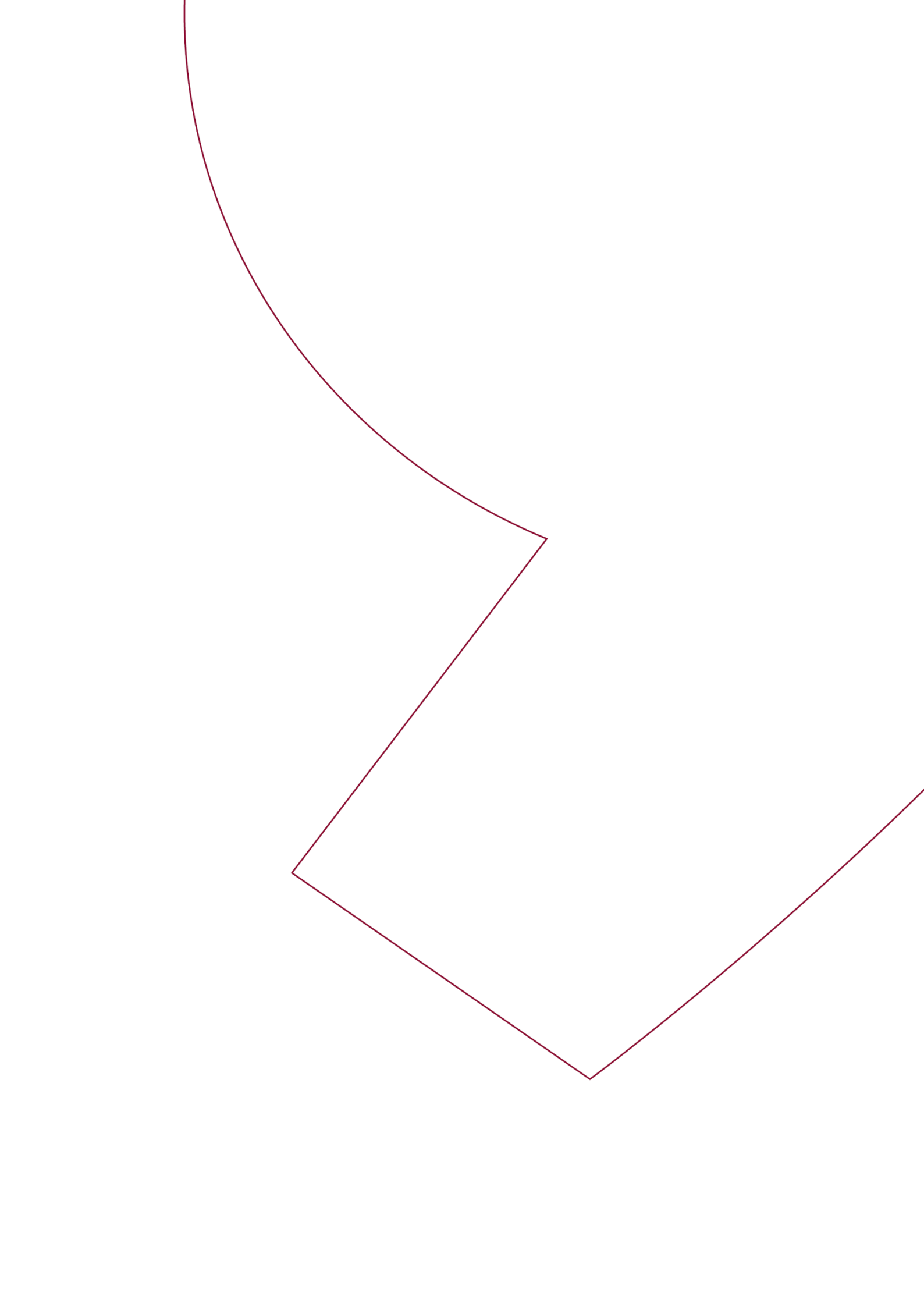
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ASSESSMENT REPORT

Institution with institutional audit (ITK)

Bachelor International Business
Full time

Hanze University of Applied Sciences



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ASSESSMENT REPORT

Institution with institutional audit (ITK)

Bachelor International Business

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ISAT 30029

Hobéon Certificering & Accreditatie

Dated
24 june 2026
Audit committee
Jolanda Berntsen (chair)
Thomas Blanc de la Carrere
Vladimir Ignjatovic
Nick van Hattem

Secretary
Daniëlle de Koning

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1. GENERAL AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

Name Institution	Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen
Status	Funded
Outcomes of Institutional Quality Assessment	Positive, 24 March 2026
Name program (as in RIO)	International Business
ISAT code	30029
Domain/sector	Economics
Orientation and level	HBO
Level	Bachelor
Degree and title	Bachelor of Business Administration
Number of credits	180 EC (three-year route) 240 EC (four-year route)
Specialisations	None
Location(s)	Groningen
Variant(s)	Full-time, three-year route and four-year route
Language of instruction	English
Does the programme work with learning outcomes, and if so, in which variants of the programme?	No
Special feature	Internationalisation (Cequint)
Date audit	7 April 2026
Final date submission deadline report NVAO	1 July 2026

2. SUMMARY

The International Business (IB) programme, offered by the International Business School (IBS) of Hanze University of Applied Sciences, is a full-time bachelor's programme with a four-year and a three-year route. The programme prepares students for international business roles by combining a broad foundation in key business disciplines with strong attention to professional skills, intercultural development and international experience. It is taught in English and situated in an international classroom in which students and lecturers come from diverse backgrounds. A more detailed description of the programme is provided in the Introduction.

Standard 1. Intended Learning Outcomes
In its assessment, the panel takes into consideration that the IB programme presents a coherent and well-substantiated set of intended learning outcomes (ILOs), firmly grounded in the national framework for International Business. These intended learning outcomes reflect the broad and interdisciplinary nature of the domain and are clearly aligned with the Dublin Descriptors and NLQF level 6, thereby adequately describing the required bachelor level and professional orientation. The programme prepares graduates to operate in complex and dynamic international contexts, combining domain-specific expertise with broader professional competences.

The panel establishes that the intended learning outcomes are demonstrably geared to the expectations of the professional field. They cover the full breadth of the international business domain, including areas such as marketing, finance and operations, while also emphasising research ability, critical thinking and professional attitude. Through a structured approach to engagement with the professional field – including work-field analyses, alumni feedback and an active Advisory Board – the programme ensures that its intended learning outcomes remain aligned with current and future developments.

The panel further observes that the programme presents a clear and recognisable profile. Its "Groninger flavour" – entrepreneurship, global mindset and sustainability – is explicitly embedded in both the intended learning outcomes and the curriculum. This profile has been sharpened in response to feedback from the previous accreditation and is consistently aligned with the Hanze Learning Concept, in which student-centred, practice-oriented and interdisciplinary learning are central. As a result, the programme demonstrates a clear identity and a strong international character, with a coherent connection between its profile, programme design and educational vision.

The current programme is still based on the 2017 national framework for International Business and is in transition to the updated 2023 framework. The panel recognises a well-considered and carefully managed approach to this transition. It identifies a solid and credible strategy for aligning the programme with the new set of integrated PLOs and the accompanying BoKSA. The transition is supported by structured project management and a phased implementation. The panel considers the programme's future direction to be coherent, forward-looking and well aligned with developments in the international business domain.

Overall, the panel concludes that the IB programme has developed solid intended learning outcomes that are aligned with national frameworks, the professional field and international requirements, and that they are embedded within a clear and distinctive programme profile.

On this basis, the panel finds that the programme meets the requirements for Standard 1.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

The panel concludes that the programme offers a coherent and practice-oriented teaching-learning environment that enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The curriculum combines knowledge development, skills training and application in realistic professional contexts. Students work on projects with companies from the first year onwards, for example by developing an international business plan or carrying out consultancy assignments for external organisations. In year 2, they also work in simulations in which they take decisions in areas such as marketing, finance and supply chain management in an international business setting. The mandatory year abroad, consisting of study and placement[1], further strengthens their international and professional development. In the graduation phase, students continue to work on authentic business questions, for example in consultancy projects and the final graduation project.

The panel is positive about the programme's strong international character and inclusive learning environment. Students and lecturers come from diverse backgrounds, and intercultural learning is embedded throughout the programme, for example through multicultural group work, courses on intercultural communication and the international experiences students gain during their studies abroad. The panel also encountered a supportive environment in which students are guided through different roles and support structures, including academic advisors, study coaches and targeted initiatives for students who are at risk of delay. A concrete example is Study Hall, an on-campus support initiative that helps students improve their study progress, motivation and sense of connection to the programme.

The teaching staff are knowledgeable, professionally engaged and clearly committed to students' development. Their experience in the professional field helps them make the relevance of the curriculum tangible for students. The panel values in particular that lecturers continue to develop themselves professionally and educationally and that some combine teaching with current professional practice or applied research. This helps to keep the programme aligned with developments in the field of international business and contributes to a learning environment in which students feel supported and challenged.

The panel also identifies several logical next steps for further development. In the transition to the new curriculum, it sees room to make the coherence of the learning journey more visible to students and to strengthen consistency in supervision, expectations and communication across modules, group projects and periods spent abroad. In addition, the panel considers it important that the programme continues to develop its approach to artificial intelligence, not only in assessment but also in teaching and learning, so that students learn to use AI in a responsible and meaningful way in a professional context. These points do not detract from the panel's overall positive judgement. The panel therefore judges that Standard 2 is met.

Standard 3. Student assessment

The panel concludes that the programme has an adequate and well-organised system of student assessment in place. Students are assessed through a broad range of methods, including written exams, project assignments, portfolios, presentations and oral defences. This variety fits the professional orientation of the programme and helps ensure that students demonstrate both knowledge and individual achievement. The panel is positive about the balance between formative and summative assessment and about the fact that the assessment structure has become more manageable and coherent through the introduction of the 5 EC structure, in which each course has in principle one assessment.

[1] For international students, the placement may also take place in the Netherlands, provided that – similar to placements abroad – it is carried out within an organisation that operates internationally or in an internationally oriented role or environment.

The quality of assessment is safeguarded through several complementary measures. These include the use of qualified assessors, the four-eyes principle in designing and checking assessments, regular calibration between lecturers and the active use of student feedback and monitoring data. The panel also encountered an Examination Board that takes its legal responsibilities seriously and plays an active role in safeguarding the quality and integrity of assessment. In addition, the programme is responding thoughtfully to the growing impact of artificial intelligence by investing in AI literacy for staff, increasing the role of oral components in assessment and working on the responsible and ethical use of AI in education and assessment.

The panel furthermore values the redesign of the graduation phase. The Graduation Project has moved towards a more practice-oriented professional product, and oral defences now play a more meaningful role in the final assessment. Although the panel sees some logical next steps, such as reducing differences between teachers in expectations and follow-up, giving further attention to the supervision of group work, and continuing the development of a future-proof approach to AI in assessment, these points do not detract from its overall positive judgement. The panel therefore judges that Standard 3 is met.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

In its assessment, the panel takes into consideration that the IB programme demonstrates in a convincing manner that students achieve the intended learning outcomes. Based on a representative and well-composed sample of graduation projects, the panel establishes that all reviewed works meet the required bachelor level and reflect the professional orientation of the programme.

The panel notes that the graduation projects are characterised by their practice-oriented nature, their clear connection to real-life business challenges and their relevance to the international business context. While some variation in methodological depth is observed, this is understandable in light of the programme's transition towards more diverse professional products and is generally in line with the grading.

In addition, the panel finds that graduates function well in professional practice and, where applicable, in further education. Feedback from students, alumni and representatives of the professional field consistently indicates that graduates possess a broad international perspective, demonstrate confidence in operating in international contexts and are able to contribute effectively as entry-level professionals.

Overall, the panel concludes that the programme provides sufficient and convincing evidence that the intended learning outcomes are achieved. On this basis, the panel judges that Standard 4 is met.

Overall conclusion

The panel concludes that the programme demonstrates convincing quality across all four standards. It encountered a programme with a clear profile, a strong international orientation, a committed team and a reflective approach to further development.

Taken as a whole, the panel concludes that the bachelor's programme in International Business at Hanze University of Applied Sciences meets all four quality standards for higher professional education, as set out in the NVAO's Assessment Framework for Programmes with Institutional Accreditation. Based on the NVAO's decision rules, the panel issues a positive overall assessment of the programme, for both the four-year and the three-year route.

After approval by the panel members, this report was adopted by the chair and secretary on June 24th 2026.

3. INTRODUCTION

This report is the result of the limited programme assessment of the International Business bachelor's programme at Hanze University of Applied Sciences. The report presents, in succession, the panel's findings, considerations and conclusions regarding the programme in relation to the four quality standards: intended learning outcomes, teaching-learning environment, student assessment and achieved learning outcomes. For its assessment, the panel applied the Assessment Framework (2024) of the Dutch–Flemish Accreditation Organisation (NVAO).

The programme forms part of the site visit cluster *HBO IBMS Groep 1 Noord*, together with the International Business programmes of Saxion University of Applied Sciences, HAN University of Applied Sciences and NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences.

The audit was initially planned for 5 February 2026, but had to be postponed due to extreme weather conditions in the north of the Netherlands. In consultation with the programme, a new site visit date was scheduled for 7 April 2026. The NVAO was informed accordingly and granted an extension for the submission of the report. The change of date also resulted in changes to the panel composition; this is explained further in Appendix II.

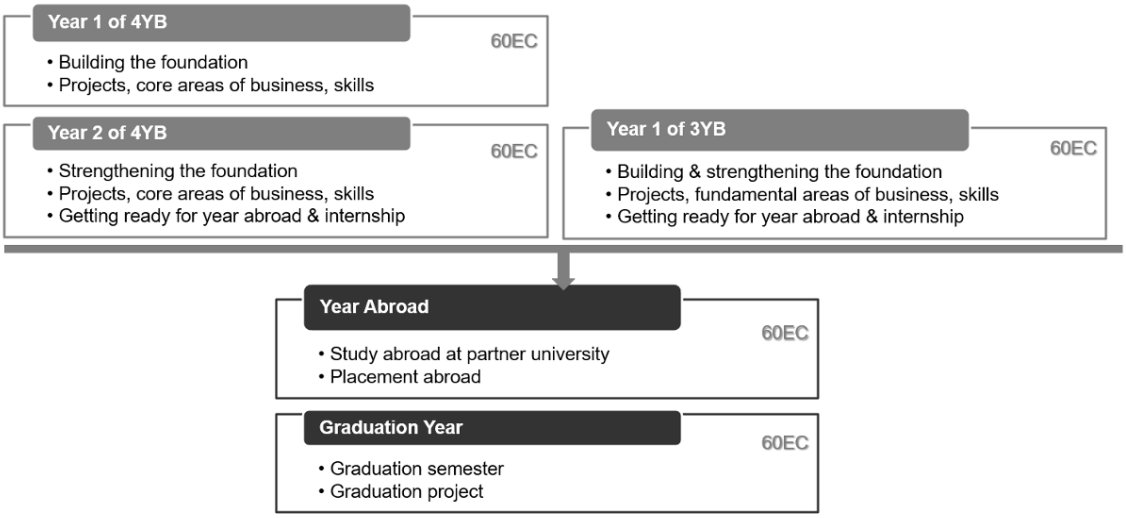
Hanze University of Applied Sciences is also applying for the special feature Internationalisation. The programme combined this procedure with the accreditation audit. The assessment procedure was organised in accordance with the *Frameworks for the Assessment of Quality in Internationalisation* published by the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA). Within the panel, Thomas Blanc de la Carrere was specifically involved in this part of the assessment; he is ECA-trained. In addition to this accreditation report, a separate report has been prepared for submission to ECA by the institution.

Hanze, IBS and the Hanze Learning Concept
Hanze University of Applied Sciences is a university of applied sciences in Groningen that offers a broad range of professionally oriented bachelor's, master's and associate degree programmes. The International Business programme is part of the International Business School, together with two master's programmes in business administration. IBS operates within the institutional frameworks of Hanze and has its own governance, education policy and quality assurance structure.

An important institutional development is the Hanze Learning Concept (HLC, 2025), which provides the university's vision on learning for the coming strategic period. The HLC emphasises development-oriented education, real-world problems, learning in learning communities, a safe learning environment and tailored learning pathways, and is built around six core educational themes, including competent professionalism, collaborative learning, personal development and transition skills. As referred to under Standard 1, the programme explicitly aims to integrate this concept further into its curriculum.

Characteristics of the programme
The International Business programme is a full-time bachelor's programme leading to the degree of Bachelor of Business Administration. It is offered in English and prepares students for internationally oriented business roles by combining a broad foundation in business disciplines with the development of professional, intercultural and research-related skills. The programme is offered in a four-year route and an accelerated three-year route.

The three-year bachelor programme is a full-time study of 180 EC with 60 EC earned per academic year. Each academic year consists of four study periods (two study periods per semester). The Year Abroad (fixed order) and Graduation Year are the same as in the four-year bachelor programmes. The distinctive feature of the International Business three-year programme lies in its condensed structure, designed for students possessing a higher secondary-school education, equivalent to the Dutch vwo level, International Baccalaureate, or an international equivalent. This enables eligible students to undertake a compressed three-year bachelor's curriculum, encompassing the foundational content of the initial two years within one. Year 2 of this programme is spent abroad and year 3 is their graduation year.
The figure below provides a schematic overview of both routes and helps to clarify how the three-year and four-year programmes are structured in relation to one another.



Curriculum renewal
The IB programme is currently in a phase of further development. It still operates on the basis of the 2017 national IB framework, while preparing for the implementation of the updated 2023 national framework from the 2026–2027 academic year onwards. In recent years, major parts of the curriculum have already been redeveloped, including the introduction of a 5 EC structure. Years 1 and 2 of the four-year route and year 1 of the three-year route have been prioritised in this process, as these were seen by students and staff as the parts of the programme where the need for change was greatest. The programme's stated ambition is to bring together the Hanze Learning Concept, the updated IB framework and its own distinctive profile in one coherent approach.

Developments since the previous visitation
The previous accreditation of the programme took place in 2019. At that time, the panel formulated four recommendations regarding the further development of the programme, in particular focusing on curriculum development, the strengthening of the programme's distinctive profile and the alignment of the programme learning outcomes with this profile. The programme has taken a number of targeted steps in response to these recommendations. The main actions and observations of the panel are summarised below.

Recommendation previous accreditation (2019)	Action taken by the programme	Status / observation panel
Further develop the curriculum, particularly years 3 and 4, in a more proactive manner (rather than reactionary)	Step-by-step redevelopment of the curriculum; introduction of a 5 EC structure; transition approach described as a refinement rather than a complete redesign; gap analysis conducted to align with the new national IB framework	The panel observes that curriculum development is now approached in a more structured and forward-looking way, with most elements of the new framework already in place and the transition to the new curriculum (2026–2027) well prepared.
Further clarify and strengthen the unique profile ("Groningen flavour") of the programme	Identification and articulation of three strategic focus areas (entrepreneurship, global mindset, sustainability); increased attention to these themes in the curriculum and learning environment	The panel establishes that the strategic focus areas are visible in the programme and recognisable for students, although continued attention to visibility and coherence remains relevant.
Make the programme's distinctive elements more explicit in the curriculum	Integration of focus areas in projects, curriculum components and extracurricular activities (e.g. entrepreneurship initiatives, sustainability projects, international learning environment)	The panel observes that these elements are embedded in both curricular and extracurricular activities and supported by an international learning environment.
Further align Programme Learning Outcomes with the programme's distinctive profile	Adoption of the national IB framework with Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs), complemented by thematic positioning (focus areas and programme structure)	The panel notes that the programme aligns with the national framework and has taken steps to further contextualise this within its own profile.

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 NVAO: 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. The principles for how the programme is organised must match the institution's vision on education and its profile. - The intended learning outcomes must be evaluated periodically.

Findings

Intended learning outcomes: content, orientation and level

The International Business programme of Hanze University of Applied Sciences aims to educate students to become starting international business professionals who are equipped to operate across the broad spectrum of the international business administration domain. In line with the programme's own profile description, graduates combine interdisciplinary skills with a solid knowledge base and are prepared to act as intermediaries across business domains in a complex and dynamic international context. The programme further emphasises that its graduates are versatile, agile and able to respond to changing labour market requirements. Depending on the professional context, they are prepared to take on a broad generalist role in small and medium-sized enterprises or to move into more specialised roles in larger internationally operating companies and multinationals.

The panel notes that the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of the current programme, which apply to both the four-year programme and the three-year programme, are based on the National Qualifications Framework for International Business (2017), which was developed by representatives of the participating universities of applied sciences in collaboration with representatives from the professional field. This framework is organised around a set of themes and Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs). It comprises a total of 24 PLOs, structured under 14 themes and clustered into four domains. An overview of the PLOs is included in Appendix IV. The panel observes that the ILOs demonstrably describe the level and orientation of the programme. They are aligned with the Dublin Descriptors and correspond to NLQF level 6, thereby ensuring that graduates meet the requirements for a bachelor-level qualification in higher professional education.

The panel also establishes that the ILOs are geared to the expectations of the professional field and reflect the breadth and complexity of the international business domain. They encompass domain-specific expertise across key areas such as international marketing & sales, finance & accounting, and operations & supply chain management, thereby covering the core disciplines that characterise the field of international business. At the same time, the ILOs address broader professional capabilities, including business research ability, reflective capacity, and the development of an international and responsible professional attitude. The panel considers this combination of domain-specific knowledge and broader professional development consistent with the orientation of an International Business programme and with the requirements set by the professional field.

New profile
The panel notes that a revised National Qualifications Framework for International Business was established in 2023. This updated framework is structured around four integrated, multidisciplinary PLOs representing the specific professional activities an IB professional performs (see also Appendix IV). These overarching PLOs are supported by a Body of Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes (BoKSA), which suggests the building blocks (what students need to know, be able to do, and embody) to achieve the learning outcomes.

At the time of the site visit, the programme was in transition to align with the new and updated IB framework from 2023. The panel understands that, following the recent redevelopment of substantial parts of the curriculum and the introduction of the 5 EC structure, the programme plans to fully implement the new framework, including the accompanying BoKSA, as of the 2026-2027 academic year. The programme formulates a clear ambition in this regard: to integrate the Hanze Learning Concept (HLC), as described in the introduction, the new IB framework and its own distinctive profile into "*a single, coherent and integrated approach*".

The panel notes that the HLC provides an important foundation for this transition. Within this concept, learning is organised according to student-centred, practice-oriented and interdisciplinary principles, with a strong emphasis on ownership of learning, collaboration and societal relevance. The ILOs are translated into Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs), which guide the design and internal coherence of the curriculum.

The panel considers the programme's approach to the transition to be well-substantiated and carefully organised. It recognises "*a solid story about the transition to the new framework*". During the IB EXPO[2] at the time of the site visit, the panel was informed about the phased approach to implementation and the deliberate alignment between the existing and the new framework. The panel appreciates the structured way in which the programme is managing this process, including through dedicated project management and the use of a transition and refinement programme. In doing so, the programme makes use of, among other elements, the comparison matrix between the 2017 and 2023 profiles included in the new framework. The panel further notes that the programme has been closely involved in the development of the new framework and has already incorporated elements of it into the current curriculum. The programme indicates that "*it technically already meets the requirements of the new profile*", which further supports the feasibility of the transition.

The panel finds it convincing that the programme explicitly positions this development as "*an evolution, not a revolution*", as was aptly expressed by one of the lecturers during the site visit. In this approach, the programme builds on the strengths of the current curriculum while moving towards a more integrated and future-oriented design. Overall, the panel considers the programme's transition towards the new IB framework to be well considered, coherent and confidence-inspiring.

Distinctive profile
The International Business programme of Hanze University of Applied Sciences profiles itself under the theme "*Adding value to international business and society*", as articulated in its self-evaluation. This overarching ambition is further reflected in the mission of the IBS, which focuses on educating internationally oriented professionals who contribute to sustainable value creation while strengthening both regional and international connections.

[2] Members of the panel walked around posters exposing projects that showed the structure and outputs of the programme and team. At each poster, lecturers and/or students were present to provide further explanation, and panel members had the opportunity to engage with them in more detail.

In response to prior accreditation feedback, and as part of a sharpened strategic direction, the programme has explicitly defined its "*Groninger flavour*" around three strategic focus areas: entrepreneurship, global mindset and sustainability. These focus areas guide the programme's core activities in education, applied research and engagement with the professional field. The panel notes that this profile is consistently aligned with the Hanze Learning Concept, in which education is organised according to student-centred, practice-oriented and interdisciplinary principles. In doing so, the programme ensures that its educational design, ILOs and programme structure are coherently connected to both the institutional vision on education and its own distinctive profile.

Based on the documentation and the site visit, the panel concludes that the programme presents a clear and recognisable profile with a strong international character. It observes that, since the previous accreditation, the programme has taken active steps to strengthen what distinguishes it from other IB programmes. In particular, the focus on entrepreneurship, global mindset and sustainability is now more explicitly embedded in the curriculum. The panel values the programme's clear identity and the consistency with which its profile is translated into education.

Vision on research

The panel notes that the programme regards research ability as a core competence for future international business professionals, with a clear emphasis on critical thinking and practice-oriented problem-solving. Students are trained to become practice-oriented researchers who are able to formulate research questions, collect and analyse data in a structured and ethical manner, and translate findings into applicable insights and professional products for the professional field. The panel notes that research is explicitly embedded in the current framework. The examples below illustrate how this is reflected in a number of Programme Learning Outcomes.

Theme	PLO
Business Research	Analyse a complex business problem in an international business setting with use of adequate research design, resulting in an evidence-based, feasible solution.
Critical Thinking	Use the process of thoughtful evaluation to deliberately formulate a reasonable conclusion.
Management of Information as digital citizen	Produce management information from various data sources in an international business environment

The panel values in particular that the programme actively involves the professional field in shaping its vision on research. The programme has calibrated its approach to research with representatives from the professional field, explicitly addressing questions such as the appropriate level of research (academic versus applied), the steps students are expected to demonstrate, and where this should be reflected in the curriculum. Based on this input, the programme has further strengthened the practice-oriented character of its graduation phase, shifting towards professional products that better reflect real-world professional practice (see also Standard 3).

In addition, the panel notes that research is embedded within the broader knowledge infrastructure of the International Business School. Two professorships, "Transition towards a Circular Economy" and "International Business", focus on applied research, teaching and knowledge transfer. Together with a senior researcher and faculty members involved in research groups, they conduct practice-oriented research addressing real-world challenges and contribute to ensuring the relevance and quality of research within the programme.

International orientation (Global mindset)
The global mindset is omnipresent in the IB programme. The programme aims to prepare business professionals with a global mindset who are ready to add value to international business and society. In this context, internationalisation is both a natural and essential element of the programme, as operating from an international perspective is considered part of daily practice within IB. This is also reflected in the 2017 framework, in which 12 of the 24 PLOs are explicitly international in nature, while the remaining PLOs incorporate international components. In the updated 2023 framework, this international orientation remains prominent, for example in PLO 3 (Relationship management), which explicitly focuses on operating with and connecting to international stakeholders.

Building on the global mindset as one of its strategic focus areas, the programme has further strengthened its international orientation by formulating a set of six internationalisation goals. These include, among others, preparing students to perform in a world without borders and to connect with international stakeholders, ensuring that both students and staff develop intercultural sensitivity and competences, and embedding intercultural knowledge and skills explicitly within the curriculum. Students work in internationally diverse teams and are continuously exposed to intercultural perspectives throughout the programme. The panel concludes that internationalisation is not treated as a separate element, but is intrinsically embedded in both the ILOs and the design of the programme, and thus forms a core component of the programme's identity, as would be expected for an IB programme.

Validation of intended learning outcomes
The panel notes that the IB programme has established a structured and multi-layered approach to maintaining close contact with the professional field and ensuring the continued relevance of its ILOs. The self-evaluation presents several examples of how external feedback is systematically collected and used to inform improvements. The programme conducts regular work-field analyses and alumni research, including placement surveys and annual analyses of graduation surveys, to monitor how well the ILOs align with developments in the professional field.

In addition, the programme makes use of an Advisory Board, which meets four times a year and consists of representatives from a range of organisations and sectors. Members receive an agenda in advance, and Advisory Board members help shape the themes for subsequent meetings. Discussions typically focus on emerging trends and developments in the field, such as the impact of artificial intelligence on international business. During the site visit, the panel spoke with members of the Advisory Board and observed an engaged and well-informed group that provides relevant and forward-looking input to the programme. The discussions also yielded concrete examples of how Advisory Board input informed adjustments in the curriculum and the programme's educational approach. For example, input from Advisory Board members contributed to the introduction and further development of the professional product in the graduation phase, strengthening the practical relevance of the programme and ensuring that students are able to demonstrate their added value in a professional context. Building on this, the Advisory Board has also contributed to the programme's ongoing reflection on the balance between research skills and practical relevance in the graduation phase, with a focus on ensuring that graduates are not only able to conduct research, but also to deliver value in a professional context.

Considerations and conclusion
In its assessment, the panel takes into consideration that the IB programme presents a coherent and well-substantiated set of intended learning outcomes, firmly grounded in the national IB framework. The ILOs are clearly aligned with the Dublin Descriptors and NLQF level 6, thereby adequately reflecting the required bachelor level and professional orientation.

The panel establishes that the ILOs are demonstrably geared to the expectations of the professional field and reflect the breadth and complexity of the international business domain. The programme maintains strong and structured links with the professional field and actively involves relevant stakeholders in the ongoing validation and development of its ILOs.

The panel further observes that the programme presents a clear and recognisable profile. Its "Groninger flavour" – entrepreneurship, global mindset and sustainability – is explicitly embedded in the curriculum. As a result, the programme demonstrates a clear identity and a strong international character, supported by consistent alignment between its profile, programme design and the Hanze Learning Concept.

With regard to the transition to the updated 2023 framework, the panel recognises a solid story about the transition to the new framework. The programme's approach is well organised and consciously managed. The panel regards the new direction as coherent, forward-looking and well aligned with developments in the international business domain.

Overall, the panel concludes that the IB programme has developed solid intended learning outcomes that are aligned with national frameworks, the professional field and international requirements. On this basis, the panel judges that Standard 1 is met.

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 NVAO: 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

I. Curriculum

From PLOs to curriculum
The panel notes that the IB programme has translated the PLOs into a coherent curriculum that demonstrably covers all intended learning outcomes. To substantiate this, the programme has provided several overviews, including an overview of the PLOs per block and a summative assessment plan. Based on its review of these materials, the panel establishes that the PLOs are systematically embedded across the curriculum and that their coverage is ensured at programme level. The panel observes that the coherence and alignment of the curriculum are actively monitored and safeguarded within the programme. In this context, the self-evaluation refers to the Assurance of Learning (AoL) team, which evolved from the former curriculum committee and plays a pivotal role in safeguarding an up-to-date, consistent and integrated curriculum. The AoL team works in an evidence-based way and monitors whether course content remains relevant, whether didactics are contemporary and aligned, and whether all PLOs are covered and applied in a way that fits the programme's educational vision. During the site visit, the panel was informed that this provides the programme with clear oversight of where and how each learning outcome is addressed and assessed across the curriculum.

Programme structure
The panel observes that the IB programme is structured as a coherent four-year bachelor's programme, alongside an accelerated three-year route. The curriculum follows a clear structure in which theoretical knowledge, skills development and application are integrated throughout the programme. Students progressively build their competences by acquiring knowledge and skills and applying these in projects, often in collaboration with real companies. The structure of the programme can be summarised as follows:

- In the four-year programme, the first two years focus on building a broad foundation in international business. This phase is structured around the programme's Core Areas of Business (CAB courses), which cover key domains such as marketing, finance, operations and supply chain management. In addition, students engage in project-based learning and skills modules, some of which include elements of economics and business mathematics, as well as courses aimed at developing research skills, business communication and intercultural competence. Professional skills such as collaboration, project management and presentation skills are developed throughout this phase.
- Languages are also part of the curriculum in the first and second year of the four-year bachelor programme. In year 1, students choose one of the following languages: Dutch,

German, French or Spanish. Depending on the number of applicants, Chinese (Mandarin) may also be offered.
- In the third year, students broaden their international experience through a year abroad, consisting of a study abroad semester and a work placement.
- The fourth year focuses on deepening and specialisation through electives and concludes with the graduation phase, in which students complete a graduation project in a professional context.

The panel notes that, after establishing a solid foundation, the programme offers increasing flexibility in the later stages. In particular, the combination of the year abroad and the graduation year allows students to shape their own learning pathway and further develop themselves in specific areas of international business, while remaining aligned with the programme's intended learning outcomes.

Three-year versus four-year route
The three-year programme follows the same overall structure and learning outcomes, but is designed as an intensive route for students entering with a higher prior level. The programme requires a greater degree of self-study and assumes prior knowledge in areas such as economics and mathematics, which are therefore covered more concisely within the Fundamental Areas of Business (FAB courses). The panel notes that, where possible, the curriculum is organised to create synergy with the four-year route, while selectively placing additional focus where needed.

The panel observes that both routes lead to the same intended learning outcomes, but differ in pace and entry level. The three-year route is more intensive and assumes greater independence from students, while the four-year route places more emphasis on building the foundational knowledge base. During the site visit, the panel was informed that students in the three-year track generally have a clearer starting position and experience a lower dropout rate.

Strategic focus areas in the programme
The panel observes that the programme's three strategic focus areas – entrepreneurship, global mindset and sustainability – are reflected in the curriculum. The international orientation is embedded throughout the programme and is further elaborated below. With regard to entrepreneurship and sustainability, the panel establishes that both are present in the programme and are supported by curricular and extracurricular activities. During the site visit, students provided a clear example of a first-year project in which both elements are combined (see example below).

Example: International Business Plan Project
Entrepreneurship is integrated into coursework. One example is the International Business Plan (IBP1) project in blocks 3 and 4 of year 1 of the 4-year programme, where students transform an innovative entrepreneurial and international business idea into a viable business plan, based on rigorous primary and secondary research and analysis. The cornerstone of their plan is sustainability, specifically linked to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12: Responsible Production & Consumption, alongside an international orientation (Global mindset). Students receive guidance from coaches and experts as they develop and defend their business plans. To encourage early engagement with the professional field, selected best performing groups have the opportunity to present their projects to real company representatives in a "Dragon's Den" format.

During the EXPO, the panel encountered additional examples illustrating how these focus areas are operationalised. A student explained the opportunities available within the programme to develop and start a business, as well as the support provided in this process. The panel notes that the number of students working on projects related to their own enterprise has increased in recent years. Another student referred to the SDG Ambassador

Programme, in which students can contribute to sustainability and the Sustainable Development Goals through their projects, thesis work or extracurricular engagement. Overall, the panel concludes that the strategic focus areas are sufficiently embedded in the programme.

Development of professional skills and connection to practice
The panel has established that the programme works in a systematic way on the development of professional skills from year 1 onwards. During the site visit, lecturers explained that companies collaborate in different projects on several themes and that the programme deliberately seeks to educate students to become T-shaped professionals: internationally oriented, pragmatic and optimally prepared for professional practice. As one lecturer put it, the programme is designed so that students "*already get a flavour of what real business life is about*". In the panel's view, this rationale is convincingly reflected in the curriculum. Year 1 already includes projects such as the International Business Plan, while year 2 contains integrated projects and simulations in which students work on realistic business tasks. In year 3, students further deepen their professional skills during the year abroad through both study abroad and placement. In the graduation year, students continue this development in the compulsory course Advanced Business Consulting (ABC project), the simulation-based course Multidisciplinary Business Simulation, and ultimately the graduation project, which is carried out in collaboration with a company, one of the professorships or, in some cases, within a student's own company. The panel also notes that this practice-oriented design is likely to be reinforced further from 2026–2027 onwards, when working in learning communities will become more common in the renewed curriculum.

The panel further notes that the programme has organised this real-world connection in a more structural way through Hanze International Business Office (HIBO), which acts as a hub between students, staff and companies. According to the self-evaluation, HIBO has grown into a mechanism that connects students and companies through real-life projects and applied research and has helped to deepen cooperation with the professional field. More than 55 joint projects with external stakeholders were realised over the past four years and that these projects are aligned with the programme's strategic focus areas. Students were positive about the mediation role of HIBO. A suggestion they made during the site visit was to strengthen collaboration with startup accelerators and incubators further. The panel considers this a relevant suggestion, as such connections could offer students additional opportunities to engage with entrepreneurial practice in an early and dynamic phase.

Examples of practice-oriented projects
A good example of how students work in year 2 is the simulation game SIM1. SIM1 is an online game, where students work in international teams to make internationally focused decisions in business disciplines like Supply Chain Management, HRM, Finance and Marketing. They apply theory and skills from various different courses in practice, by running a company in a simulated business environment. By the end of the simulation, students understand the complex interrelationship between these business areas within a dynamic, international environment.

During the site visit, the panel also encountered a concrete example from the graduation semester in the course Advanced Business Consulting. One student explained during the EXPO how he and his group had carried out a consultancy assignment for a company that offers horse transport all around the world and provides export and import of horses according to a stable-to-stable principle. The group investigated export opportunities to Japan, a region in which the company was less active, and translated their findings into concrete recommendations. The panel particularly values that, according to the student, the company actually started to work with these recommendations afterwards. In the panel's view, this illustrates well how students engage with authentic business questions of direct relevance to the professional field. The panel was also positive about the longitudinal character of this project, as the student explained that subsequent student groups can

continue building on the data and recommendations already generated. This strengthens the continuity and applied value of such projects.

The panel also observes that lecturers themselves play an important role in strengthening the link with practice. The programme benefits from lecturers with relevant professional experience. During the site visit, lecturers explained that their continued engagement with the professional field helps them make the relevance of course content tangible for students. Students explicitly value this. As one student remarked during the site visit: "*I like it when lecturers speak from their perspective. I can go through the slides myself.*" One lecturer in Finance & Accounting, for example, emphasised: "*We are one of the major stakeholders for the students concerning their connection with the professional field.*" The panel also heard that lecturers' own professional engagement and willingness to keep learning sends an important signal to students that staff remain attuned to current developments.

The role of alumni also contributes to this connection with practice. The programme refers to an active alumni network, and during the site visit examples were shared of recent graduates returning quickly to the programme to contribute, for instance through guest lectures. The panel sees this as a meaningful way of maintaining a living relationship between the programme and the professional field.

The panel furthermore considers it relevant that the programme's practice orientation is also reinforced beyond the formal curriculum. Students referred, for example, to the role of the student association IBS-U, which organises a part of the introduction week and business-related events and is supported by the faculty, including financially. Although extracurricular, the panel regards this as a meaningful contribution to students' professional and community development.

Placements
Placements form an important part of the programme's practice-oriented approach. In both the three-year and four-year routes, students complete a placement during the year abroad, thereby gaining experience in an international professional context. Students report mixed experiences regarding placement guidance. During the site visit, several students indicated that the support available is eventually sufficient, but that information and guidance could be offered earlier and in a more structured way, especially for students who start their placement in the first rather than the second part of the year abroad.

The panel notes positively that the programme is already working on strengthening the feedback loop around placements. According to the self-evaluation, input from the professional field has led to adjustments in the role of the IBS supervisor, and there is now more structured contact with companies at the start of the placement through a kick-off meeting to align expectations, planning and assignments. The panel also understands that, according to the Examination Board, contact with companies has improved through the use of assessment moments such as presentations. Taken together, the panel sees that the programme is aware of the varying student experiences in this area and is taking steps to improve support and alignment.

Group work
The panel recognises the strong emphasis on group work within the programme, which is an essential element of an international classroom and closely linked to the development of intercultural and professional skills. Students work in multicultural teams throughout the curriculum, which reflects the realities of international business practice. At the same time, the panel notes that effective collaboration in group work can be challenging in practice, particularly given differences in cultural backgrounds, personalities and levels of

commitment. To support students in this, the programme has taken several measures, for example by combining group assignments with individual components and by involving coaches and academic advisors in monitoring team processes. Lecturers indicated that these situations are an inherent part of the learning process: "*these kinds of experiences prepare them for experiences in real practice*". The panel recognises the educational value of such experiences, while also noting that students participate in multiple group projects throughout the programme and may benefit from more consistent supervision and clearer expectations regarding teamwork (see also Standard 3 with regard to assessment).

Development of research skills
The panel has established that students develop a solid basis in research skills throughout the programme. These skills are built up progressively within the curriculum. In the first years, students are introduced to research through integrated projects and courses, while in year 2 this is further developed, for example in the flexible research project. In the later stages of the programme, research skills are applied in more complex and practice-oriented contexts, culminating in the graduation project. During the site visit, lecturers emphasised that the programme explicitly aims to educate practitioners with a sound basis in applied research. As they indicated, students are trained not to rely solely on intuition, but to adopt an evidence-based approach in analysing business problems. In line with the orientation of a university of applied sciences, the focus is not on developing theory, but on solving practical problems in a structured and well-substantiated manner.

Role of Artificial Intelligence
The panel discussed during the site visit how artificial intelligence (AI) is addressed within the programme. The panel notes that students are, in principle, allowed to use AI when conducting research or working on projects, but that the programme has set conditions for its use. During the site visit, the Assessment Committee indicated that recent graduates reflected that, during their studies, they mainly learned that they could use AI, but not how to use it in a responsible and meaningful way. The panel understands that the programme has taken steps in this area, for example through the involvement of the Digitalisation Team and increased attention to AI within the programme. Given its growing importance in the professional field, it would help if the programme makes (even) more explicit where and how students are prepared to use AI in a responsible and meaningful way. The panel also sees scope to broaden the programme's approach to AI. While recent efforts have focused mainly on assessment, integrating AI more fully into teaching and learning would help students develop the practical AI skills increasingly expected in international business.

Internationalisation
Inherent to the name of the programme, the panel considers it fully understandable that, in line with the agreements made within the National Platform of International Business programmes, the programme is offered in English and carries an English-language title. This choice enables the programme to attract international students and staff and to create an international learning community. According to the panel, this international learning community contributes to the development of students' intercultural competencies, as students work together while blending different perspectives and cultures.

The panel observes that the programme's international character is clearly reflected in key elements of the curriculum. A central component is the mandatory year abroad, in which students complete both a study abroad semester and a placement, together amounting to 60 EC. In addition, specific courses contribute to this international orientation, such as 'Global Business Behaviour' in year 4, in which students reflect on their international experiences and develop intercultural competences. With regard to the year abroad, the panel notes that students report varying experiences in relation to guidance, particularly when it comes to

finding a placement and support during their stay abroad. Students indicated that this can be challenging and that support is not always experienced as equally visible or consistent. The panel observes that the programme has taken steps to improve this, for example by developing a database of companies and by strengthening connections with the professional field. Lecturers also provided a valuable nuance during the site visit, emphasising that students are expected to take responsibility for finding an appropriate placement and that this sometimes requires them to broaden their perspective beyond a specific city or country. The panel understands this as a careful balance between guidance and student independence, while noting that more consistent support and communication could further strengthen this component.

In addition to these curricular elements, the programme deliberately fosters intercultural awareness within the learning environment. Students work in multicultural teams throughout the programme, with group compositions consciously designed to include different nationalities and backgrounds. Both students and lecturers indicated that this approach is applied consistently, particularly in the first year, where groups are composed to ensure diversity and where students gradually learn to take this into account themselves. Courses focusing on intercultural communication and professional skills provide the theoretical basis for understanding cultural differences, which students then apply in practice. As one student explained, "*we know that we are different, but not why. We learn the theoretical frameworks behind those differences*."

The panel further notes that the international learning environment is reinforced by the diversity of the teaching staff and their professionalisation. Mandatory trainings, such as the Intercultural Competence Learning Lab (ICLL) and Intercultural Didactics Learning Lab (IDLL), support intercultural sensitivity and the development of a global mindset. Lecturers indicated that this helps them to make cultural differences explicit in their teaching and to support students in navigating diverse perspectives.

Student support and guidance
The panel is positive about the structure and variety of student support within the programme. It recognises a well-developed system of guidance, in which different roles – including Academic Advisors in year 1, Main Phase Study Advisors in later years, and additional support services such as counsellors and special needs advisors – provide students with accessible and layered support throughout their studies. Students confirmed during the site visit that the Academic Advisor functions as a first point of contact and that guidance shifts gradually from being initiated by the programme in the first year to greater student responsibility in later stages.

The panel values the strong student-engagement structures and the proactive initiatives taken by the programme, in particular through the Student Engagement Team. This team not only fulfils a coordinating role, but also initiates targeted projects to improve student success, for example by analysing reasons for dropout and implementing measures to address study delay. The panel notes that Study Hall, as presented during the EXPO, is a concrete example of such an initiative. This on-campus support programme for students with study delay focuses on study progress, motivation and peer support, and was described by both staff and students as an effective way to help students get back on track. The panel further notes that these efforts have contributed to improved student satisfaction and a significant reduction in dropout rates.

Overall, the panel concludes that the programme convincingly presents a rich and inclusive learning environment that is well aligned with its international profile. It appreciates the programme's commitment to community building and inclusion, which contributes to a

supportive environment that is experienced by students and alumni as having a clear “home feel”.

Transition to the new curriculum (2026–2027)
As indicated in the introduction and in Standard 1, the programme will implement the new national IB profile as of September 2026. The panel observes that this transition is not a complete overhaul, but rather a continuation and refinement of the developments already initiated. The introduction of the 5 EC structure and the step-by-step redevelopment of the curriculum have created a solid foundation for this next phase. The panel notes the strong internal coherence in the way this development is approached. During the site visit, lecturers emphasised a shared sense of ownership for the intended learning outcomes and indicated that collaboration within the team is well developed, enabling them to address learning gaps collectively. The main room for further development, according to the panel, lies in strengthening coherence and visibility. As the programme continues to develop and transition to the new curriculum, there is an opportunity to present the learning journey in a more connected and recognisable way for students, particularly in showing how the different stages relate to one another and how learning progresses over time.

II. Teaching staff
Based on the overview provided, the panel establishes that lecturers possess relevant subject-specific expertise as well as appropriate didactical qualifications. Approximately half of the staff has an international background, which contributes to the international learning environment. Proficiency in English is a prerequisite for all lecturers. In addition, all staff members obtain the University Teaching Qualification (BDB), including the Basic Teaching Qualification for assessment (BKE). At the time of the site visit, three staff members had obtained the Senior Teaching Qualification for assessment (SKE), while two others were in the process of obtaining this qualification. New lecturers are supported through a structured onboarding process, including coaching and a buddy system.

The panel observes that professionalisation is structurally embedded and supported through a wide range of concrete activities. Table 9 of the self-evaluation shows that lecturers can participate in training and development activities such as applied research training, Design Thinking, ANS online testing, and workshops on assessment and blended learning. In addition, lecturers engage in external conferences and dedicated programmes, such as KAOSpilot training in Denmark and internal courses such as “Veranderkracht” (power of change). Specific attention is also given to emerging topics, including AI, which is addressed through internal workshops, inspiration days and ongoing discussions within teams. Specific competences required for teaching in an international context are addressed through mandatory training (ICLL and IDLL), as described earlier in the report under internationalisation. In addition, lecturers can participate in targeted courses such as “Diversity in the Classroom” and support activities for working with neurodiverse students. The panel notes that this supports lecturers in responding to the diverse backgrounds and learning styles of students.

The panel further values that lecturers are actively encouraged to maintain their connection with professional practice. This includes opportunities for professional engagement, such as internships within companies, and the presence of “hybrid” lecturers who combine teaching with work in the professional field or applied research. During the site visit, lecturers provided concrete examples of such activities, including involvement in start-up networks and applied research projects. According to the panel, this contributes to keeping the curriculum aligned with current developments in international business.

Finally, the panel observes that the Management Team takes a proactive and structured role in supporting staff, including in managing workload during ongoing curriculum developments.

The phased implementation of changes, in combination with regular communication and opportunities for informal exchange among staff – such as catch-up lunches and newsletters – contributes to a manageable workload and a strong sense of community and shared ownership within the team. According to the panel, this results in an engaged and self-starting team that actively contributes to the further development of the programme.

III. Programme-specific facilities

The programme does not have facilities that are exclusively dedicated to the IB programme, but makes use of the broader facilities of the International Business School within Hanze University of Applied Sciences. The programme is located at the Zernike Campus, in the Van OlstBorg building, which provides the necessary facilities to deliver the programme. In addition, the learning process is supported by a digital learning environment (Brightspace) and various applications for study progress, communication and scheduling.

Considerations and conclusion

The panel concludes that the IB programme offers a strong and rich teaching-learning environment that enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The curriculum is coherent and thoughtfully structured, with a clear build-up from knowledge development in the early years towards increasing application, professional development and international experience in the later phases of the programme. In the panel's view, the programme clearly delivers what it has to deliver.

A clear strength of the programme lies in its strong links with the professional field. Practice-oriented learning is embedded throughout the curriculum through projects, simulations, the year abroad, placements and the graduation phase. The panel particularly appreciates the way in which students already encounter realistic professional situations early in the programme and gradually develop into internationally oriented and pragmatic young professionals.

The panel is also positive about the programme's international and inclusive learning environment. Internationalisation is not an add-on, but forms an integral part of the curriculum, the composition of the student and staff population, and the educational approach as a whole. The panel noted clear coherence among lecturers in the way intercultural awareness is addressed in the programme. Lecturers show a high understanding of intercultural backgrounds and contribute actively to an environment in which students learn to work in diverse teams and to develop intercultural awareness and competences. This is fully in line with the nature and ambitions of an International Business programme.

The panel further values the programme's extensive student support. It encountered a supportive environment in which students feel seen and supported, and it appreciates the wide range of advisory and support roles, the strong student-engagement structures, and initiatives such as Study Hall, which the panel considers meaningful and well embedded. The panel also finds that information, guidance and accessibility arrangements adequately support the diverse student population. The programme demonstrates a clear commitment to community-building and inclusion, which is also reflected in improved student satisfaction and reduced dropout rates.

The panel is very positive about the quality of the teaching staff. Lecturers collectively possess the required expertise in terms of subject matter, didactics and professional experience. The panel especially values that lecturers continue to develop themselves actively, both in educational and professional terms. Their continued engagement with practice, including through hybrid forms of teaching and professional involvement, helps to keep the curriculum current and relevant for students.

The panel also observes that the programme is navigating several developments simultaneously, including the transition to the new IB framework and the further implementation of the Hanze Learning Concept. The panel sees a reflective and development-oriented programme that is fully aware of these themes and already working on them. In this context, the panel identifies several logical next steps, including making the coherence of the learning journey even more visible to students, further strengthening consistency in support and supervision in certain parts of the programme, and continuing staff and curriculum development with regard to the meaningful use of AI in teaching and assessment.

These points for further development do not detract from the panel's overall positive judgement. On the contrary, they fit a programme that is clearly in motion, knows where it wants to go, and has already taken important steps in that direction. Overall, the panel concludes that the programme provides a convincing, supportive and internationally oriented teaching-learning environment, with strong links to professional practice and a committed and competent teaching team. On this basis, the panel judges that Standard 2 is met.

4.3. Student assessment

Standard 3: *The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.*
Explanation NVAO: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. The Board of Examiners carries out its legal duties and exercises its legal powers.

Findings

System of assessment and grading
The panel establishes that the programme has a structured and coherent system of assessment. As described in the IBS Assessment Policy and the assessment plan, the overall system of assessment and grading, as well as the main assessment principles and methods, apply to both the four-year and the three-year route of the programme. The programme uses a broad and appropriate range of assessment methods, including written exams, project assignments, oral examinations and presentations, portfolios, business reports and simulation games. The assessment vision is not limited to the selective function of assessment, but also aims to support student growth, feedback and continuous development. In the panel's view, this provides a clear and well-considered foundation for the programme's assessment system.

The panel further values that the overall structure of assessment has become more manageable and more coherent. The programme has deliberately simplified an earlier, heavier assessment structure by introducing a 5 EC structure and, in principle, one assessment per 5 EC course. The panel values this reduction in assessment pressure and considers continued monitoring of sufficient coverage of the intended learning outcomes important. During the site visit, students confirmed that this has made the assessment load more manageable. One student explained that, in the past, he could face six exams in one week and, on one occasion, even nine assessments in a single week, whereas the current structure is experienced as "*doable*". The panel sees this as a positive and concrete improvement in the professionalisation of the assessment programme.

Assessment methods and alignment with the curriculum
The panel notes that the assessment programme is well aligned with the structure and aims of the curriculum. The assessment plan shows how the programme combines theoretical assessments, skills-based assessments and applied projects across the years of study. In the early years, written exams are used alongside projects and skills assignments to build a foundation in core business areas, professional communication, intercultural skills and applied research. In the year abroad, assessment focuses on the application of knowledge and professional skills in authentic settings. In the graduation year, students work with practice-oriented assessments such as Advanced Business Consulting, Multidisciplinary Business Simulation and the individual Graduation Project (as mentioned earlier in standard 2). According to the panel, this demonstrates a clear and well-considered match between assessment methods, programme phase and intended learning outcomes.

The panel also values the programme's use of oral components, such as presentations, defences and individual questioning, alongside written work. In the panel's view, these oral elements strengthen the reliability of assessment by allowing students to explain and justify their choices and to demonstrate that they have achieved the intended learning outcomes themselves. This is particularly relevant in a programme in which many assessments are project-based and professionally oriented.

Group work and individual accountability
The panel observes that collaborative assessment is a substantial element of the programme's assessment strategy. From the assessment plan, the panel concludes that group work is consistently combined with an individual component. This can take the form of an individual defence, an individual assignment, an individual process result, or an individual contribution within a group product. The panel considers this an important safeguard, as it ensures that students are assessed not only as a group but also on their own achievement.

During the site visit, students and lecturers explained that the programme also uses group contracts, peer evaluation and self-evaluation to support accountability in group work. Lecturers indicated that these evaluations are taken into account in grading and that, while the same grade is often awarded to all group members, differentiation is possible if a student functions differently within the team. The panel appreciates that the programme has developed several instruments to support fair assessment in collaborative settings.

At the same time, the panel heard from students that the practical follow-up on these arrangements can vary. One student expressed this as follows: "*Group contracts are a good concept, but if they are not followed, they have no use.*" Students also suggested that reducing differences between teachers in expectations and follow-up would further strengthen the assessment experience, while recognising that the programme is already working on this. The panel sees this as a relevant point for further strengthening.

The graduation programme and the redesigned Graduation Project
The panel considers the recent redesign of the graduation phase a relevant and positive development. Instead of the previous four minors, students now complete a set of compulsory courses alongside a choice of eight electives. In addition, the Graduation Project (GPJ) has shifted from a strongly research-based thesis towards a more practice-oriented professional product, such as a financial analysis, partner strategy or feasibility study, thereby better reflecting the intended learning outcomes and the needs of the professional field.

The panel values that the graduation semester contains preparatory elements that support students in moving towards the final graduation project. One of the students at the EXPO described the Advanced Business Consulting course as a dress rehearsal for the Graduation Project, in which students practise consultancy and research-related skills in a group setting before applying them individually. During the site visit, lecturers also explained that some elements of the research setup, such as literature review and methodology, have recently been combined more explicitly into one integrated section, because this was considered more applicable and meaningful in relation to professional practice.

The panel further notes that the Graduation Project has also been adapted in response to developments around AI. The weighting in the Graduation Project has shifted to 50% for the report, 20% for the presentation and 30% for the defence, partly in response to the need to authenticate students' individual competence in the context of generative AI. During the site visit, lecturers and members of the Assessment Committee confirmed that the defence now plays a more meaningful role than before and is no longer treated as a formality. According to the panel, this reflects a clear and relevant response to current developments and contributes to safeguarding the integrity and validity of end-level assessment.

The panel also considered the way in which graduation projects are assessed. It notes that the assessment of graduation projects is generally transparent and consistent. In the reviewed dossiers, the involvement of two assessors, the use of clear criteria and the provision of written feedback support the traceability of grades. The panel also notes positively that the programme has calibration procedures in place for third-marker cases. Although panel members noted

some variation in the practical application of assessment rules, they understand that the programme is in a transition phase and see this as a natural part of ongoing development. This does not detract from the panel's overall positive view of the graduation assessment.

Safeguarding the quality of assessment
The panel concludes that the structure in place to ensure the quality of assessment is strong. The programme uses several complementary safeguards to monitor and improve assessment quality. These include:

- the four-eyes principle in the design and checking of assessments,
- the use of qualified assessors,
- calibration as part of the regular PDCA cycle, and
- post-exam evaluations where pass rates are notably high or low.

In the panel's view, these arrangements provide a solid basis for the validity and reliability of assessment. The panel also notes that all relevant assessment information is available to students in the handbooks on the digital learning environment, which supports the transparency of expectations and requirements. In addition, the programme actively uses evaluation and monitoring data to strengthen assessment quality in practice. Lecturers referred during the site visit to "*temperature checks*" and a broader Q&A cycle with students to identify issues during a module or semester and to make adjustments where needed. Together with the alignment sessions and calibration moments discussed below, this illustrates an active and responsive quality culture around assessment.

The panel notes that calibration is clearly taken seriously within the programme and takes place at different levels. At module level, lecturers organise alignment sessions to "*make sure that we all look from the same perspective*", particularly where several coaches or assessors are involved. In the graduation phase, calibration takes a more explicit form. During the site visit, lecturers referred to a "*full blown calibration moment between the hand in moment and the interviews*", which the panel considers an important illustration of the seriousness with which the programme approaches consistency and shared judgement in high-stakes assessment. The panel also notes positively that assessors are expected to attend regular calibration sessions.

Role of the Examination Board and appointment of examiners
The panel met with the Examination Board and concludes that it fulfils its statutory tasks in a serious and active manner. The Board safeguards the level of the programme, appoints examiners, deals with irregularities, fraud and exemptions, and determines whether graduates meet the intended learning outcomes. Clear requirements are also in place for the appointment of examiners. Examiners must hold a BKE or BDB qualification, new lecturers without these qualifications may not independently act as examiners, and new GPJ assessors start as co-markers before taking on a first-marker role. In the panel's view, these arrangements provide appropriate safeguards for the quality of assessors and thus of assessment itself.

During the site visit, the chair of the Examination Board expressed this proactive stance very clearly: "*If the curriculum is changing, we want to be involved during the transition process.*" The panel considers this an important signal. It indicates that the Examination Board does not view its role narrowly or reactively, but seeks to be involved early in developments that affect the validity, reliability and transparency of assessment. The panel values this sense of ownership and considers it confidence-inspiring in a period in which the programme is undergoing several developments at the same time.

AI and assessment
The panel observes that AI has become a major and explicit theme within the programme's thinking about assessment. Written assignments are increasingly combined with oral

components such as presentations and defences, and during the site visit the chair of the Assessment Committee summarised the challenge clearly by stating: "*we need to change our mindset of assessment*." The panel considers this an important and appropriate recognition. It also heard that the programme is actively investing in AI literacy among staff, for example through two team days devoted to the topic and through broader discussions on how AI can be used in an ethical and responsible way in education and assessment. In the panel's view, this illustrates a programme that is not only responding to AI as a risk to assessment integrity, but is also working to strengthen the knowledge and awareness of its team.

The panel further notes that the programme is already taking concrete steps. During the site visit, members of the Examination Board and Assessment Committee explained that more emphasis is now placed on the logical structure of student work, the justification of arguments and the verification of references. They also referred to more structured question sets for defences and regular meetings with supervisors in the graduation phase. The panel sees this as evidence of a programme that is actively responding to AI-related developments.

The panel nevertheless recognises that this remains an area in development. It agrees that further steps will be needed to remain future-proof and sees AI as an important theme for continued development. This does not detract from the panel's positive judgement on the current assessment system; rather, it reflects a programme that is clearly aware of a changing context and is already working on an appropriate response.

Considerations and conclusion
The panel concludes that the programme has an adequate and well-organised system of student assessment in place. Assessment is clearly structured and well managed, and the programme uses a broad and appropriate range of methods. The panel is positive about the diversity of methods, the balance between formative and summative assessment, and the way in which the assessment programme supports both learning and decision-making. The move to a 5 EC structure, with in principle one assessment per 5 EC course, has made the system more manageable and coherent for students and staff alike.

The panel further values the programme's strong safeguards around assessment quality. It considers the structure in place to ensure quality to be strong, with measures such as the four-eyes principle, the use of qualified assessors, regular calibration and the active use of evaluation and monitoring data. The panel appreciates in particular that calibration takes place at different levels within the programme, both at module level and in the graduation phase, and that all relevant assessment information is available to students through the handbooks on the digital learning environment. The panel is also positive about the role of the Examination Board, which takes its statutory responsibilities seriously and seeks to be involved actively in developments that affect the quality and integrity of assessment. The same applies to the programme's response to AI. The panel values that the programme recognises AI as a theme that requires a broader reconsideration of assessment practice and is already investing in AI literacy, ethical awareness and new approaches to assessment design.

The panel acknowledges the substantial progress the programme has made in simplifying, modernising and professionalising its assessment system. The redesigned Graduation Project demonstrates a clear commitment to alignment with professional practice, while the increased use of oral components and defences reflects a thoughtful response to current developments, including AI. The panel also sees some logical points for further strengthening, such as reducing differences between teachers in expectations and follow-up, giving further attention to the supervision of group work, and continuing the development of a future-proof approach to AI in assessment. These points do not detract from the panel's overall positive judgement. On this basis, the panel judges that Standard 3 is met.

4.4 Achieved learning outcomes

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

Selection of graduation projects
To assess whether the intended learning outcomes are achieved, the panel reviewed a representative sample of graduation projects. Based on an overview of all graduates from the past two academic years, the panel selected fifteen graduation dossiers: five from 2023–2024 and ten from 2024–2025. The sample was composed to reflect the diversity of the programme and included students from both the four-year and three-year programmes, as well as one Honours student. In addition, the range of passing grades was proportionally represented in the selection.

Quality of graduation projects
Based on the review of the selected graduation projects, the panel concludes that the final works are of bachelor level, professionally oriented and clearly embedded in an international business context. The projects address real-life business challenges, follow a coherent research process and result in applicable recommendations or professional products, thereby reflecting the expected profile of an entry-level international business professional.

The panel finds that the level achieved is consistent across the sample. Some projects are stronger than others in analytical depth, use of multiple data sources and the elaboration of implementable recommendations, but all reviewed projects achieved the required bachelor level. The panel did not assess any of the reviewed works as insufficient.

At the same time, the panel observed some variation in methodological depth between cohorts, which appears to be related to the programme's recent shift towards more diverse and practice-oriented professional products (see Standard 3). In a number of projects, methodological choices or the depth of justification could have been elaborated more fully, while in other projects the integration of theory and analysis was particularly strong. The panel notes that these differences are generally reflected in the grading.

Functioning of graduates in professional practice and further education
In addition to the graduation projects, the panel considered information on the functioning of graduates in the labour market and in further education. Based on discussions with students, alumni and representatives of the professional field during the site visit, the panel concludes that graduates are well prepared for professional practice.

- During the site visit, students and recent graduates indicated that the programme provides them with confidence, particularly in operating in English and in international contexts. They reported having acquired a broad understanding of international business and the ability to apply this knowledge in practice. One alumna also explained that she had continued her studies at the University of Groningen and that the IB programme had provided a good foundation for her follow-up study.
- Representatives from the professional field confirm this picture. They describe graduates as professionals with a broad international perspective who are able to operate effectively in diverse contexts. Employers indicate that they perceive IB students as junior professionals who can deliver value from the start, and that they demonstrate independence and a hands-on approach in their work and that "*they take initiative*".

- The outcomes of alumni research further support these findings. Alumni generally transition smoothly into the labour market and highlight that the programme prepared them well for international careers and for performing in their current roles. A large majority indicate that the programme has been important in securing employment and in functioning professionally, particularly in internationally oriented environments. The panel also notes that alumni frequently operate in international or internationally connected roles, both within the Netherlands and abroad, and make use of competencies such as intercultural communication, English language proficiency and collaboration in diverse teams in their daily work.

Taken together, the evidence from graduation projects, employer feedback and alumni outcomes provides a consistent and convincing picture that graduates of the IB programme achieve the intended learning outcomes and are able to function effectively in professional practice and, where applicable, in further education.

Considerations and conclusion
In its assessment, the panel takes into consideration that the IB programme demonstrates in a convincing manner that students achieve the intended learning outcomes. Based on a representative and well-composed sample of graduation projects, the panel establishes that all reviewed works meet the required bachelor level and reflect the professional orientation of the programme.

The panel notes that the graduation projects are characterised by their practice-oriented nature, their clear connection to real-life business challenges and their relevance to the international business context. While some variation in methodological depth is observed, this is understandable in light of the programme's transition towards more diverse professional products and is generally in line with the grading.

In addition, the panel finds that graduates function well in professional practice and, where applicable, in further education. Feedback from students, alumni and representatives of the professional field consistently indicates that graduates possess a broad international perspective, demonstrate confidence in operating in international contexts and are able to contribute effectively as entry-level professionals.

Overall, the panel concludes that the programme provides sufficient and convincing evidence that the intended learning outcomes are achieved. On this basis, the panel judges that Standard 4 is met.

5. OVERALL CONCLUSION

The panel concludes that the International Business programme at Hanze University of Applied Sciences is a mature and recognisably international programme with a clear identity, a strong sense of purpose and a committed community of staff and students. Throughout the site visit, the panel encountered a programme in which people clearly want to be, work and learn together. This “home feeling” and sense of belonging are not incidental, but form part of a wider culture in which students feel supported, staff are engaged, and the international classroom is experienced as a real and meaningful learning environment. The panel also values that the programme combines this strong community with a reflective and development-oriented attitude. It has seen a programme that is actively working on its future relevance through the transition to the new IB profile, the further implementation of the Hanze Learning Concept, the strengthening of learning communities and the ongoing reflection on AI, while at the same time remaining clearly connected to its own mission of “*adding value to international business and society*”.

Taken as a whole, the panel concludes that the bachelor’s programme in International Business at Hanze University of Applied Sciences meets all four quality standards for higher professional education, as set out in the NVAO’s Assessment Framework for Programmes with Institutional Accreditation. Based on the NVAO’s decision rules, the panel issues a positive overall assessment of the programme, for both the four-year and the three-year route.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The panel sees three clear recommendations for further strengthening the programme. These build directly on the observations made under the standards and concern logical next steps in a programme that is already clearly aware of these themes and actively working on them.

- **Further strengthen the coherence and visibility of the learning journey.**
  The panel recommends that the programme continue its current development work in a way that makes the curriculum logic even more transparent and recognisable for students. In particular, there is an opportunity to present the learning journey in a more connected and recognisable way, especially in showing how the different stages of the programme relate to one another and how learning progresses over time.

- **Further strengthen the consistency of supervision, expectations and communication in group work and during periods spent abroad.**
  The panel recommends that the programme continue to improve the consistency of supervision across modules, group projects and periods spent abroad. Students value these parts of the programme greatly, but support during study abroad and placement deserves continued attention. In relation to group work, the panel recommends clarifying expectations regarding teamwork and individual accountability, and ensuring consistent follow-up when freeriding occurs. While the programme already adds individual components to group assessments, a clearer and more consistently applied approach in this area would further strengthen the assessment of teamwork.

- **Make AI more explicit in both teaching and assessment.**
  The panel recommends that the programme move beyond a primarily assessment-focused approach to AI by embedding AI literacy more explicitly as a curriculum theme and professional competence. This includes helping students understand how AI can be used in a responsible, ethical and meaningful way in international business, while continuing to reflect on the implications of AI for assessment design and integrity.

APPENDIX I Overview of judgements

Results overview Hanze University of Applied Sciences Bachelor programme in International Business	
Standard	**Judgement**
Standard 1. Intended Learning Outcomes	Meets the standard
Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment	Meets the standard
Standard 3. Student assessment	Meets the standard
Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes	Meets the standard
Overall conclusion	**Positive**

APPENDIX II Site visit, working methods and rules of decision

Programme 7 April 2026

08:30	Arrival Panel / Welcome
09:00	Session with management
09:45	Internal meeting panel
10:00	Session with lecturers
11:00	Internal meeting panel
11:15	Session with students
12:15	Lunch
13:00	IB Expo (of projects)
13:45	Internal meeting panel
14:00	Session with Exam Board and Assessment Committee
14:45	Internal meeting panel
15:00	Session on internationalisation
15:45	Session with Alumni & Advisory Board
16:30	Pending issues: MT members available MT
16:45	Internal meeting panel
17:30	Final evaluation and feedback for all staff All participants

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
In compliance with the NVAO regulations the audit panel prior to the audit decided on the composition of the delegations (auditees) in consultation with the course management and on the basis of the points of focus that had arisen from the panel's analysis of the course documents.

Auditing process
The following procedure was adopted. The panel studied the documents regarding the programme (see Annex Documents reviewed) and a number of theses. The panel secretary organised input from the auditors and distributed the preliminary findings among the panel members prior to the audit. A preparatory meeting of the panel was held before the site visit.

The audit was initially scheduled for 5 February 2026, but had to be postponed due to extreme weather conditions. Following consultation with the programme, the site visit was rescheduled for 7 April 2026. As a result of this postponement, two changes were made to the composition of the panel. Biljana Pešalj, who had already studied six graduation projects, reviewed the accreditation dossier in full and shared her findings and questions with the secretary and the other panel members during the online preparatory meeting, was replaced by Vladimir Ignjatovic. Carla López Segura, who was no longer available on the new audit date due to an examination, was replaced by Nick van Hattem. The questions she had already submitted were also taken into account.

In assessing the relevant full-time programme, the panel applied the *Assessment Framework for the Accreditation System of Higher Education in the Netherlands*, as established by the NVAO (in effect since 1 April 2024). This framework specifies the standards that an audit panel

must address during a programme assessment, as well as the criteria on which the panel must base its judgement of the programme.

The site visit focused on verifying the findings of the document analysis and on gathering additional information about the content of the curriculum. This was achieved through discussions with representatives of the programme, students, and the professional field, which took the form of 'peer-to-peer dialogues'.

Verification by the audit panel took place by addressing the same topics on multiple occasions with different groups, by reviewing additional documentation, and (where housing and material facilities were concerned) through direct observation.

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.

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 attended the open consultation session.

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.

Rules of decision
According to the NVAO Accreditation Decision Rules, a standard can score "satisfactory", "partially satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory". Hobéon has applied the decision rules as listed in the "Assessment Framework for the Dutch Higher Education Accreditation System" (2024).
If there are different variants of a programme (e.g. full-time, part-time and dual), the assessment must show that the quality of each variant is guaranteed on the basis of the standards set out in the relevant assessment framework in order to arrive at a positive final assessment of the programme. The final assessment of the programme is either "positive", "positive with conditions" or "negative".

If a programme is offered under a single programme code (ISAT) at multiple locations, the programme can only be considered for accreditation if the assessment shows that each location meets the quality standards specified in the relevant assessment framework.

Programme assessment of institutions without ITK accreditation
The final assessment of a programme is positive in any case if all standards score "compliant".

The final assessment of a programme is positive with conditions in any case if
Standard 1 is compliant and a maximum of three standards score "partially compliant", in which case the audit panel recommends imposing conditions.

The final assessment of a programme is negative in any case if:
- one or more standards score "does not meet"
- standard 1 scores "partially meets"
- one to three standards score "partially meets", whereby the audit panel does not recommend imposing conditions;
- three or more standards score "partially compliant".

APPENDIX III Documents reviewed

List of documents examined

Basic documents

- Self-Evaluation Report Bachelor's Programme in International Business
- Hanze Strategic Plan 2021-2026 "Engaged and Versatile"
- Hanze Educational Concept, Vision on Learning
- IBS Governance (September 2024)
- IBS Education Policy 2025 "Supporting Student Growth through Education"
- IBS Assessment Policy 2025 "Supporting Student Growth and Effective Evaluation"
- National Qualifications Framework International Business 2017
- National Qualifications Framework International Business 2023
- Suggested Body of Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes Framework International Business 2023
- Overview IBS Staff 2025-2026
- IBS Overview Committees, Coordinators & Teams 2024-2025 and 2025-2026
- List of examiners 2023-2024, 2024-2025 and 2025-2026
- Assessment Plan 2024-2025
- IBS Curriculum and Learning Outcomes, Overview PLOs in courses and at end level
- Overview PLOs per block IB Programme, 3yr and 4 yr bachelor
- Quality Assurance Policy IBS 2025-2026
- IBS First-100-days & dropout analysis
- Hanze Guide to Assessment (March 2024)
- Teaching and Examination Regulations Bachelor's programme International Business (full-time. Four-year programme and three-year programme) 2025-2026
- IBS Graduation Project Handbook 2023-2024, 2024-2025 and 2025-2026
- Alumni Reflections on IBS Programmes and Career Readiness: "Insights from Bachelor's and Master's Graduates" (April 2025)
- IB Alumni Study: "The Role and Impact of English-taught International Business Programmes" (May 2025)
- Representative selection of course and assessment materials.
    - 3yr bachelor year 1:
    - Fundamental Areas of International Business 3;
    - International Talent Management Cycle
    - Advanced Skills in International Business 1
    - 4yr bachelor year 1:
    - Core Areas of International Business 3;
    - International Business Plan
    - Intercultural and Professional Skills in International Business 1
    - 4yr bachelor year 2:
    - Core Areas of International Business 5;
    - Flexible Research Project,
    - Spanish 3
    - Placement reports
- Representative selection of manuals, reference books and other learning materials.

Additional documents

- Overview NSE
- IBS Year plan 2024 + 2025
- Annual report Examination Board 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 including management response
- IBS Educational Evaluation report 2024-2025:
    - 3yr bachelor year 1, period 3

    - 4yr bachelor year 1, period 2
- Graduation semester, period 1
- GPJ Topics overview. Started Academic Year 2024-2025
- Graduation Project Benchmarking with IB Schools
- IBS Guidelines for the Appointment of Examiners
- Placement Handbook 2024-2025
- Placement Intercultural (IC) Assignments Handbook 2024-2025
- Hanze International Business Office (HIBO). Products and services
- IBS Report Writing Standards (2025)
- IBS Research Policy 2025
- IBS Report "Understanding Student Engagement at Hanze International Business School: A Sequential Mixed-Method Study" (August 2025)
- Report Midterm audit IB programme (part I June 2023 – part II November 2023)

Additional documents for the distinctive feature Internationalisation
- Self-Evaluation Report CeQuInt Bachelor's Programme in International Business
- Diploma Supplement
- IBS Activities with impact – overview of all projects and activities from the past three years that contribute to internationalisation
- Incoming and outgoing students: location of placement companies Hanze IB Programme
- Representative selection of study abroad reports from partner institutions in France, Germany, Hong Kong, Spain and Taiwan

Following NVAO regulations the panel prior to the audit has studied fifteen students' graduation works. 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.

APPENDIX IV Learning outcomes of the programme

IB Framework 2017

Ways of Thinking		
Critical Thinking	WT1	Use the process of thoughtful evaluation to deliberately formulate a reasonable conclusion.
Innovation & Creativity	WT2	Create innovative ideas in a changing business environment in a systematic fashion.
International Business Awareness	WT3	Analyse patterns in global macro-economic factors and policies that drive international trade and business development.
Ways of Working		
International Business Communication	WW4	Communicate (business) messages effectively and persuasively using advanced English to an (un)informed audience.
	WW5	Optional: Use one or two additional languages to facilitate international business.
Collaboration	WW6	Collaborate effectively with different kinds of stakeholders in different cultural, organisational and political landscapes to contribute to achieving agreed goals.
Management of Information as digital citizen	WW7	Produce management information from various data sources in an international business environment.
Living in the world		
Personal & Professional Development	LW8	Express reflections on one's personal development with the aim of personal growth.
	LW9	Respond appropriately to an unfamiliar, or unexpectedly changing, business environment.
Ethical & Social Responsibility	LW10	Formulate one's own position concerning ethical and social responsibility in a professional environment.
Intercultural Proficiency	LW11	Mitigate the pitfalls of cultural differences in business and social contexts
	LW12	Display willingness to work with people from other cultures and to work in countries with different cultural backgrounds.
	LW13	Use appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication in an intercultural setting.
	LW14	Assess the effect of cultural differences on organisational behaviour and strategic choices.
Tools for working and management		
Marketing & Sales	TWM15	Develop a well-founded marketing plan to support the creation of value for international customers.
	TWM16	Use appropriate sales techniques in support of durable customer relationships.
	TWM17	Incorporate developments of the digital landscape in a marketing strategy.
Finance & Accounting	TWM18	Evaluate financial performance of the organisation from different stakeholders' perspectives.
	TWM19	Recommend financing possibilities in a dynamic international environment
Operations & supply chain management	TWM20	Evaluate operations processes within and between organisations.
	TWM21	Manage operations processes within and between organisations.
Organisation & People	TWM22	Draft the strategic cycle of part(s) of the organisation (process and content).
	TWM23	Assess the impact of change on the organisation.

Business Research	TWM24	Analyse a complex business problem in an international business setting with use of adequate research design, resulting in an evidence-based, feasible solution.

IB Framework 2023

The International Business Professional facilitates sustainable international (global) business development. They do so by:

1. defining international business opportunities and recommending possible strategies for the organisation to create sustainable multi-sided value for stakeholders (PLO1);
2. contributing to business (systems) transitions and transformations in order to optimise sustainable international business practices (PLO2);
3. cultivating and managing internal and external relationship with culturally diverse stakeholders in a responsible manner to achieve (mutual) business goals (PLO3);

To do this successfully, they need to:

4. manage themselves in a complex surrounding and develop their professionalism for the benefit of the organisation, the field of international business and themselves (PLO4).

PLO 1: International business opportunities

The IB professional defines international business opportunities and recommends possible strategies for the organisation to create sustainable multi-sided value for stakeholders.

IB professionals thoroughly investigate the internal and external environment of the organisation on an international scale. They actively look for and apply multiple perspectives and empathic skills to their research, observations, questionings, investigations and analyses, continuously postponing judgment. They collect data regarding trends and developments, the context, the market and the customer on an international scale, using appropriate current tools, including digital and technological ones. They translate these data into opportunities and threats for the organisation based on its characteristics, and leverage these with the organisation's strengths and weaknesses to determine possible strategies that create multi-sided value, in consultation and collaboration with experts from various disciplines. As IB professionals always consider social, ecological, ethical, economic and cultural aspects, they conduct impact analyses of the possible strategies both on the local (foreign) society and the organisation itself in order to determine which are viable, desirable and sustainable.

Examples of professional deliverables related to PLO 1:

- Analysis: market analysis, competitor analysis, trend analysis, (wicked) problem analysis, SWOT analysis, country/region analysis, cultural analysis, geopolitical analysis, macro-economic analysis.
- Evaluation: scenarios, impact analysis.
- Advice: business case, feasibility study, export plan, market entry recommendation, merger & acquisition recommendation, rebranding / extended branding recommendation, market strategy plan

PLO 2: Business transformation

The IB professional contributes to business (systems) transitions and transformations in order to optimise sustainable international business practices.

IB professionals make recommendations as to how the organisation should be redesigned to successfully do business on an international scale in a responsible manner. They analyse operational / tactical processes and determine which organisational elements are incompatible with doing business on an international scale in a sustainable, responsible, efficient and effective manner. They formulate viable, feasible and compliant recommendations for organisational change in consultation and collaboration with experts from various disciplines, considering appropriate current digital and technological solutions. After identifying the necessary changes and getting approval from decision makers, IB professionals design, plan, coordinate and/or monitor the operational implementation process of these changes, in terms of people, processes and information, making effective use of current digital and technological tools.

Examples of professional deliverables related to PLO 2:

- Analysis: financial analysis, supply / value chain analysis, organisational scan, capabilities analysis.
- Advice: business case, business process redesign, project plan, risk management plan, organisational change plan, feasibility study.
- Execution: coordinate projects, monitor progress (and carry out interventions)

PLO 3: Relationship management

The IB professional cultivates and manages internal and external relationships with culturally diverse stakeholders in a responsible manner in order to achieve (mutual) business goals.

IB professionals build and maintain bridges, and closely collaborate with stakeholders from diverse cultural and professional backgrounds using appropriate strategies. They create trust and rapport with stakeholders being inclusive and empathic, taking multiple (cultural) perspectives and interests into consideration and by applying context-appropriate intercultural and interpersonal communication skills. They conduct (research) activities and initiatives to identify and select internal and external (networks of) stakeholders, such as partners, suppliers, distributors, team members, experts, customers, for their organisation on an international scale. They profile stakeholders to determine the appropriate approach, relationship management, communication and/or negotiation strategy for them based on the context.

Their operational responsibilities include negotiating, bargaining, connecting, lobbying, networking and collaborating with stakeholders from different cultures and disciplines, and representing their organisation / team in internal and external networks, events and meetings. IB professionals coordinate implementation processes, collaborating and communicating with and managing diverse stakeholders effectively, using appropriate current digital and technological tools. When needed, they manage conflicts in a constructive and respectful way.

Examples of professional deliverables related to PLO 3:

- Analysis: account analysis, stakeholder analysis, critical incident analysis, business culture analysis, (international) network analysis.
- Advice: account management plan, business development road map, stakeholder interest map, communication strategy/plan, event planning, strategic alliance proposal, sales proposal, collaboration proposal, partner strategy, relationship management strategy, negotiation strategy, approach strategy for culturally diverse (potential) partners/stakeholders.
- Execution: choose and apply context-appropriate intercultural and interpersonal communication approach, build and manage international relationships, dealing / collaborating with / manage diverse stakeholders (including customers / clients), dealing with conflicts of interest, negotiation, represent organisation, e-mails, presentations, conversations

PLO 4: Self-management

The IB professional manages themselves in complex surroundings and continuously develop their professionalism for the benefit of the organisation, the field of international business and themselves.

IB professionals have a clear view of what they want to achieve – personally and professionally – and why. They understand their own needs, characteristics, values, strengths and weaknesses, and circle of influence. They set a clear path for themselves to utilise these effectively and responsibly to achieve their goals and ambitions in a rapidly changing world. IB professionals continuously monitor their (learning) actions, activities and results. They regularly ask the people around them for feedback and feedforward. They reflect on the moral, ethical and social appropriateness and efficiency and effectiveness of their actions, activities and results before, during and after performing them. They use these reflections to systematically improve their performance and develop themselves further. They are aware of their surroundings – how they are influenced by them and vice versa – and make responsible and effective choices regarding when and how to (not) adapt to the context or circumstances.

IB professionals are capable of taking on different roles in – multicultural and multidisciplinary – teams; leading in some and being lead in other instances, actively taking part in different stages of the process. They embrace the unknown and have the stamina and resilience to deal with uncertainty, discomfort, failure, resistance, delays and changing dynamics of the international arena. They monitor and maintain their mental and physical fitness and adopt stress-reduction strategies to cope with the pressures of their job.

Examples of professional deliverables related to PLO 4:

- Analysis: insights (reflection) own capabilities / personal values / motivation / preferred styles / strengths and weaknesses, report on successes and mistakes and how to learn from them, analysing received feedback.

- Execution: dealing with setbacks, giving and receiving feedback, asking for help (formulating help/support questions), cross own boundaries / step out of comfort zone, take responsibility, take on different roles in teams (lead / follow).
- Creation: personal branding report, personal development plan.

APPENDIX V Composition of the audit panel

On 17 September 2025, the NVAO endorsed the composition of the panel to assess the bachelor's programme in International Business at Hanze University of Applied Sciences (PA-2408). As explained in the Introduction, the audit was subsequently postponed and two panel members were replaced. On 16 March 2026, the NVAO approved the amended composition of the panel for the assessment of the bachelor's programme in International Business within the site visit cluster *HBO IBMS Groep 1 Noord*.

Name site visit cluster	HBO IBMS Groep 1 Noord

Name	**Role**	**Succinct CVs**
Jolanda Berntsen	Chair	Director of Aeres University of Applied Sciences Dronten and Aeres Farms
Thomas Blanc de la Carrere	Member	Quality advisor Internationalisation at Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences, CeQuInt auditor certified by ECA
Vladimir Ignjatovic	Member	Senior Lecturer & Year Coordinator at the IB programme of the Hague University of Applied Sciences
Nick van Hattem	Student-member	International Business student at Windesheim
Daniëlle de Koning	Secretary	Senior advisor at Hobéon, NVAO-certified secretary

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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