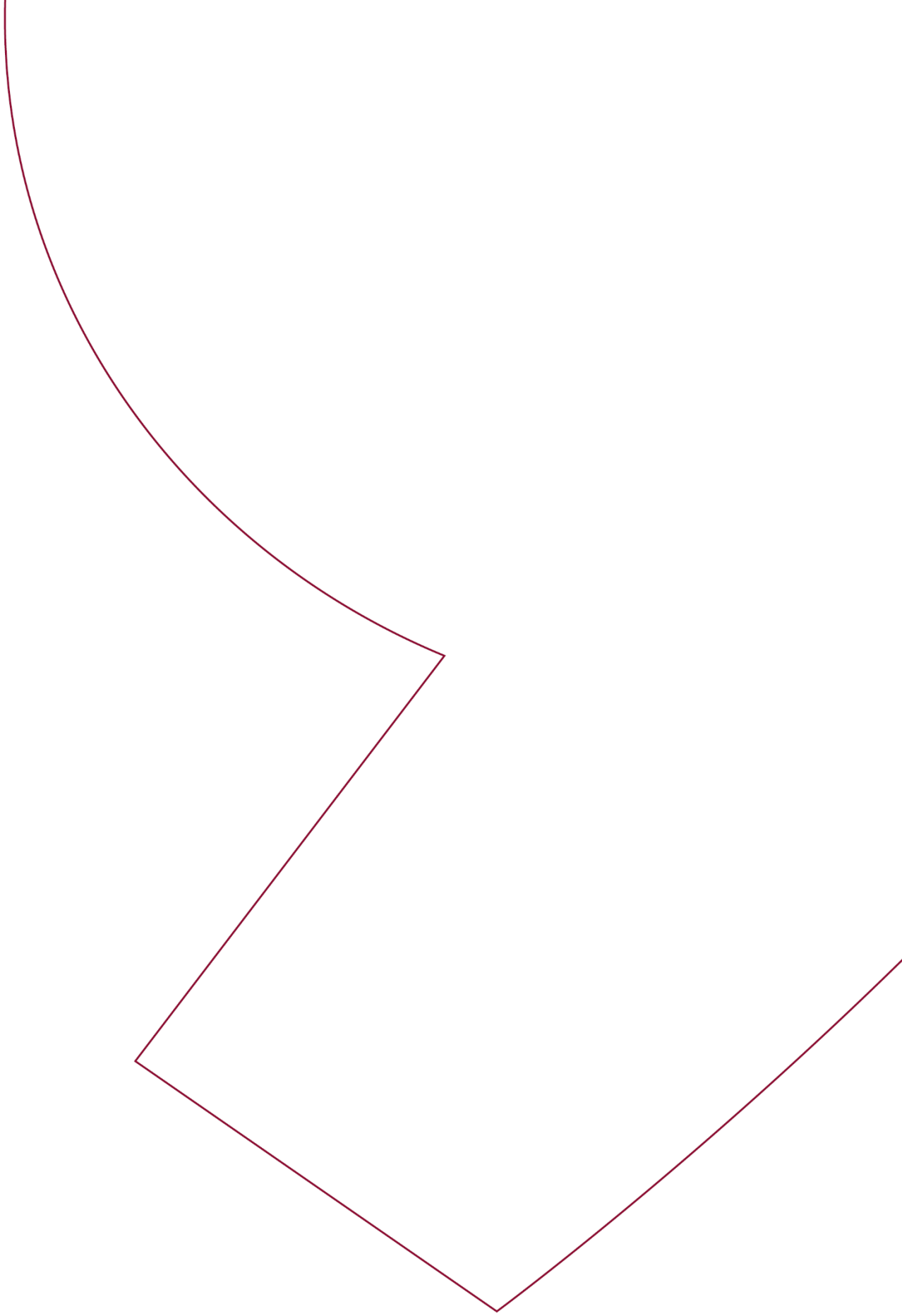


ASSESSMENT REPORT

Limited programme assessment
International Food & Agribusiness

Bachelor programme
Full time

HAS green academy



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Limited programme assessment
International Food & Agribusiness

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Full time

HAS green academy

Croho registration: 39281

Hobéon Certificering & Accreditatie
July 10th 2024

Audit Committee

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INHOUDSOPGAVE

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1. GENERAL AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

Name Institution	HAS green academy
Status	Funded
Outcomes of Institutional Quality Assessment	Satisfactory, awarded 31-01-2019
Name of programme in Central Register of Higher Professional Education (CROHO)	International Food & Agribusiness
ISAT-code CROHO	39281
domain/sector croho	Primary production, Food processing & nutrition
Orientation and level	Hbo
Degree title	Bachelor
Number of credits	240
Location	's-Hertogenbosch
Variant	Full time
Language	English
Date site visit	02-04-2024

2. SUMMARY

The global food system faces significant challenges, including population growth and increasing demand for quality food, requiring robust efforts to ensure food security and promote healthy diets. However, the complexities of food production, such as global supply chains and advanced agricultural practices, coupled with resource scarcity and environmental concerns such as climate change and soil degradation, present additional hurdles. In addition, inequalities in access to resources and working conditions persist within the sector. Sustainable intensification or transformation of the current food system are potential solutions to address these challenges and meet future needs. IFA is designed to equip students to address these issues and to thrive in the international business landscape.

Standard 1. Intended Learning Outcomes

Satisfactory

The final qualifications demonstrate, according to the panel, the combination of sustainable improvement and innovation with international business, leadership and personal skills. The panel recognizes the urgency and relevance of the IFA programme and finds the final qualifications to be workable. The panel notes that the economy and our society are desperately waiting for people who have acquired these skills. The intended learning outcomes are linked to the Dublin Descriptors and the panel notes the bachelor's level. The panel is highly satisfied with the alignment of the programme with the professional field with regard to keeping the qualifications up to date. The Work Field Scans and conversations with the Strategic Network contribute to the continuous development of the programme. The panel suggests to have meetings with the Strategic Network more frequently.

The international nature of the agri-food sector requires professionals who are able to address its myriad challenges through interdisciplinary approaches. The IFA programme serves as an ideal platform for students to cultivate the necessary skills for international and interdisciplinary engagement. IFA's emphasis on research equips students to become adept change-makers in the sector, fostering critical thinking and innovation. The panel recognizes the programme's effective integration of research skills development into its profile, which aligns well with the evolving needs of the industry and offers promising prospects for students in the Netherlands and beyond.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

Satisfactory

The IFA programme offers a comprehensive learning environment for students to contribute to the sustainable food system transformation and innovation within the field. The program uses various learning approaches and didactics, including problem-based learning, practicals, and real-life assignments. The panel believes that IFA has taken a good step in the further development of the curriculum, resulting in a curriculum that enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes and develop their professional skills. The curriculum offers plenty of room for personal development and has a strong link with practice. Research skills are also sufficiently placed within the curriculum, with students developing both qualitative and quantitative research skills. The panel advises that collaboration with lecturers and research groups can further develop the student's research skills.

Students are positive about the supervision, the lecturers, the informal atmosphere, and the emphasis on group work – as they will collaborate with other professionals during their professional careers as well. The programme emphasizes peer feedback and encourages open communication. The panel appreciates the safe learning and feedback environment fostered by the programme. Next to the positive learning environment, the IFA programme facilities are excellent, according to the panel.

The IFA-team, consisting of thirteen lecturers and eight staff members, is well-qualified to deliver a program in the global agri-food system. The staff members are experienced in various fields and actively participate in professional activities, attending seminars and congresses. Most

of the lecturers have experience in the international field. The panel notes how the programme benefits of the international relations the lecturers bring with them. Their level of the English language is proficient. Students are highly satisfied with their lecturers and the panel concludes that the team possess extensive expertise. However, the small team size and high workload, partly due to sickness, present challenges. The panel recommends optimizing the programme for efficiency, such as better planning and sharing of knowledge. Management should continue to support the team and improve the organization. Collaborating with other courses within the HAS green academy can reduce the workload and offers opportunities to efficiently organize the exchange of both teachers and content.

Standard 3. Student assessment

Satisfactory

The IFA assessment policy, based on the HAS educational vision, is translated into a clear programme that links IFA qualifications, testing methods and levels of assessment within the curriculum. The programme uses both summative and formative assessments, including knowledge tests, portfolio assignments and written assignments to support student learning and feedback. The panel commends the variety and effectiveness of these assessments and notes positive feedback from students.

Quality assurance is maintained through a robust assessment cycle, the four-eyes principle, and calibration sessions, which ensure validity, reliability and transparency. However, the panel suggests formalising the programme's quality culture to increase visibility and sustainability, while reducing staff workload. The recently established Cluster Exam Committee, which oversees the Agri & Business domain, is fulfilling its statutory role but needs to be further developed to ensure quality control of the assessments. The panel therefore recommends the establishment of a Assessment Committee to pre-check assessments, thereby reducing the workload on lecturers.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

Satisfactory

Prior to the site visit, the panel reviewed the graduation files of fifteen recent graduates and found the overall quality of the final assessments to be satisfactory, with appropriate grades reflecting bachelor's level standards. Initially, the panel found it unclear how individual students were graded in the Professional Assignments, but this was clarified in discussions with the assessors. The panel recommends that the HAS green academy make individual student contributions clearer.

During the visit, the representatives of the professional field – with whom the panel spoke - praised the students for their motivation, independence, confidence and initiative, in line with the programme's aim of producing change-makers that are capable of working in a multidisciplinary team. Graduates found employment quickly after graduation, highlighting the programme's effectiveness in preparing students for the labour market. The panel also appreciates the programme's close links with alumni, exemplified by initiatives such as the Work Field Scan.

Overall conclusion

Considering the unique and relevant education offered by the IFA programme, the highly passionate and enthusiastic staff, and the level of attainment achieved by students, the panel concludes that the programme fulfills all of the requirements for re-accreditation. IFA clearly is an international programme that benefits from the multidisciplinary approach at HAS green academy, and the strong connections to the international professional field. The panel therefore advises the NVAO to reaccredit the programme.

Upon agreement with the panel members, the chair adopted this report on July 10th 2024.

3. INTRODUCTION

The present report is the result of a so-called ‘Limited Programme Assessment’ of the hbo-bachelor programme International Food & Agribusiness (IFA), as offered by the HAS green academy. The assessment was carried out through a document analysis and a site visit on April 2nd, 2024. The evaluation is carried out by a panel of independent experts (see Annex IV for further explanation).

This report sequentially presents the findings, considerations, and conclusions of the panel in relation to the IFA bachelor’s programme. The panel bases its assessment on the 2018 Assessment Framework of the Netherlands-Flanders Accreditation Organization (NVAO).

The hbo-bachelor programme International Food & Agribusiness is a full time programme offered by the HAS green academy (HAS) in 's-Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands. IFA focuses on sustainable food systems. The programme is primarily a bachelor of International Business Administration. In addition, IFA provides a holistic perspective on food systems and transformation. It also focuses on leadership and personal development. IFA students will work in the ever-changing global food systems in an international context.

HAS green academy is an agri-food and environmental education and expertise centre. It is a medium-sized university of applied sciences: it employs more than 450 employees and offers educational programmes to about 3,000 students and professional courses to about 300 participants. HAS has an intensive link between education and the working field. The HAS approach ensures a continuous interaction between education and professional practice:

- The university offers students a learning environment with input from the professional field.
- Students and staff work in a commercial setting on innovative projects for the professional work field.

Education is thus combined with knowledge development and knowledge transfer. This also applies to the IFA programme. More on this in the findings on the Standards later in this report.

Development since the last accreditation

The programme was lastly visited by an accreditation panel in 2018. The panel assessed the programme as ‘satisfactory’ on all standards. The table below shows the recommendations from the previous visit and the subsequent improvements to the programme between then and now.

Panel remark (2018)	Assimilation of the remark
Describe the learning objectives in more detail. Continue the learning lines throughout the programme, like is done for research, as well.	Based on the documentation reviewed, the panel finds that the learning objectives have been adequately translated into the revised programme.
Cover more business subjects in the propaedeutic phase to ensure a good reflection of the whole programme. Reduce the workload in the second study year for both students and teachers.	The panel notes that the new curriculum prioritizes the business focus throughout the entire programme and effectively rebalances the workload in years 1 and 2 in comparison to the old curriculum.
If new staff is to be appointed, hire non-native staff with an international business administration background. Also, involve associate professors throughout the whole programme.	No/few new staff have joined the programme recently. IFA has had to cope with resignations and sickness within the team, resulting in a higher workload. The panel has seen that the course has managed to hold its own well and, with the establishment of a new management, several steps have been taken to reduce the workload. The panel

	notes that the use of lecturers may also contribute to this.
Pay attention to discriminative marking and benchmarking with other programmes.	The panel considers the new assessment programme as more effective and efficient. The new assessment programme has achieved a better balance between individual and group assignments. Also the number of written assignments is reduced. The programme participated in peer reviews. This has increased the objectivity of marking, and continuous training and calibration ensure that proper feedback of assessors is provided in the assessment forms.
Align the assessments to the criteria of the learning objectives.	The new assessment programme has more attention for the level of Applying and Analyzing in year 2 and Evaluation and Creation in year 4. The panel finds the appropriate levels of Bloom are better applied in the assessment programme and better relate to the student's level.
Target the Professional Assignment report more to the commissioner, through improved business writing and discriminating main issues from side issues. Strengthen the network with typical employers of graduates from this programme.	The procedure of the generic HAS concept of Professional Assignment has been expanded to consider the needs and aspirations of students and lecturers, and to rigorously review all assignments to ensure they align with the professional field and meet the required qualifications. More on this will be covered in Standard 4, later in this report.

In the current report below, the audit panel describes its findings under Standards 1 – 4 of the Limited Assessment Framework 2018 of the NVAO.

4. FINDINGS AND JUDGEMENTS

4.1. 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.

Explanation: The intended learning outcomes demonstrably describe the level of the programme (Associate Degree, Bachelor's, or Master's) as defined in the Dutch Qualifications Framework, as well as its orientation (professional or academic). In addition, they tie in with the regional, national or international perspective of the requirements currently set by the professional field and the discipline with regard to the contents of the programme. Insofar as is applicable, the intended learning outcomes are in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations.

Findings

The global food system is facing major challenges. Population growth and the demand for quality food are increasing rapidly, requiring significant efforts to ensure food security and healthy diets. However, food production has become increasingly complex, with global supply chains and advanced agricultural practices. In addition, resource scarcity and environmental challenges such as climate change and soil degradation pose further obstacles. Access to resources and markets is uneven, and working conditions and access to training for those involved in food production are not guaranteed.

To meet these challenges and ensure the needs of future generations, sustainable intensification or transformation of the current food system is a potential solution. The bachelor's programme International Food & Agribusiness (IFA) aims to prepare students to address these issues and to operate successfully in an international business environment.

Final qualifications, level and orientation

Since 2020-2021, IFA uses revised final qualifications which are aligned with developments in the international agri-food sector, professional practice and education. This gave rise to a change in focus and hence a reconsideration of the learning outcomes. The IFA educational profile consists of seven final qualifications, which can be divided into two categories:

Food systems and transformative business qualifications
1. Improving Sustainability of the Global Agri-Food System
2. Contributing to Sustainable Innovation in Agri-Food Production and Consumption
3. Contributing to New Business Models
Personal Leadership and skills qualifications
4. Creating Change
5. Value based Personal Leadership
6. Project management
7. Doing research

The programme has linked the qualifications to the Dublin Descriptors, demonstrating the link to international professional qualifications. The final qualifications are also linked to the hbo-standard and are therefore in line with the bachelor level in higher education.

The final qualifications demonstrate, according to the panel, the combination of sustainable improvement and innovation with international business, leadership and personal skills. The panel recognizes the urgency and relevance of the IFA programme and finds the final qualifications to be workable. The panel notes that the economy and our society are desperately waiting for people who have acquired these skills.

Alignment with the professional field

The panel sees that the programme keeps its profile up to date through so-called Working Field Scans. These are alumni surveys in which employers of alumni are also asked about their vision of the programme and their thoughts on further development. The programme also stays in touch with the professional field through the Strategic Network, which consists of working field partners. The panel considers this close link with the professional field to be very important for the continuous improvement of the programme. The panel suggests that meetings with the Strategic Network could be held more frequently. It is important to keep the conversation going with frontrunners in the field. As a programme that educates the agri-food change-makers for the future, it's important to think about the future together with the professional field. Not just about tomorrow, but also the day after tomorrow. The panel sees great opportunities for IFA as the programme contributes to innovation in and transformation of the field.

International profile

The international agri-food sector faces many challenges. The sector is in need of professionals who are capable of working internationally. It is important to address these challenges interdisciplinary in order to identify opportunities and to contribute to solutions for sustainable agri-food business development in an international context. HAS green academy, and IFA in particular, is the perfect place for students to learn how to engage internationally and interdisciplinary as future professionals. The panel found that students from all over the world find HAS and want to study in this sector here. In addition, the Netherlands offers great opportunities in this industry. Therefore, the international profile suits IFA perfectly.

Research

In order to educate the change-makers in the agri-food sector as IFA intends, students need to develop their research skills. It's important that students can clearly motivate the advices they give, therefore research skills are needed. The challenges the agri-food sector is facing – and will be facing in the future – ask for a critical and analytical view. Students have to obtain research skills to investigate the possibilities in issues from the field, and to motivate their innovative solutions. The programme also focuses on preparing students to work and do research in a more multidisciplinary way and in collaboration with others. The panel is positive about the way in which the programme looks at the development of students' research skills and has incorporated this into the profile and the final qualifications.

Considerations and Judgement

With regard to the findings, the panel concludes that IFA **meets the requirements** of Standard 1. The final qualifications demonstrate the combination of sustainable improvement and innovation with international business, leadership and personal skills. The panel recognizes the urgency and relevance of the IFA programme and finds the final qualifications to be workable. The panel notes that the economy and our society are desperately waiting for people who have acquired these skills. The intended learning outcomes are linked to the Dublin Descriptors and the panel notes the bachelor's level. The panel is highly satisfied with the alignment of the programme with the professional field according to keep the qualifications up to date. The Work Field Scans and conversations with the Strategic Network contribute to the continuous development of the programme. The panel suggests to have meetings with the Strategic Network more frequently.

The international nature of the agri-food sector requires professionals who are able to address its myriad challenges through interdisciplinary approaches. The HAS green academy serves as an ideal platform for students to cultivate the necessary skills for international and interdisciplinary engagement. IFA's emphasis on research equips students to become adept change-makers in the sector, fostering critical thinking and innovation. The panel recognizes the programme's

effective integration of research skills development into its profile, which aligns well with the evolving needs of the industry and offers promising prospects for students in the Netherlands and beyond.

4.2. 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.

Explanation: The intended learning outcomes have been adequately translated into educational objectives of (components of) the curriculum. The diversity of the students admitted is taken into account in this respect. The teachers have sufficient expertise in terms of both subject matter and teaching methods to teach the curriculum, and provide appropriate guidance. The teaching-learning environment encourages students to play an active role in the design of their own learning process (student-centred approach). If the programme is taught in a language other than Dutch, the programme must justify its choice. This also applies if the programme bears a foreign language name. The teaching staff must have a sufficient command of the language in which they are teaching. Services and facilities are not assessed, unless they have been set up specifically for the programme concerned.

Findings

Educational vision on learning

At the core of the IFA vision on learning is discovering and developing talents, learning to take directions, and developing and showing willpower. To achieve these aims, three guiding principles form the basis of the curriculum:

- Thematic teaching
- Student-centered learning and teaching
- Strong emphasis on project management and collaborative work

Programme content and design

The programme focuses primarily on international business management, while also providing a technological foundation. It prepares students for further study or careers in the dynamic global food system, both in the Netherlands and abroad, and fosters their development into responsible global citizens. This is achieved by providing an international learning environment, inspiring and challenging students, giving them choices and gradually increasing their responsibilities. This approach helps students develop their talents and become enterprising, innovative and inspiring professionals. Figure 1 shows a schematic overview of the curriculum:

Year	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
1	Global Food Systems IF1421 (6)	Agri Food Business IF1423 (6)	Business Economics IF1425 (8)	Work Experience Placement IF1427 (14)
	Intro Food IF1422 (7)	Primary Production IF1424 (8)	Biobased Economy IF1426 (6)	
	Personal Leadership IF1420 (5)			
2	Business & Marketing IF2441 (8)	Sustainable Value Chains IF2443 (8)	Business Development 1 IF2445 (6)	Business Development 2 IF2447 (6)
	Circular Agri-food Production I IF2442 (6)	Circular Agri-food Production II IF2444 (6)	Food Systems Governance IF2446 (8)	Extension on Sustainability IF2448 (8)
	Personal Leadership IF2450 (4)			
3	Internship (30)		Electives (30), e.g. Internship Minor	
4	Specialisation (30), e.g. Future Food Systems		Professional Assignment IF4430 (30)	

Figure 1. Overview of the curriculum

In order to contribute to the sustainable transformation of the food system, students need a broad knowledge of current practices and possible improvements in global food systems. The programme therefore provides students with an inspiring learning environment. In the first year, IFA uses a variety of learning techniques, including problem-based learning (PBL), lectures, practicals, tutorials, and group projects to build foundational skills and knowledge. From the second year, the focus shifts to interdependent project work and increased independent study, with constant exposure to professional practice through field trips, guest lectures and real-life projects with international companies and NGOs. In the third year, students gain practical experience through internships and electives, including options for minors or international exchanges. The fourth and final year prepares students for professional life, with a specialization in Future Food Systems and the Professional Assignment: a real-life assignment from the professional field (see more in Standard 3: Graduation).

The content and coherence of the curriculum is satisfactory to the panel. The different modules are offered at the appropriate level and enable students to develop as entry-level change-makers. The panel clearly saw how the learning objectives were reflected in the curriculum and appreciated the strong link to practice through the authentic assignments and cases that students work with throughout the programme.

Research skills are well placed within the programme. Students encounter conducting research at various stages of the programme. In doing so, they develop both qualitative and quantitative research skills. The panel is satisfied with the level of research skills reflected in the programme. The panel suggests to the programme to look further into creative research methods, since less traditional can be more relevant for a change-maker. The panel sees opportunities in collaborating with the research group and lecturers increases the development of the student's research skills and investigative ability.

Admission

The panel considers the admission criteria to be appropriate and comparable to those of other bachelor programmes in agribusiness. Dutch students with a havo or vwo qualification are eligible if their profile includes mathematics. Students from MBO level 4 programmes can also enroll, although it is strongly recommended that they have mathematics and English in their curriculum. International students must have a secondary school diploma equivalent to the Dutch havo diploma, with mathematics in the last year. A good knowledge of English is necessary for successful study: Dutch students should have a B1 level, while international students need an IELTS score of 6.0, a Cambridge score of B2 or a TOEFL score of 70.

Supervision

Students were positive about the supervision they receive during the programme. Within the programme, the panel enjoyed the informal atmosphere of the international 'IFamily' community. The panel appreciated the hard work of the lecturers and the whole team to ensure that every student – including the international students¹ - feels comfortable. Students are exposed to different cultures. This suits the position of an international change-maker. The programme emphasizes the importance of working in groups and from year 1 students are introduced to peer feedback. Students described peer feedback as constructive and as a tool that really works. The panel learned that the programme provides an environment where students are open and fair with each other; the programme exceeds in creating a safe environment. Students are encouraged to speak up in supervised sessions. The panel appreciated the emphasis on peer feedback in a safe environment. This also ensured greater clarity about students' individual contribution to group work, while students convinced the panel of the fairness of peer feedback and reflection.

¹ Approximately 40% of all IFA students are international (June '24).

Staff

The IFA-team comprises thirteen complementary lecturers and eight additional staff members (two associate lecturers, two junior researchers, a study advisor, a secretary, and two directors). Based on documentation the panel concludes that the staff is well qualified to deliver the program, both didactical and content-wise. The panel learned that staff members are selected based on their educational background, relevant expertise, broad international experience in the field, and passion for the global agri-food system. The panel notes how the programme benefits of the international relations the lecturers bring with them. Their level of the English language is proficient. Students highly value the lecturers and feel seen and heard by them.

The relatively small team of lecturers ensures a tight and committed group of people that give their best to the programme. The panel obviously appreciates this, yet the panel also sees a pitfall. The workload is high, which is also recognized by students. The panel appreciates the steps taken by management and therefore encourages them to continue to support the team. The panel sees room to gain time and reduce the workload. The panel noted many small groups within the small programme, which gave the impression that the organization could also develop and improve. The panel therefore recommends that the programme be optimized and organized in a more efficient way, e.g. better planning, fewer pages for students to write (and thus less for lecturers to assess), or more sharing of knowledge and experience between lecturers (not 'inventing the same wheel') and collaboration with other programmes within HAS green academy.

Members of the IFA-team engage in various activities related to their expertise and professional development. All lecturers have successfully completed the Basic Qualification in Examination (BQE/BKE), while three members hold the Senior Qualification in Examination (SQE/SKE). The panel highly appreciates the level and substantial experience of the staff, both in educational/pedagogical tools and content-wise in various fields of expertise. The panel also learned that most of the staff members are also still active in the professional field. They also attend seminars and congresses.

Facilities

HAS green academy (location 's-Hertogenbosch) has modern and innovative facilities in its own complex, such as a food technology centre, a greenhouse, laboratories, a technology hall, a school garden, and climate rooms. During the site visit, the panel was given a tour of the excellent facilities available to all IFA students. The panel was impressed by all the facilities IFA students can make use of. Also the digital learning environment is satisfactory. Students find study materials and information on Microsoft Teams.

Considerations and Judgement

Based on the findings, the panel considers Standard 2 to be **satisfactory**. The IFA programme offers a comprehensive learning environment for students to contribute to the sustainable food system transformation and innovation within the field. The program uses various learning techniques, including problem-based learning, practicals, and real-life assignments. The panel finds that IFA has a solid and aligned curriculum that enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes as well as develop their professional skills. The curriculum offers modules at appropriate levels and strong links to practice. Also research skills are well placed within the curriculum, with students developing both qualitative and quantitative research skills.

Students are positive about the supervision, the lecturers, the informal atmosphere, and the emphasis on group work – as they will collaborate with other professionals during their professional careers as well. The programme emphasizes peer feedback and encourages open communication. The panel appreciates the safe learning and feedback environment fostered by the programme. Next to the positive learning environment, the IFA programme facilities are excellent, according to the panel.

The IFA-team, consisting of thirteen lecturers and eight staff members, is well-qualified to deliver a program in the global agri-food system. The staff members are experienced in various fields and actively participate in professional activities, attending seminars and congresses. Most of the lecturers have experience in the international field. The panel notes how the programme benefits of the international relations the lecturers bring with them. Their level of the English language is proficient. Students are highly satisfied with their lecturers and the panel concludes that the team possess extensive expertise. However, the small team size and high workload, partly due to sickness, present challenges. The panel recommends optimizing the programme for efficiency, such as better and more efficient planning and sharing of knowledge. The management should continue to support the team and improve the organization in this regard.

4.3. Student assessment

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

Explanation: The student assessments are valid, reliable and sufficiently independent. The requirements are transparent to the students. The quality of interim and final examinations is sufficiently safeguarded and meets the statutory quality standards. The tests support the students' own learning processes.

Findings

Assessment policy

The assessment policy of IFA is based on the general educational vision of HAS. IFA has translated this policy into a clear assessment programme. This provides a clear vision of the link between the IFA qualifications, testing methods, and the level of assessment within the teaching course of the curriculum. The panel recognized how the programme is based on constructive alignment.

IFA's vision of assessment is that assessment must have a learning and feedback function in order to play a stimulating role in the student's learning process. Therefore, both summative and formative assessment elements are used in the assessment programme. The panel looked at some assessments from different years and concluded that there's a good variety of forms of assessment, such as knowledge tests (both open and multiple choice), oral exams, and written assignments. The panel also looked at feedback forms. Both feedback and feed forward are provided to students, ensuring that test results do not come as a surprise and that the learning experience is as positive as possible. The panel heard this from students who were positive and satisfied with the feedback they received.

Quality assurance

Multiple instruments are used to maintain quality in assessment: a clear assessment cycle, the four-eyes principle, and calibration sessions among assessors. The panel considers the foundation of the quality criteria used within the IFA programme to be valid, reliable and transparent. This was made clear in the documents the panel received and became evident during the interviews at the site visit. The panel is appreciative about the manner and extent of calibration among assessors.

The panel saw a strong culture of quality in the programme. The staff, core team, lecturers, and exam committee are committed to continuous development and improvement. The panel sees this as a strength of the relatively small programme. However, the panel considers that this strong quality culture needs to be formalized. During interviews, the panel heard many things that the programme does to ensure quality, but these are not yet documented and formalized. The panel recommends that what the programme does be made explicit in a formal way, also to make it visible to others. This will also contribute to the sustainability of the programme and reduce the workload for staff.

Exam Committee

Recently, IFA had a cluster Exam Committee installed which is responsible for all programmes within the Agri & Business domain. It consists of four members; one member of the IFA team and three members of other educational programmes in the domain. The committee acts as an independent board that provides feedback to the IFA staff, checking the completeness of graduation files, and nominates assessors. The panel notes that the Exam Committee fulfils its statutory duties.

The panel sees that the cluster Exam Committee is still under development and ensuring the quality of assessments beforehand can be further developed. The panel therefore highly recommends that an Assessment Committee be set up as soon as possible to ensure that assessments are not only externally checked by the Exam Committee but are also checked

beforehand. The establishment of an Assessment Committee will also reduce the workload on lecturers.

Graduation

The fourth and final year of the IFA programme serves as the graduation year. In two courses, students need to show they have required all the intended learning outcomes at bachelor's level:

- Future Food Systems course (30 EC): a course that brings together the skills and knowledge students have gained throughout the programme. The course aims to deepen professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes to expand the student's professional network. The course includes a project on real-world issues related to food system transformation that require effective project management.
- Professional Assignment (PA) (30 EC): this is a HAS-wide assignment in which students work in a complex, professional, and often multidisciplinary setting. The projects that students work on are assignments commissioned by industry partners, who pay a sum of money in return for a team of students to help them with authentic and practical issues. Students engage in the professional field and are able to demonstrate their level of achievement towards the final qualifications.

In addition to the assignments, students also keep a graduation portfolio in which they demonstrate their achievement of the learning objectives at the final level of the programme. In the portfolio students also reflect on their individual contribution in the multidisciplinary teams.

In the PA, the quality of students' work towards the clients is ensured. Supervisors of the students are responsible for the final quality of the handed work. The panel is satisfied that the HAS green academy and industry clients take steps to ensure that there's no conflict of interest. However, the panel strongly recommends that a way is found to reduce the likelihood of potential conflicts of interest in a more formal way.

Considerations and Judgement

The panel finds that the programme **meets the standard** for Standard 3. The IFA assessment policy, based on the HAS educational vision, is translated into a clear programme that links IFA qualifications, testing methods and levels of assessment within the curriculum. The programme uses both summative and formative assessments, including knowledge tests, portfolio assignments and written assignments to support student learning and feedback. The panel commends the variety and effectiveness of these assessments and notes positive feedback from students.

Quality assurance is maintained through a robust assessment cycle, the four-eyes principle, and calibration sessions, which ensure validity, reliability and transparency. However, the panel recommends formalizing the programme's quality culture to increase visibility and sustainability, while reducing staff workload. The recently established Cluster Exam Committee, which oversees the Agri & Business domain, is fulfilling its statutory role but needs to be further developed to ensure quality control of the assessments. The panel therefore recommends the establishment of an Assessment Committee to pre-check assessments, thereby reducing the workload on lecturers.

4.4. Achieved learning outcomes

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

Explanation: The achievement of the intended learning outcomes is demonstrated by the results of tests, the final projects, and the performance of graduates in actual practice or in postgraduate programmes.

Findings

Realised final level

Prior to the site visit, the panel reviewed the graduation files (PA, Future Food Systems and the portfolio) of fifteen recent graduates. The sample of the graduation files was drawn from a list of all 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 graduates, taking into account a spread across academic years and assessments.

Overall the quality of the final assessments was considered as satisfactory by the panel. Next to the student's final works, the panel also reviewed the assessment and judgement. The panel considered the marks rewarded to be appropriate, some works were reviewed with a lower grade by the panel but all assessments were sufficient and represented the bachelor's level.

At first sight, it was not clear to the panel how individual students were graded in the PA's. Through discussion with the assessors, the panel was able to gain a clearer understanding of the individual assessments. The panel recommends that the programme - and the HAS green academy, as the PA is academy-wide - improve this. The contribution of each student should be clear at all times.

Performance of graduates

Throughout the visit, the panel spoke to commissioners of the PA who unanimously praised the students for their motivation, independence, self-confidence and initiative. They also appreciated the students' holistic approach and their ability to focus when necessary. These observations are in line with the programme's aim to produce generalists rather than specialists. The panel also spoke to alumni of the programme. They found employment quickly after graduation, underlining the effectiveness of the programme in preparing students for the labour market. The panel appreciates the close connection the programme maintains with alumni, for example by carrying out the Work Field Scan.

Considerations and Judgement

The panel concludes that the programme meets the quality and therefore receives the judgement 'satisfactory' on Standard 4. Prior to the site visit, the panel reviewed the graduation files of fifteen recent graduates and found the overall quality of the final assessments to be satisfactory, with appropriate grades reflecting bachelor's level standards. Initially, the panel found it unclear how individual students were graded in the PA's, but this was clarified in discussions with the assessors. The panel recommends that the HAS green academy make individual student contributions clearer.

During the visit, the commissioners – with whom the panel spoke - praised the students for their motivation, independence, confidence and initiative, in line with the programme's aim of producing change-makers that are capable of working in a multidisciplinary team. Graduates found employment quickly after graduation, highlighting the programme's effectiveness in preparing students for the labour market. The panel also appreciates the programme's close links with alumni, exemplified by initiatives such as the Work Field Scan.

5. OVERALL CONCLUSION

The audit panel assesses the quality of the hbo-bachelor programme International Food & Agribusiness offered by HAS green academy as satisfactory. The programme meets the requirements of all the standards of the limited framework for programme accreditation. The panel is convinced by the urgent and the up-to-date profile and sees the relevance of this international programme for our society. Students achieve the intended learning outcomes in which they are fully supported by a very dedicated teaching team. Students perform up to the standards of a hbo-bachelor degree.

Therefore the panel advises the NVAO to re-accredit the hbo-bachelor programme International Food & Agribusiness as offered by the HAS green academy.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Formalize and document the strong quality culture

The programme is committed to continuous development and improvement. During interviews, the panel heard many things that the programme does to ensure quality, but these are not yet recorded and formalized. The panel recommends that what the programme does be made explicit in a formal way, also to make it visible to others. This will also contribute to the sustainability of the programme and reduce the workload for staff.

Set up a formal Assessment Committee as soon as possible

Ensuring the quality of forehand assessments can be further developed. The panel therefore recommends that an Assessment Committee be set up as soon as possible to ensure that assessments are not only externally checked by the Exam Committee but are also checked at the forehand. The establishment of an Assessment Committee will also reduce the workload on lecturers.

Ensure clear individual grading in the Professional Assignments (PA's)

At first sight, it was not clear to the panel how individual students were graded in the PA's. Through discussion with the assessors, the panel was able to gain a clearer understanding of the individual assessments. The panel recommends that the programme - and the HAS green academy, as the PA is Academy-wide - improve this. The contribution of each student should be clear at all times.

ANNEX I**Overview of judgements**

Overview of the panels judgements HAS Green Academy hbo-bachelor International Food & Agribusiness full-time	
Standard	Judgement
Standaard 1. Intended learning outcomes	Satisfactory
Standaard 2. Teaching-learning environment	Satisfactory
Standaard 3. Student assessment	Satisfactory
Standaard 4. Achieved learning outcomes	Satisfactory
Overall judgement	Positive

ANNEX II

Schedule of the site visit

Schedule hbo-bachelor International Food & Agribusiness | HAS Green Academy | April 2nd, 2024 | 's-Hertogenbosch²

Time	Conversation
08.00 – 08.15	Walk-in & welcoming audit panel
08.15 – 09.00	Pre-consultation audit panel
09.00 – 09.45	Interview with the management <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Directors▪ Core team member Education & Assessment▪ Lectorate Future Food Systems
09.45 – 10.00	Break
10.00 – 10.45	Interview with the professional field and alumni <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ External core team member▪ Work field partner▪ Work field partner▪ Alumnus▪ Alumnus
10.45 – 11.00	Break
11.00 – 11.45	Interview with the Exam Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Chairman of the Exam Committee▪ Member of the Exam Committee▪ Former IFA member of the Exam Committee
11.45 – 12.00	Break
12.00 – 13.00	Showcase the programme and tour: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ HAS greenhouse▪ Microbiology lab▪ The Food Design Centre
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch break
14.00 – 14.45	Interview with students <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Student year 4▪ Student year 4▪ Student year 3▪ Student year 2▪ Student year 2▪ Student year 1
14.45 – 15.00	Break
15.00 – 15.45	Interview with lecturers <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Core team member Students▪ Core team member Staff & Planning▪ Lecturer▪ Lecturer▪ Study coordinator
15.45 – 16.00	Break
16.00 – 16.15	Pending issues
16.15 – 17.15	Drafting assessment by the audit panel
17.15 – 17.45	Review and feedback

² For privacy reasons, the names are not included in this report. The names of auditees are known to the secretary of the audit panel.

Working methods

Selection of the delegations / the auditees

In accordance with NVAO regulations, the audit panel decided on the composition of the delegations (auditees) prior to the audit, in consultation with the course management and on the basis of the focus areas identified in the panel's analysis of the course materials.

An 'open consultation session' was scheduled as part of the site visit programme. The panel verified that the scheduled times of the consultation session had been made public to all parties involved in the school community in a correct and timely manner. No students or staff members replied to the open consultation session.

Auditing process

The following procedure was adopted. The panel studied the documents regarding the programme (see Annex Documents reviewed) and the final assessments of fifteen students from recent cohorts. The panel secretary organized input from the auditors and distributed the preliminary findings among the panel members prior to the audit. An online preparatory meeting of the panel was held before the site visit.

The panel formulated its preliminary assessments per theme and standard immediately after the site visit. These were based on the findings of the site visit, and building on the assessment of the programme documents.

A first version of the assessment report was drafted by the secretary and circulated among the members of the panel for review and comments. The final draft was subsequently forwarded to the institute to correct factual inaccuracies.

Assessment rules

Coordination between audit panels within the cluster

The reviews within the cluster 'HAO Bedrijf' were organized by the quality agencies Hobéon, Aequi and NQA. Coordination between the subpanels was initially achieved by briefing the panel members on of the evaluation framework. The assessment criteria, agreed between Hobéon and the NQA, were part of this briefing. Prior to this, alignment was ensured by overlapping membership across all subpanels within the cluster. Panel members were involved in several reviews, with overlapping membership between subpanels ensuring coordination. Bearing in mind that each programme evaluation is an individual evaluation, the overlap in staffing has (where possible) led to progressive reflection on the other reviews within the cluster. Furthermore, coordination between the panels is ensured by the support of the same secretary as much as possible and the use of trained chairmen.

Assessment rules

According to the NVAO assessment rules a standard meets, partially meets or does not meet the score. Hobéon applied the decision rules, as listed in the "Assessment Framework for higher education accreditation system Netherlands, September 2018.

Limited framework

According to assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands, September 2018

Final conclusion

Positive:

The programme meets all the standards.

Conditionally positive:

The programme meets standard 1 and partially meets a maximum of two standards, with the imposition of conditions being recommended by the panel (see Additional assessment rules regarding conditions).

Negative:

In the following situations:

- The programme fails to meet one or more standards;
- The programme partially meets standard 1;
- The programme partially meets one or two standards, without the imposition of conditions being recommended by the panel;
- The programme partially meets three or more standards.

ANNEX III

List of documents examined

List of documents examined

- Self-evaluation Report HAS IFA
- Education policy plan HAS
- Policy plan regarding research in relation to the programmes offered or similar document(s);
- Staff (policy) plan or similar document(s);
- Services and facilities plan or similar document(s);
- Quality assurance plan;
- Policy plan regarding the accessibility and feasibility of the programme for students with functional disability;
- Summary and analysis of recent evaluation results and relevant management information;
- Documentation regarding student and staff satisfaction;
- Reports on consultations in relevant committees / bodies;
- Test questions with corresponding assessment criteria and requirements (answer models) and a representative selection of actual tests administered (such as presentations, work placements, portfolio assessments) and assessments;
- representative selection of final projects, selected by the panel, of the past two years with corresponding assessment criteria and requirements;
- Reference books and other learning materials.
- List of all recent final projects/papers examined prior to the audit:

Following NVAO regulations the panel prior to the audit has studied 15 students' final projects. For privacy reasons, the names of these graduates and their student numbers are not included in this report. The names of the graduates, their student number, as well as the titles of the final projects, are known to the secretary of the audit panel.

ANNEX IV

Composition of the audit panel

This programme belongs to the following assessment group:

Name assessment group:	HAO Bedrijf
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On March 12 2024 the NVAO endorsed the composition of the panel to assess the full time bachelor programme International Food & Agribusiness of HAS Green Academy (PA 1814):

Name	Role	Succinct CVs
Drs. D.J.N.M. (Nies) Rijnders	Chair	Educational advisor
G.A.M. (Gerry) Kouwenhoven MBA	Member	Associate lector 'Investing in Circular Agriculture & Horticulture Business, Inholland University of Applied Sciences
M.F.A. (Maarten) Kuiper	Member	Researcher and lecturer Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences Food Chain Traveler
C. (Christa) van Es	Student member	Student Food & Dietetics at The Hague University of Applied Sciences
C.F. (Cathelijne) van Oeffelt MSc	Secretary	Certified and NVAO-trained secretary and advisor at Hobéon

Prior to the audit all panel members undersigned declarations of independence and confidentiality which are in possession of the NVAO. This declaration certifies, among other things, that panel members do not currently maintain or have not maintained for the last five years any (family) connections or ties of a personal nature or as a researcher/teacher, professional or consultant with the institution in question, which could affect a fully independent judgement regarding the quality of the programme in either a positive or negative sense.

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