor training covering both written exams and practical assessment forms. New lecturers complete the Basic Examiner Qualification (BEQ) course as part of their didactic training.

Lecturers who do not yet hold this qualification may only assess under the supervision of a certified colleague, in accordance with the four-eyes principle. The master's programme also follows BUas's policy on the Senior Examiner Qualification (SEQ), which ensures advanced competence in assessment design. Several members of the BoE, the educationalist, and the management team hold or are currently pursuing this qualification.

#### *Generative AI*

According to the self-evaluation, BUas and ABEL have recently begun exploring the use of generative AI within education and assessment. An

ABEL working group, which includes the ISCM coordinator and an educational specialist, reflects on both the opportunities and risks associated with AI. The ISCM programme management emphasises that they feel responsible for teaching students how to responsibly use AI tools critically and ethically. The use of AI in assessments is permitted under clear conditions: students must disclose how and to what extent they have used AI. The BoE indicated that this policy is still being refined and aligned across the academy. The BoE also explained that the introduction of AI technologies raises questions about the evolving role of examiners and the safeguarding of academic integrity. The BoE feels responsible to develop a strong AI policy in close cooperation with educational experts.

#### *Assessment quality assurance*

The BoE safeguards the quality and reliability of assessment by monitoring its validity and consistency. In addition, the BoE verifies whether the intended learning outcomes are adequately represented throughout the curriculum. To support the quality assurance process, several formal mechanisms are in place. These include random checks of theses across different grade categories and audits conducted after major curriculum revisions. In addition, the teaching team holds regular calibration and alignment sessions to promote consistency in both supervision and assessment practices. Because the ISCM programme is delivered by a small and closely collaborating team, part of the quality assurance process takes place informally. Short communication lines and ongoing dialogue further support this process.

During the site visit, the BoE demonstrated a solid understanding of the bachelor's programmes within ABEL, its knowledge of the specific characteristics and objectives of the ISCM master's programme appeared could be strengthened.

### Considerations

The panel concludes that the assessment system used by the ISCM meets the required standards and is in line with BUAs's and ABEL's vision on education. The balance between formative and summative assessment is good and ensures that students receive regular and constructive feedback throughout the programme.

The panel acknowledges the programme's ongoing efforts to strengthen the quality and transparency of assessment. The introduction of new rubrics in 2023 has improved the structure, traceability, and consistency of grading across assessors. Lecturers explained that objectives and criteria which were initially implicit have since been made more explicit in the documentation and rubrics. At the same time, the panel found the alignment between intended learning outcomes, module objectives, and assessment criteria is spread across multiple documents, which makes it challenging to see how specific objectives, such as those related to internationalisation and intercultural competences, are assessed in practice. The panel therefore advises

BUAs to further develop the rubrics and to create a clear alignment matrix that explicitly shows where and how each learning objective is assessed within the curriculum. This would increase transparency for both lecturers and students and make the assessment system more coherent and accessible to internal and external reviewers.

The BoE fulfils its formal responsibility for safeguarding the quality of assessment through various mechanisms, such as random thesis checks and audits. Regular calibration sessions further contribute to reliable and consistent grading practices. However, the panel observed that the BoE's familiarity with the ISCM master's programme could be strengthened. The panel advises the BoE to become more actively and structurally involved in the ISCM programme. This includes paying particular attention to safeguarding elements such as the assessment of international and intercultural competences.

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

To accurately assess the overall final level of the ISCM programme, the panel reviewed a representative distribution of 15 graduation projects submitted between 2023 and 2025, covering both the 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 cohorts and representing the full range of grades awarded. Each graduation project consisted of a thesis and a leadership report. The panel concludes that the graduation projects achieved the required master's level. The 15 theses clearly show that students can operate at both tactical and strategic levels, with particular strengths in leadership and change management. The thesis topics are relevant, up to date, and closely aligned with current developments in the supply chain industry.

### *Graduation project*

The graduation project (18 EC) consists of an applied research component for an external organisation (graduation company) and the demonstration of mastery of the four core supply chain competencies. These competencies form the foundation of the assessment framework and are equally weighted in the final grade (each 25%).

The project assessment comprises two parts: the thesis and a separate leadership report. In the leadership report, students reflect on their leadership style, personal development, and the implementation approach of their improvement plan within the company context. Together, these components provide a holistic demonstration of the student's academic, professional, and personal development.

During the graduation project, students are supervised by both a company supervisor and a

BUAs thesis supervisor. Thesis supervisors must meet specific requirements. They are expected to have thorough knowledge of research methodology and sufficient expertise in the supply chain domain to guide and assess students effectively.

During the site visit, lecturers explained that in the past, some students encountered difficulties conducting their graduation research because they did not have sufficient access to quantitative data, often due to GDPR restrictions. As an improvement, the programme has implemented a stricter selection procedure for graduation companies, requiring that students are guaranteed access to the data necessary to successfully complete their research projects.

Students report that feedback is not limited to final products but is also provided on thesis drafts and intermediate steps. They value this iterative process, which allows them to continuously improve their work. Alumni confirm that the graduation project including the leadership report has significantly contributed to their personal and professional development.

### *Thesis assessment*

Before the thesis defence, the Graduation Assessment Committee (GAC), consisting of the chair, the BUAs supervisor, and an external examiner from the industry, assesses the admissibility of the thesis report. This check ensures that the report meets the required academic standards in terms of structure, writing, referencing, and use of sources. Only when the report meets this admissibility standard may students proceed to the formal presentation and defence.

External professionals who are involved in thesis assessments ensure the professional relevance of the graduation project and brings in practical expertise from the field. External examiners are officially appointed by the BoE based on defined criteria and may only participate after completing specific assessment training, which includes observing at least two defence sessions.

The GAC uses a set of formal instruments before and after the thesis defence, to support the assessment procedure. These instruments include rubrics, assessment forms, and a traceability form that records all assessors' grades, the competency averages, and the final grade calculation. For each competency, all assessors provide their grades individually both before and after the thesis defence, allowing them to adjust their evaluation based on the oral presentation and discussion. The average of the three assessors' grades per competency determines the final grade, and students must achieve at least a 5.5 for each competency to graduate. The company supervisor has an advisory role in this process.

For the assessment of theses, BUas applies the so-called "6+2 eyes" principle. This principle entails multiple assessors being responsible for the assessment of theses. Regular calibration and alignment sessions are organised to support consistent grading practices. Although rubrics provide a clear structure, the panel noted that their interpretation sometimes varies. For instance, a strong presentation does not automatically lead to a higher grade. This reflects the ongoing challenge of balancing holistic judgement with sufficiently objective criteria.

#### *Industry professionals and alumni*

According to the self-evaluation, ISCM graduates transition smoothly into the labour market. Data from the HBO labour market monitor show that 83% of ISCM alumni are satisfied or very satisfied with their current job. Representatives

from the supply chain industry and alumni confirm that the programme's strong connection to professional practice prepares students effectively for their future careers.

Both industry partners and alumni value the programme's distinct focus on leadership, strategy, and personal development. Industry representatives emphasised that graduates are well prepared for strategic and change-oriented roles within the supply chain sector, and they particularly appreciate the programme's explicit attention to change management.

Alumni describe the ISCM master as small-scale and personal, with a strong sense of community fostered by the Breda campus environment. They highlight that the knowledge and competencies acquired during the programme are highly relevant to their professional development. The Leadership module and Lumina training are viewed as unique and valuable components that strengthen both self-awareness and team leadership skills.

BUas actively maintains and expands the ISCM professional network. It has established several alumni committees and organises annual symposia on topics such as artificial intelligence, resilience, CSRD, last-mile logistics, and sustainability. These activities ensure that the curriculum remains current and aligned with developments in the professional field. Alumni describe the ISCM network as vibrant and growing, providing a valuable platform for knowledge exchange and lifelong learning.

#### Considerations

The panel is of the opinion that the graduation projects of the ISCM programme meet the expected master's level. The reviewed theses and leadership reports demonstrate that graduates are capable of conducting applied research and developing innovative solutions for complex

supply chain challenges. The topics covered in the theses are current, relevant, and well aligned with developments in the supply chain industry. The panel also appreciates the strong integration of leadership and change management in both the thesis and the leadership report.

The involvement of industry professionals in assessment is regarded as a strength, as it ensures that the evaluation of students' work remains closely connected to professional practice. The application of the "6+2 eyes" principle and regular calibration sessions between assessors further support consistent application of the assessment criteria. The panel notes however that the balance between holistic judgement and the use of objective assessment criteria could be further refined. While rubrics provide useful structure, their interpretation is not always fully

consistent across assessors. The panel encourages the programme to continue discussing and calibrating assessment practices to ensure a shared understanding of the criteria.

The panel is positive about the career prospects of ISCM graduates. The programme meets a clear demand in the labour market for supply chain professionals with strong analytical and leadership skills. Industry representatives stated that graduates are well prepared for strategic and change-oriented roles. Alumni emphasised the value of the programme's focus on leadership, strategy, and personal development for their professional growth.

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

## Facilities

Standard 5: The accommodation and material facilities (infrastructure) are sufficient for the realisation of the curriculum

### Findings

During its visit to the BUas campus in Breda, the panel gained a clear impression of the facilities available to the ISCM programme. The campus offers modern, small-scale classrooms and collaborative spaces that stimulate interaction between students, lecturers, and industry professionals. The ISCM programme is located within ABEL, but students and lecturers have access to all BUas-wide facilities, including classrooms, computer labs, study areas, project rooms, meeting spaces, and the university library.

The BUas library provides access to a wide range of digital and physical resources, including international journals and databases relevant to logistics, supply chain management, and business research. The campus offers various non-academic amenities such as the Lighthouse and the Grand Café, a vegetable garden, a radio studio, a Music Room, an e-sports room (The Hive), and the Innovation Square. Students interested in entrepreneurship can receive guidance and advice from BUas Start-up Support.

The digital learning environment Brightspace is used to share course materials, submit assignments, and facilitate communication between students and lecturers. It supports both online and blended teaching, as well as community learning activities such as graduation tables. Students the panel spoke with expressed high satisfaction with the available facilities, both physical and digital. They particularly appreciated the informal atmosphere of the small-scale campus and the high quality of the amenities.

Due to the ongoing student housing challenges in the Netherlands, BUas plans to build an on-

campus residence for international students. The building is expected to open in 2028. With the new building, BUas aims to further strengthen its position as an international university of applied sciences.

### Considerations

The panel believes that BUas provides excellent facilities that fully support the learning process and professional development of ISCM students. The campus offers modern, small-scale, and well-maintained spaces that align well with the needs of a professional master's programme. Classrooms, project rooms, and study areas are designed to stimulate collaboration, reflection, and interaction between students, lecturers, and industry partners.

The panel is impressed by the range and quality of on-campus amenities that promote community building and student well-being. Students expressed great satisfaction with the available facilities and highlighted the informal and welcoming atmosphere of the Breda campus as an important aspect of their study experience. The digital learning environment Brightspace is user-friendly and strengthens the way lecturers teach, the way they communicate with students and each other, and the way feedback is given and documented.

The only concern facilities wise that the panel has relates to student housing, reflecting a broader national issue in the Netherlands. The panel appreciates that BUas is trying to solve the housing problem by building an on-campus housing facility for international students. The panel commends BUas for this initiative. It demonstrates BUas's commitment to improve

the student experience and strengthen its international profile.

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

## Quality assurance

Standard 6: The programme has an explicit and widely supported quality assurance system in place. It promotes the quality culture and has a focus on development.

### Findings

BUAs applies a systematic and continuous quality assurance process that covers all key domains: education, research, staff, and facilities. The organisation operates within a decentralised structure, supported by central monitoring mechanisms. This approach encourages active involvement and ownership of quality at all organisational levels.

The BUAs quality assurance framework is built around the PDCA cycle. The PDCA cycle operates at three levels: the institution, the academies, and individual employees (through the HR cycle). At the institutional level, the Executive Board bears final responsibility for the quality of education. At the academy level, this responsibility lies with the academy directors. The Education, Research & Information Management (ER&IM) department oversees the BUAs-wide quality assurance system and supports the academies in analysing educational data and evaluation results.

At the academy level, the process is coordinated by the educational manager and overall coordinator of the master, under the supervision of the academy director. Each academy submits a management report three times per year, addressing budget, staffing, and achieved results within the academy.

At the programme level, the ISCM master systematically monitors and evaluates the quality of education in close cooperation with lecturers, students and industry partners. After each module, students complete online surveys, and BUAs organises round-table sessions to discuss the survey results in greater depth. These sessions

help clarify written feedback and identify specific areas for improvement.

During the site visit, students indicated that they feel comfortable giving feedback. They experience that their input is taken seriously and that follow-up actions are communicated clearly. This open feedback culture contributes to continuous improvement within the programme.

The programme also makes use of BUAs-wide surveys such as exit polls and employee satisfaction surveys, as well as external instruments like the HBO-Monitor and the National Student Survey (NSE). The results of all evaluations are systematically discussed within the management team, the Degree Programme Committee (DPC), and at academy level. Lecturers and management regularly meet to analyse these findings and agree on improvement actions where needed. During the site visit, the panel heard several examples of how such feedback has led to concrete changes, including adjustments to module content, workload, and clearer assessment criteria.

All outcomes of evaluations, reviews, and improvement actions are discussed within the teaching team and communicated to students through the digital learning environment Brightspace and dedicated feedback sessions. Improvement plans are recorded in annual reports and their progress is monitored by the academy management.

According to lecturers, the small-scale nature of the programme enables swift implementation of improvements and facilitates open communication with all stakeholders.

### *Committees*

BUAs has established several committees to safeguard and enhance the quality of education and assessment, including the inter-master consultative body, the Board of Examiners (BoE), the Degree Programme Committee (DPC), the BUAs Industry Board, and the Logistics Industry Committee (LIC).

The inter-master consultative body brings together representatives from all BUAs master's programmes. It serves as a platform for sharing knowledge, aligning practices, and discussing strategic and educational developments relevant to all BUAs master's programmes. The ISCM coordinator participates in this body on behalf of the programme.

The Degree Programme Committee consists of an equal number of students and lecturers. It monitors the quality of the programme and provides advice on education-related matters to both the programme management and the academy director.

The BoE ensures the quality and consistency of assessment and is responsible for verifying whether students meet the learning outcomes required for graduation.

External stakeholders are also actively involved in the quality assurance process. The BUAs Industry Board advises the institution on broader labour market developments and future professional demands. It consists of around twelve representatives from different sectors of the professional field. The Logistics Industry Committee (LIC) focuses more specifically on developments within the logistics and supply chain

domain and provides input on how BUAs can align its programmes with current and emerging industry needs.

### **Considerations**

The panel establishes that the quality assurance system as set up by the ISCM programme is adequate. Students and lecturers evaluate the quality of the programme frequently, both through surveys as well as round-table discussions.

The panel values the open and reflective culture that BUAs and the ISCM teaching team have established. Lecturers show a clear commitment to continuously improving the programme and actively seek input from various stakeholders. The small-scale nature of the ISCM master facilitates direct communication, quick decision-making, and the swift implementation of improvements. Students confirm that they feel comfortable providing feedback and that their suggestions are taken seriously and acted upon appropriately.

At the same time, the panel notes that a part of the quality assurance process relies on the informal and small-scale character of the programme and on the strong personal commitment of individual staff members. While a transition toward a more formalised quality assurance structure is underway, the panel encourages the programme and the BoE to continue strengthening the formal documentation of procedures and improvement actions.

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

## Administrative details of the programme

<b>Institution</b>	
Name in RIO	Breda University of Applied Sciences
Address	Mgr. Hopmanstraat 2, 4817 JS, Breda
Website	<a href="http://www.buas.nl">www.buas.nl</a>
BRIN-number	21UI
Status (funded or unfunded)	Funded (Publicly funded)
ITK (yes or no)	Not applied for
<b>Programme</b>	
First name, as in RIO	M International Supply Chain Management
Location	Breda
Programme number in RIO	49307
Orientation and level (wo/hbo/ad/ba/ma)	hbo – master
Research master?	No
Language of instruction	English
(Legal) professional requirements (yes or no)	No
All programme tracks/specialisations	No
Joint programme degree	No
Special feature	Internationalisation
Degree and addition	Master of Science (MSc) in International Supply Chain Management
Studyload in EC (60, 90, 120, 180, 240, 360)	60 EC
Modes: fulltime, parttime, dual	Fulltime
Working with units of learning outcomes (full-time, part-time, dual)	—
Assessment cluster	HBO International Supply Chain Management (uniek)
Submission date	1 November 2025
Other (e.g. name change or extension of study duration)	

## Attachment 1: assessment panel

Ab F. Groen, Chair  
Executive in Education, GOO

Dennis Moeke  
Professor of Logistics and Alliances, HAN University of Applied Sciences

Carla Bergman  
Director Transformation and Capability Enablement, Logitech Global Operations

Jessica Shinnick  
Educational Consultant, Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences

Noémie Faure, Student Member  
Student of Aquaculture and Marine Resource Management, Wageningen University & Research

The panel was supported by Yvet Blom, certified secretary.

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

## Attachment 2: site visit programme

Prior to the site visit, an online preparatory meeting of the panel took place on Friday, 12 September, from 09:00 to 10:30. On the same day (13.00 to 14.00), staff and students were offered the opportunity to participate in an online open consultation session. No registrations were received for the consultation session.

Time	Site Visit	What
<b>08:45 – 09:15</b>	Arrival and welcome at reception BUAs Campus in Building Horizon South	Preliminary discussion
<b>09:15 – 10:00</b>	Board & Management	Introduction, strategy BUAs, academy, master's programme ISCM
<b>10:15 – 11:15</b>	Showcase of projects/ Campus tour	Campus tour Showcase Learning Communities ISCM
<b>11:30 – 12:00</b>	Internationalisation	Internationalisation at BUAs & ABEL, role and position in master's programme ISCM
<b>12:00 – 13:00</b>	Lunch	
<b>13:00 – 14:00</b>	Teaching staff and researchers ISCM	Programme, testing, quality of staff, role and position of research in the programme
<b>14:15 – 15:00</b>	Students & recent Alumni	Programme, testing, quality of staff, final results
<b>15:15 – 15:45</b>	Board of Examiners & Quality of Assessment & Thesis Coordinator	Assessment policy, testing and learning outcomes achieved
<b>16:00 – 16:45</b>	Alumni & Industry partners	Connection between programme and industry Alumni: looking back at the programme
<b>16:45 – 18:00</b>	Deliberations	Internal consultation
<b>18:00 – 18:15</b>	Feedback and closure	Feedback of findings and conclusions

## Attachment 3: Recommendations from previous assessment

AUDIT M SCM NVAO TNO 2020 and Mid-term accreditation 2023 Page | 1 In 2020, the accreditation committee provided ABEL with some recommendations (see text in Dutch) to work on for this master's programme in running up towards the start. In plain text the master's programme has added their comments which illustrates the PDCA cycle between 2020 and 2025:

STANDARD 3: 3.1 Leiderschap – Het panel is zich ervan bewust dat 'leiderschap' een breed begrip is, maar het panel wil de opleiding aanmoedigen om zich nog eens te buigen over de definitie en invulling van het begrip leiderschap. Aan het einde van de studie moet het 'leiderschap' immers worden afgetoetst aan de hand van duidelijke criteria.

Leadership has been defined as the ability of an individual or a group of individuals to influence and guide followers or other members of an organisation and is applied to the Leadership study component. In this study component students are enabled to explore the challenges of leadership and to experiment with and acquire leadership skills in simulated situations as a first step in their development as supply chain leaders. This study component is structured as follows: > Masterclasses based on the book Leadership in Organizations and peer-reviewed articles focusing on existing theories on leadership, the complexity and challenges of leadership, related to leading teams and organisations in the supply chain. This will be tested through an individual topic essay paper. > Training programme (Lumina) focusing on team building, personal characteristics, communication styles and behaviour, and practising with supply chain leadership skills. During the thesis project students need to be able to manage their stakeholders and to be persuasive in getting support for their supply chain improvement plan and implementation approach. > Another recommendation in 2020 about leadership was about assessment. Some changes were made to clarify the concept of leadership and the test criteria used: Lumina, as a part of the Leadership module, now has its own marking rubric (and is thus disconnected from the Leadership topic essay paper rubric) as well as formative assessment moments for helping students improving their paper. The clear learning objectives formulated for the Leadership module form the basis for the blueprint and rubric, thereby making it extra transparent to students what they are being assessed on. > ABEL initiated a new Supply Chain & Research Fundamentals module (5 ECTS), which led to a change in the curriculum for the academic year of 2023 – 2024. As a consequence, five modules shrunk by one ECTS credit, creating space for this 5 ECTS credits bridging module that will cover the first four weeks of the programme. During that module, students perform a business game in which they have a specific business role that serves to develop leadership skills. This includes a functional role assignment within a student group (CEO, CFO, Sales director, Operations & supply chain director, Procurement director and Sustainability director). They have to evaluate the different leadership roles they performed as individuals within the group. They do this by linking their sustainable business decisions to their strategy and implementing them within the setting of the game.

3.2 Research Proposal – Het hebben van een cursus als het research proposal is naar het oordeel van het panel een goed idee, al mag de inhoud nog wat verstevigd worden; gezien de omvang van 6 EC lijkt daar ook alle ruimte voor te zijn.

The content of the Research Proposal module has been strengthened by adding three masterclasses for the students' preliminary research on contextual company analysis including supply chain and market analysis, and for the students' research approach by discussing appropriate methods in varying contexts. Furthermore, additional Q&A and workshop sessions were scheduled.

STANDARD 5: 5.1 Aannamebeleid – Het aannamebeleid zit an sich degelijk in elkaar, maar het panel heeft uit de gesprekken geconcludeerd dat de opleiding ervan uitgaat dat de inkomende student over de vereiste kennis en

vaardigheden op het gebied van Supply Chain Management beschikken. Het panel adviseert om nog eens goed te kijken naar 'bijspijker mogelijkheden' voor studenten die op een onderdeel een deficiëntie (b)lijken te hebben.

The programme provides catch-up opportunities or obligations for students with deficiencies prior to the start of the programme. This applies only to students who passed the selection criteria and fulfil the required minimum English level. Most often this refers to students of whom there are questions about their theoretical and/or practical background in the field of operations, logistics and supply chain management. These catch-up opportunities can thus refer to, for example, these fields of operations, logistics and supply chain management, but can also refer to statistics, English<sup>1</sup> or accounting. Students can be recommended to prepare themselves before the start of the academic year but catching up can also be imposed as a condition for entering the programme. This, of course, depends on the seriousness of the deficiencies identified. For operations, logistics and supply chain management the programme prescribes two online MITx courses and/or an oral exam based upon a book on logistics, operations and supply chain management. For statistics, accounting and English references are made to online courses as well. In case of a recommendation, it is up to the prospective student to follow it and so this has no consequences for admission. Mentors are appointed from day 1 and are thus aware whether their students have received such a recommendation. In the case of a compulsory assignment, this is verified by evidence to be handed over (e.g. MITx courses) and/or by an oral examination to ultimately test whether the candidate has met these admission requirements. Once this has been done, the candidate is formally admitted to the programme and his or her application is no longer on hold. After having experienced two student cohorts ABEL decided to incorporate a separate starting module (the module of Supply Chain & Research Fundamentals) in the curriculum of 2023-2024 (fourth cohort) to bridge the gap between influx diversity and programme standards. By doing so, ABEL aimed to create a level playing field in relation to operations, logistics & supply chain management, quantitative research methods, and academic & professional writing. This module applies to all students including students who have a bachelor's degree in logistics. Student evaluations (written and Round Tables) show appreciation for this module. They see it as a good preparation and landing especially for research. They experience a different research approach at master's level compared to what they were used to in the bachelor. Having said that, there are still a few students struggling with academic research methods on a master's level.

STANDARD 6: 6.1 Programme requires intensive supervision of students; this demands a lot of time and energy from staff and lecturers. Panel asks programme to monitor this workload closely and evaluate it in time.

The workload of individual members of the team is carefully managed. The programme recognises the risk that intensive supervision of students may become excessive. Measures have therefore been taken to ensure that the workload of formative assessment remains within acceptable limits. This was done through team alignment and by an informal approach including setting maxima to formative assessment. <sup>1</sup> Even if students fulfil the minimum criteria on English there might be reasons for some to improve their English skills before they enter the programme.

STANDARD 9: 9.1 De PDCA-cyclus die tot nu toe is ingezet, heeft goed gewerkt en het panel adviseert om dit het komende half jaar, tot de start van de opleiding, deze cyclus in volle vaart door te zetten, nog te kijken waar verbeteringen mogelijk zijn en ook na de start van de opleiding deze PDCA goed door te zetten.

A PDCA cycle with written student evaluations and Round Tables (with 360° feedback to both lecturers and students) has been built up which has been continued ever since. In the run-up period towards the start of the programme, different team meetings were held, and progress was made on mostly content development and alignment (between modules). The team meetings are based on annual and long term agenda of the master's programme, and also matters that concern the day-to-day business and short-term issues of the programme.

STANDARD 10: 10.1 Formatief toetsen – Het panel zou graag zien dat ook de resultaten van formatief toetsen goed worden vastgelegd. Zeker bij een gering aantal summatieve toetsen is de formatieve toets en de verslaglegging

daarvan zeer belangrijk. Ook de toetsmatrijzen kunnen nog verduidelijkt worden in het aangeven van het juiste niveau.

In 2020 the panel advised to properly record the results of formative tests, in addition to results of summative tests. The necessity to implement this recommendation has diminished due to extra summative exams in the modules of Research Methods (RM) and Change & Innovation (C&I). Hence, the decision was made to focus on guidance and coaching instead of formalizing this orally processed feedback. Starting from the fifth cohort, the programme deliberately chose to concentrate all summative tests in exam weeks and spread all formative handins over the first semester. As of the third cohort the lecturers also started working with test blueprints when it concerned examination by delivering papers. These blueprints, clearly showing the appropriate level of the students per competency and aligning learning objectives, also ensure the quality of testing and thereby delineate and hone the level of the students' work and assessment by lecturers.

10.2 The explicit choice of the programme to test only at the individual level, according to the panel, makes students miss the opportunity to reach an assessment in collaboration, a process that is certainly essential in the field of Supply Chain Management. Panel recommends looking into whether group assessment could be a component of the programme.

Initially, the programme was reluctant to do this. Since September 2023, the programme started working with group assessments. The programme was already familiar with group work but not yet with group assessments. This reluctance had to do with the fact that the programme ultimately has to assess final competences at individual level for a one-year programme and was therefore a matter of principle. Group assessments in which there is also often free-riding behaviour can generate a diffuse picture of individual competence development. So this position was reconsidered and it was decided to introduce group assessments. This increased the palette of didactic forms. This was done by implementing the digital management game The Triple Connection in the SCRF study component and the Procter & Gamble case in the C&I study component. The management game also gave opportunities to generate and assess leadership roles. The Procter & Gamble case gave opportunities for a real-life based change and innovation assignment in supply chain management. The involved lecturers indicated that working together in a group functioned as a preparation of collaborating with others in a professional future supply chain context.

In 2023, the accreditation committee provided ABEL with some recommendations to work on for this master's programme in follow up to the interim assessment. Underneath these recommendations can be found in *Italics*. In plain text the master's programme has added their comments which illustrates the PDCA cycle of the quality improvement process since the interim assessment of January 2023:

STANDARD 10: 10.3 The programme may consider rebalancing the types of assessment used during summative assessment moments on the one hand, and during formative assessment moments on the other, including a wider variety of assessment methods in the summative assessment programme too (e.g. group work, presentations, etc.).

Students receive a semester overview with the formative and summative submission and assessment times. This gives students transparency and insight into the complete examination planning. Since September 2023, the programme started working with group assessments. This increased the palette of didactic forms of work with the introduction of a management game and the Procter & Gamble case. The management game also gave opportunities to generate and assess leadership roles. The Procter & Gamble case gave opportunities for a real-life based change and innovation assignment in supply chain management. By adjusting the curriculum, by introducing a bridging module Supply Chain & Research Fundamentals, and by introducing group assessments, the balance between formative & summative testing was reshaped. More summative moments were added and this led to an increasing need to control the quantity of formative assessments.

10.4 In a next improvement cycle, the quality of the rubric of the thesis assessment form could be further improved with respect to the formulations of the criteria (especially the last three) and the accompanying achievement levels and grades. Continuous attention needs to be paid to the written justifications on the assessment forms, especially to the link between the student's work and the criteria in the rubrics.

Academic year 2023.2024 was used to thoroughly review the thesis rubric. It was decided to develop a more detailed rubric for each of the four competences and for presentation & defense. The latter included a separate rubric indicating how presentation and defense affected the initial grading of the four competences. This approach included grading on explicit criteria associated with the four competences and it included grading based on six grading columns. Initially, there were only three grading columns. This move to six assessment columns was inspired by the example of the VU thesis rubric sent by one of the accreditation members. This detailed approach to rubrics eliminates the need to add text on the assessment forms. This is now completely covered by the rubric texts themselves. The presentation/defense is a single point rubric. Aim is: if the performance is aligned with the assessments based on the reports, than the grading remains unchanged. Underperforming or excellent performing adds up to 1 point less or more to the thesis grade. The new forms were implemented during that academic year and used for the first time in July 2024 and thoroughly evaluated also in July 2024 (internally) and November 2024 (with external examiners). There was also a calibration session with the thesis coordinators of the master's ISCM of RUAs. The overall findings of the evaluations indicated that the approach was not only very well detailed but also practical. These findings were documented in different evaluation reports.

STANDARD 11: 11.1 The programme could look for a more fitting form of assessing mastery on the four professionally oriented competencies than working with a "traditional" thesis.

This was discussed internally (lecturing staff) on 6 June 2023 and with the industry committee on 22 September 2023. Industry Committee members were not supportive in changing the current thesis approach. The programme integrates the development of an improvement plan and implementation approach in a classic thesis approach. Moreover, the leadership part is separated from the research scope: students write a separate reflection report on leadership. This is also translated into a separate rubric. To some extent this already resembles a portfolio approach with three elements: Thesis report, Leadership report and Presentation & Defense. The assessment of the latter is currently still related to the reports. This was in line with how the team of lecturers thought about it. It was argued that this thesis approach, by conducting a company-level study, is very suitable for achieving the four competences and also fits well with the ambition of an MSc programme.

Furthermore, adjustments have taken place in the spirit of this recommendation. Leadership runs like a thread through the programme and during graduation, students are required to demonstrate their leadership qualities. Originally, the graduation phase only required a reflection report to be delivered as an appendix. This has become a separate report from the research report in which both personal development and engaging with stakeholders are elaborated since July 2024. This leadership report contains a clear link to the learning moments from the earlier phases of the master's programme in the field of leadership and ultimately covers the leadership competency at the highest level in the complex business environment.

## Attachment 4: reviewed documents

- Self evaluation report
- Appendix 1 Buas+ Strategic direction 2022 – 2025
- Appendix 2 Academy plan ABEL 2022 – 2025
- Appendix 3 ISCM's overview and explanation of implementation of recommendations from previous accreditations
- Appendix 4 Curriculum adjustments ISCM 2022 – 2025
- Appendix 5 ISCM's Course Catalogue 2025-2026
- Appendix 6 Professional Master's Standard
- Appendix 7 Dublin descriptors
- Appendix 8 BUAs's current educational vision.
- Appendix 9 ISCM's Admission and selection criteria and their application in the intake procedure
- Appendix 10 ISCM's Coverage matrix - competencies - learning objectives - 25.26
- Appendix 11A-I ISCM's Student manuals 2025-2026
- Appendix 12 BUAs's Student AI Guidelines
- Appendix 13 BUAs's AI guidelines for quoting and referencing
- Appendix 14 ISCM's application of Buas's AI-levels per module
- Appendix 15 BUAs Language Policy Implementation Plan
- Appendix 16A-B BUAs's People & Organisation Vision
- Appendix 17 2025 ABEL Professionalisation Plan
- Appendix 18 ISCM's Quantitative & qualitative deployment
- Appendix 19A-I ISCM's Overview of the master team's CVs
- Appendix 20 ISCM's Qualitative staffing overview of relevant expertise areas
- Appendix 21 ABEL's Assessment Policy Plan
- Appendix 22 ABEL's Teaching and Examination Regulations for ISCM
- Appendix 23 ISCM's Exam Procedure Plan
- Appendix 24A-B ISCM's Thesis topic and graduation companies assessment and approval
- Appendix 25 ISCM's Nomination letter for external examiners and their appointment conditions and criteria
- Appendix 26 ISCM's Graduation assessment process and procedure
- Appendix 27A-D ISCM's Thesis evaluations 2024 – 2025
- Appendix 28 BoE's Annual Report 2023-2024 (of ABEL)
- Appendix 29 BUAs Quality Assurance System for Education
- Graduation work of 15 students

