

ASSESSMENT REPORT

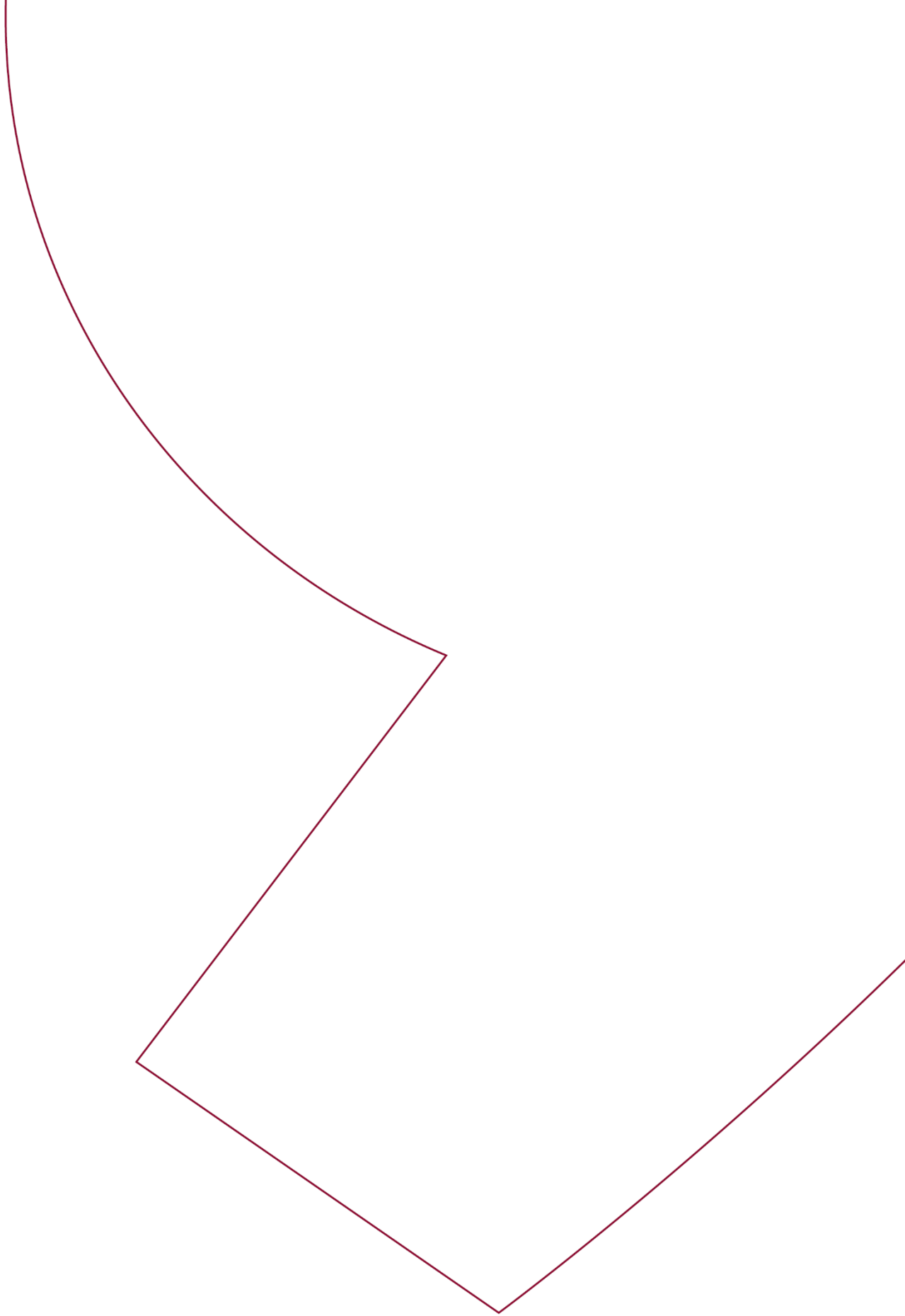
Institution with institutional audit (ITK)

International Business

Bachelor programme

Full time

NHL Stenden



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ISAT. 30029

Hobéon Certificering & Accreditatie
December 19th 2025

Audit panel

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1. GENERAL AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

Name Institution	NHL Stenden
Status	Funded
Outcomes of Institutional Quality Assessment	Positive d.d. 7 May 2020
Name program (as in RIO)	Bachelor of International Business
ISAT code	30029
Domain/sector	Economics
Orientation and level	Hbo
Level	Bachelor
Degree and title	Bachelor of Business Administration
Number of credits	240 EC
Specialisations	None
Locations	Emmen Leeuwarden
Variant	Full time
Legal professional requirements	No
Language of instruction	English
Special feature	No
Dates audit	October 14 2025 November 4 2025
Final date submission deadline report NVAO	01-05-2026

2. SUMMARY

The bachelor programme in International Business is a four-year course offered full-time by NHL Stenden. The programme prepares students to operate as business professionals within international organisations and trade. Students learn how to function effectively in an international work context.

Standard 1. Intended Learning Outcomes

Judgement: meets the standard

The panel concludes that the intended learning outcomes are at bachelor level and meet international standards. The programme has a clear profile focused on educating well-rounded business professionals who can operate within the field of international business and trade. The panel considers this an appropriate programme profile that aligns with the regional professional context. The formulation of the learning outcomes is, in the panel's view, well executed. Research and internationalisation are integrated in a highly suitable manner and add significant value for students. The panel advises the programme to enrich the learning outcomes by incorporating the international learning achievements of students. Furthermore, it finds that the professional field is closely involved in the programme and plays an active role in updating the learning outcomes.

The panel assigns the judgement that the programme meets the basic quality for standard 1.

Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment

Judgement: meets the standard

The curriculum, learning environment, and quality of the teaching team enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The panel concludes that the learning outcomes have been translated into a substantively adequate programme at both locations. Specifically for the Emmen location, the panel advises safeguarding the unique content and identity of IB within the curriculum. The programme offers students a structured opportunity to develop relevant professional and research skills. The panel is positive about the integration of internationalisation and the way it contributes to student development. It also values the project work and the guidance provided to students in this process. The programme has an appropriate educational vision that aligns with the institution and the needs of the professional field. The panel sees opportunities to create space in the curricula for a potential pre-master.

The programme offers a rich learning environment for students, according to the panel. The didactical principles are considered appropriate by the panel. Student support is well aligned with the international classroom and contributes to student development. The panel views the student association at the Leeuwarden location as a positive aspect and recommends exploring a similar community or association for the Emmen location. As a point of attention in student support, the panel advises focusing on guidance for students regarding possible further studies and pre-master options.

The programme have qualified teaching teams to deliver the curriculum. Workload is noted as a point of attention, particularly during the current curriculum renewal. The panel recommends that management allocate sufficient resources to support this process. Programme-specific facilities and information provision are considered adequate by the panel. The panel observes that a quality culture is present within the programme. The programme work systematically on their own quality. The panel endorses the ambition to further develop the quality assurance system and advises including the completion of the quality cycle, particularly by providing feedback to students on realised improvements.

Based on the above arguments, the panel concludes that the programme achieves the required basic quality. The panel assigns the judgement “meets the standard” for Standard 2.

Standard 3. Student assessment

Judgement: meets the standard

The panel concludes that the system of assessment is well designed. Based on its findings, the panel determines that the system results in valid, reliable, and transparent assessments. Students learn from their assessments and are generally satisfied. The programme has sound procedures for assessing group work. The panel is positive about the approach of the Examination Board and the Assessment Committee. The quality of assessments is safeguarded. The programme has made significant progress in the quality of the graduation assessment and evaluation. The panel commends the programme and recommends continuing efforts to improve consistency in graduation assessment. The panel sees an opportunity for the Examination Board to play a role in this process.

The panel assigns the judgement that the programme meets the basic quality standard for Standard 3 and provides a recommendation to improve consistency in graduation assessment.

Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes

Judgement: meets the standard

The panel concludes that students achieve the intended learning outcomes at bachelor level. The programme provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate that they have achieved all learning outcomes. Alumni and the professional field are satisfied with the level of graduates. According to the panel, the graduation projects are relevant to the international professional practice and have a clear connection to the field. The panel recommends aligning the final products more closely with NHL Stenden’s educational vision, Design-Based Education. The quality of the assessments is adequate. The panel also suggests that the programme consider developing an (international) alumni network.

Based on the above arguments, the panel assigns the judgement that the programme meets the standard for Standard 4.

Overall conclusion

The panel is satisfied with the quality of the International Business bachelor programme at NHL Stenden. The programme is well-structured and provides students with the opportunity to develop into competent business professionals ready to enter the international field. The panel observes a vibrant and professional community of international students and lecturers. Connections with the international professional field are strong and offer students an excellent foundation to develop their skills.

The panel concludes that the programme meets the basic quality requirements for all standards. In accordance with the NVAO decision rules, the panel advises continuing the accreditation of the International Business programme.

After approval by the panel members, this report was adopted by the chair and secretary on December 19th 2025.

3. INTRODUCTION

This report is the result of the limited programme assessment of the hbo-bachelor's programme in International Business (hereafter: IB) at NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences (hereafter: NHL Stenden). The assessment was conducted on the basis of a document analysis and a site visits on October 14 and November 4 2025 by an audit panel of independent experts (see Appendix IV for further details).

This report presents, in succession, the panel's findings, considerations, and conclusions regarding the programme against the four quality standards: *intended learning outcomes*, *teaching-learning environment*, *assessment*, and *achieved learning outcomes*. For its assessment, the panel applied the Assessment Framework (2024) of the Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation (NVAO).

NHL Stenden

NHL Stenden comprises several academies and educational locations across the Netherlands. NHL Stenden hosts 33 research groups (lectorates) that conduct applied research. Since 2024, the International Business (IB) programme has been part of the Academy of Business and Leadership. The programme is offered at the Leeuwarden and Emmen campuses. Both locations provide a solid starting point for the international student community.

Profile

The IB programme focuses on broadly educating international business professionals. It provides students with a solid foundation to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to operate effectively in an international business workplace. Approximately 66% of the student population comes from abroad, representing a total of 49 nationalities. At the Leeuwarden campus, 583 students are enrolled, while Emmen hosts 62 students.

Developments since the previous visitation

The previous accreditation took place in February 2020. The panel provided the programme with several conditions, which have since been addressed. In March 2022, a follow-up assessment was conducted by the previous panel, and the programme successfully implemented the improvement measures to the previous panel's satisfaction.

The panel notes that after several years, these measures have enhanced the overall quality of the programme. Documentation and the site visit confirm that the programme has also acted upon the remaining recommendations from the previous accreditation. The interviews during the site visits have made it sufficiently clear to the panel how the programme has worked on all the recommendations and what the results have been. The panel is satisfied with the outcomes of the implementation of the recommendations.

In the chapters below, the audit panel describes its findings with regard to standards 1 to 4 of the Assessment Framework for an institution with ITK.

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 and profile

The bachelor programme in International Business (hereafter: IB) prepares students to operate as business professionals within international organisations and trade. Students learn how to function effectively in an international work context. The focus is on providing a broad foundation of substantive knowledge and skills, as well as teaching students to navigate diverse cultures and backgrounds. The panel considers this a suitable profile, particularly in light of the region's and NHL Stenden's ambitions. Based on the discussions, the panel concludes that the profile aligns well with the international student population and the regional labour market.

The programme has formulated its intended learning outcomes based on the current version of the national programme profile. The panel finds that these intended learning outcomes correspond with the national profile and NHL Stenden's institutional profile. The panel notes that IB is in the process of transitioning to use the new national profile. The learning outcomes are consistent with the international and practice-oriented nature of the programme and reflect the bachelor's level. Documentation and conversations with the programme confirm that specific learning outcomes safeguard the international character of the programme.

Intended learning outcomes	
Ways of Thinking	Critical thinking Innovation & Creativity International Business Awareness
Ways of Working	International Business Communication Modern Foreign Language Collaboration Management of Information as Digital Citizen
Living in the World	Personal & Professional Development Ethical and Social Responsibility Intercultural Proficiency
Tools for Working & Management	Marketing & Sales Finance & Accounting Operations & Supply Chain Management Organisation & People Business Research

Applied research

Students are trained to conduct applied business research during the programme, such as performing targeted market analyses or product evaluations. At NHL Stenden, design-based education is employed as a teaching methodology to expose students to research practices. Discussions indicate that the programme has appropriately integrated the use of AI into the development of research skills. The panel concludes that there is a clear and suitable vision on research and that research is an integral component of the intended learning outcomes.

Internationalisation

The panel commends the programme for its vision on internationalisation and the way this is embedded throughout the curriculum. The programme has developed an appropriate approach to organising an international classroom, fostering students' personal intercultural development, and encouraging (mandatory) international study and learning experiences. The panel observes that internationalisation is reflected in the intended learning outcomes. Based on the discussions, the panel notes that there is still room to further elaborate internationalisation within the intended learning outcomes' description: according to the panel, students acquire more internationalisation-related competencies in the curriculum and extra-curricular than are currently anchored in the learning outcomes. The panel encourages the programme to develop this further.

Connection with the Professional Field

The professional field is actively involved in the programme's development and in updating the intended learning outcomes. The programme has an advisory board that systematically monitors developments in the field and incorporates these into discussions with the programme. Thanks to the composition of this advisory board, the programme also generates sufficient relevant projects for students. The panel is particularly enthusiastic about the two business liaisons who ensure continuous engagement with the field and organisations. The panel concludes that the programme effectively involves the professional field in updating the learning outcomes and the curriculum.

Panel considerations and conclusions

Judgement: meets the standard

The panel concludes that the intended learning outcomes are at bachelor level and meet international standards. The programme has a clear profile focused on educating well-rounded business professionals who can operate within the field of international business and trade. The panel considers this an appropriate programme profile that aligns with the regional professional context. The formulation of the learning outcomes is, in the panel's view, well executed. Research and internationalisation are integrated in a highly suitable manner and add significant value for students. The panel advises the programme to enrich the learning outcomes by incorporating the international learning achievements of students. Furthermore, it finds that the professional field is closely involved in the programme and plays an active role in updating the learning outcomes.

The panel assigns the judgement that the programme meets the basic quality for standard 1.

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.

The learning environment must reflect the institution's vision on education. - The workforce must be sufficiently large. - If the programme is taught in another language than Dutch, the human resources policy must make accommodation for teachers to teach in that language.

Findings

Translation intended learning outcomes to programme

The programme translates the intended learning outcomes into a substantively adequate curriculum. The panel reviewed the elaboration of the learning outcomes and observed that they have been translated into learning objectives and various modules. For all modules, it is clear which learning objectives are addressed and at what level. The panel notes that the first two years are essential for establishing foundational knowledge and skills. All learning outcomes are covered, and the content is, in the panel's view, current and tailored to the international character of the programme.

Curriculum

The panel notes that the programme operates with separate curricula for the Leeuwarden and Emmen locations. These curricula have been renewed in recent years. During the first site visit, the panel thoroughly reviewed the curricula and concluded that both are soundly designed. The Leeuwarden curriculum is fully tailored to International Business. At the Emmen location, the first two years are jointly structured with the bachelor programme International Logistics Management. According to the panel, this is a logical choice and provides IB students with sufficient opportunities to achieve the learning outcomes and to exchange knowledge with students from other internationally oriented programme. Based on the discussions, the panel advises safeguarding the unique content and identity of IB in Emmen.

From the documents and conversations, the panel concludes that the structure of the curricula supports student development. The first two years focus on foundational knowledge and skills. In the third and fourth years, students can specialise and deepen their engagement with the professional field. Students and alumni are generally positive about the curriculum. Discussions reveal that a group of students would appreciate the option to combine a pre-master with a minor. The panel recommends that the programme explores how this could be embedded in the curriculum.

Practical and Research Skills

Students develop their professional skills throughout the curriculum. The panel observes that the programme actively promotes this through project work, practical assignments, and internships, as supported by documentation and discussions. Students indicate that working in multicultural teams on projects is of great added value. Conversations with students reveal that

this approach helps them learn to work with different cultures and establish effective agreements for team functioning. The panel notes that the programme takes sufficient measures to guide project work effectively and prevent free-riding behaviour.

In addition to practical skills, students also develop research skills through a learning trajectory spanning from the first to the final year. Initially, students acquire the basics of conducting business research, for example in the Business Research module. The curriculum encourages students to apply and further develop their research skills through project work, internships, and the graduation phase. Students report that this provides sufficient guidance, which the panel views positively.

The programme works with two business liaisons who maintain close contacts with the professional field and secure relevant and up-to-date (research) projects for students. The panel considers this strong connection with the professional field beneficial for both students and the quality of the programme.

Internationalisation

Internationalisation is embedded throughout the programme, according to the panel. The programme makes use of an international classroom and international projects, which the panel considers highly valuable for students as it enables them to develop intercultural skills. Dutch students are required to gain international experience, for example by completing a minor at one of NHL Stenden's partner institutions. Discussions indicate that the programme has formulated clear policies for exchanges with other institutions and handles these carefully towards students. Furthermore, the panel observes that during internships and graduation projects, students engage with internationally operating organisations, allowing them to further develop relevant skills.

The site visit convinced the panel members that NHL Stenden has an International Office that provides strong support for international students studying in the Netherlands and helps them feel at home. Concrete examples include informing prospective students about studying in the Netherlands and arranging housing during the first year. The panel commends NHL Stenden for the way this contributes to student well-being and academic success for students from outside the Netherlands.

Learning environment and student support

The programme creates a stimulating international learning environment for students. The didactic principles include: the concept of Design-Based Education, an international classroom, fostering personal development, research skills, and learning additional languages. Discussions reveal that students and alumni are highly satisfied with the learning environment. The panel also observes these principles reflected in the curriculum and the quality of the learning environment.

Students are generally satisfied with the academic support provided. Conversations indicate that the programme offers guidance in various ways, such as personal development coaching by an assigned study coach or support for project team collaboration by a designated project manager. In addition, subject-specific guidance is provided by lecturers. The panel considers the student support to be well-structured and contributing to students' development and academic success. In line with its advice regarding creating space for a pre-master, the panel recommends that the programme guide students in exploring potential further studies and choosing a pre-master.

The Leeuwarden location has a student association, IBCO. Discussions show that this association contributes to community building among students and with the professional field. The panel is positive about this initiative and advises the programme to explore how a similar initiative could be established in Emmen.

Faculty

From the documents and discussions, the panel concludes that there are two teams of committed and qualified lecturers. The composition of these teams (e.g. nationalities) reflects the international character of the programme, according to the panel. Students are generally satisfied with the quality of the lecturers. They describe the lecturers as approachable and accessible, and students know whom to contact with questions. Discussions also reveal that students highly appreciate the study coaches. Based on the documents and conversations, the panel confirms that the lecturers are qualified to deliver the programme.

During the site visits, the panel discussed the topic of workload as the programme are in the process of curriculum renewal and have already implemented part of the new curricula. The panel asked management and lecturers whether the workload is perceived as too high and whether this could negatively impact the future quality of the programme. This does not appear to be the case, but the panel considers it a point of attention for the near future. The panel recommends that management continue to allocate sufficient resources for the curriculum renewal.

Facilities and Information Provision

The panel visited the Emmen and Leeuwarden locations and concludes that both have the necessary facilities to deliver the education. Students have access to essential information through the online learning environment. Documents and discussions indicate that students are satisfied with the quality of the information provided and that it supports their studies. According to the panel, the facilities and information provision are well in order.

Quality assurance and culture

The programme work systematically on their own quality, as evidenced by the documents and discussions. Education is systematically evaluated with students, and lecturers also collect student feedback on a structural basis to incrementally improve the teaching. The panel notes that students appreciate this approach. A striking example is that students are involved in the design and development of the new curricula for the locations Leeuwarden and Emmen. The programme indicates that it aims to further develop quality assurance once the new curricula have been implemented. The panel supports this ambition and advises the programme to include closing the quality cycle in this process. Discussions reveal that the programme does not always inform students when evaluations have led to improvements.

The panel spoke with members of the Programme Committee and concludes that the committee fulfils its statutory role and acts as a sparring partner for programme management. The quality of the curriculum is safeguarded by a Curriculum Committee.

English name and language

The programme has chosen to adopt an English name and to use English as the language of instruction. The panel considers this a logical choice, given that it is an international business programme preparing students for a strongly internationally oriented labour market. The teaching team is qualified to teach in English. The panel also finds it necessary to use English as the language of instruction to facilitate the students' international learning environment; adopting Dutch as the instructional language would make this impossible.

Panel considerations and conclusions

Judgement: meets the standard

The curriculum, learning environment, and quality of the teaching team enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The panel concludes that the learning outcomes have been translated into a substantively adequate programme at both locations. Specifically for the

Emmen location, the panel advises safeguarding the unique content and identity of IB within the curriculum. The programme offers students a structured opportunity to develop relevant professional and research skills. The panel is positive about the integration of internationalisation and the way it contributes to student development. It also values the project work and the guidance provided to students in this process. The programme has an appropriate educational vision that aligns with the institution and the needs of the professional field. The panel sees opportunities to create space in the curricula for a potential pre-master.

The programme offers a rich learning environment for students, according to the panel. The didactical principles are considered appropriate by the panel. Student support is well aligned with the international classroom and contributes to student development. The panel views the student association at the Leeuwarden location as a positive aspect and recommends exploring a similar community or association for the Emmen location. As a point of attention in student support, the panel advises focusing on guidance for students regarding possible further studies and pre-master options.

The programme have qualified teaching teams to deliver the curriculum. Workload is noted as a point of attention, particularly during the current curriculum renewal. The panel recommends that management allocate sufficient resources to support this process. Programme-specific facilities and information provision are considered adequate by the panel. The panel observes that a quality culture is present within the programme. The programme work systematically on their own quality. The panel endorses the ambition to further develop the quality assurance system and advises including the completion of the quality cycle, particularly by providing feedback to students on realised improvements.

Based on the above arguments, the panel concludes that the programme achieves the required basic quality. The panel assigns the judgement "meets the standard" for Standard 2.

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 student assessment**

The principles for the assessment system are described in the IB assessment policy. The panel observes that this policy enables the programme to assess and evaluate students in accordance with statutory requirements for validity and reliability. This is evident from the guidelines and processes established for student assessment. Discussions reveal that since the last accreditation, the programme has made significant progress in the quality (enhancement) of assessment. The panel appreciates this development in a positive manner and encourages the programme to continue improving, particularly regarding analytical and holistic assessment.

The panel reviewed the assessment programme, exams, and assessment forms. The quality of the assessments is considered adequate. The programme uses a mix of different assessment forms. The assessments are valid, and the grades awarded are reliable and transparent. Discussions indicate that the programme has measures in place to adequately assess group work. It applies a system of individual assessments and group work evaluations that always include an individual component. From the completed graduation assessment forms, the panel notes that consistency in examiners' substantiation varies within an acceptable range. The panel recommends further improving the consistency to further enhance reliability.

Documents and discussions show that assessments essentially contribute to students' learning process. Students report that they learn from their assessments and the feedback provided by examiners. Overall, students are satisfied with the quality of the assessments, according to the discussions.

Quality assurance in assessment

The programme has an Examination Board and an Assessment Committee. Discussions indicate that the Examination Board actively safeguards the quality of assessments, for example by appointing examiners based on clear criteria and yearly reviewing final works on a sample basis. The panel also notes the presence of an Assessment Committee that works under a mandate to ensure the quality of individual assessments. The panel is positive about both committees and their collaboration, as this contributes to improving the quality of assessments. Discussions reveal that both programme locations are represented in these committees. In line with the recommendation to improve consistency in graduation assessment, the panel advises the Examination Board to be involved in the calibration sessions. The committees also expressed their intention to take further steps in using data to monitor assessment quality, which the panel strongly encourages.

Graduation

Graduation demonstrates that the student has achieved all intended learning outcomes and is ready to enter the professional field. Students graduate by completing the modules Strategic International Business Consultancy and the Graduation Project. The panel considers this an appropriate approach that enables students to demonstrate their final level. Since the previous accreditation, the programme has invested significantly in the quality of the graduation assessment and evaluation. The developed assessment and evaluation forms are well designed according to the panel.

Panel considerations and conclusions

Judgement: meets the standard

The panel concludes that the system of assessment is well designed. Based on its findings, the panel determines that the system results in valid, reliable, and transparent assessments. Students learn from their assessments and are generally satisfied. The programme has sound procedures for assessing group work. The panel is positive about the approach of the Examination Board and the Assessment Committee. The quality of assessments is safeguarded. The programme has made significant progress in the quality of the graduation assessment and evaluation. The panel commends the programme and recommends continuing efforts to improve consistency in graduation assessment. The panel sees an opportunity for the Examination Board to play a role in this process.

The panel assigns the judgement that the programme meets the basic quality standard for Standard 3 and provides a recommendation to improve consistency in graduation assessment.

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.

Findings

Discussions with the professional field and alumni indicate that graduates of this programme are well prepared to function in practice or pursue further studies. Alumni report having received sufficient knowledge and skills to succeed in the labour market or in master's study programme. The professional field is generally satisfied and states that graduates reflect the IB profile.

The panel reviewed a stratified sample of fifteen final projects, which were representatively distributed across the different locations, grades and cohorts. From these projects, the panel concludes that students achieve the intended learning outcomes at bachelor level (NLQF 6). The graduation projects are methodologically sound, and the topics and deliverables are relevant to the IB professional field. The panel notes that the deliverables often consist of advisory reports, and in some cases, prototypes. The panel sees room to align the final product more closely with NHL Stenden's educational vision, Design-Based Education, and recommends further translating this vision into the student's final deliverable.

Currently, the programme does not have an alumni network. Based on the discussions, the panel suggests exploring the development of an (international) alumni network. This could provide opportunities to further strengthen the IB programme and increase student intake.

Panel considerations and conclusions

Judgement: meets the standard

The panel concludes that students achieve the intended learning outcomes at bachelor level. The programme provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate that they have achieved all learning outcomes. Alumni and the professional field are satisfied with the level of graduates. According to the panel, the graduation projects are relevant to the international professional practice and have a clear connection to the field. The panel recommends aligning the final products more closely with NHL Stenden's educational vision, Design-Based Education. The quality of the assessments is adequate. The panel also suggests that the programme consider developing an (international) alumni network.

Based on the above arguments, the panel assigns the judgement that the programme meets the standard for Standard 4.

5. OVERALL CONCLUSION

The panel is satisfied with the quality of the International Business bachelor programme at NHL Stenden. The programme is well-structured and provides students with the opportunity to develop into competent business professionals ready to enter the international field. The panel observes a vibrant and professional community of international students and lecturers. Connections with the international professional field are strong and offer students an excellent foundation to develop their skills.

The panel concludes that the programme meets the basic quality requirements for all standards. In accordance with the NVAO decision rules, the panel advises continuing the accreditation of the International Business programme.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Orientation on further studies

The panel notes that a group of students wishes to pursue a specialised master's programme. Discussions with students and alumni reveal two specific needs: first, guidance in selecting a suitable follow-up study programme; second, the possibility of combining a pre-master during the minor. The panel recommends that the programme explore ways to embed these options within the curriculum.

Resources for curriculum renewal

The panel discussed with management and lecturers whether workload is perceived as too high and whether this could negatively impact the future quality of the programme. This does not appear to be the case, but the panel considers it a point of attention for the near future. The panel advises management to continue allocating sufficient resources for curriculum renewal to ensure that workload remains acceptable for the team.

Further strengthening the reliability of assessments

Since the previous accreditation, the programme has made significant progress in the quality of graduation and assessment. However, the completed graduation assessment forms show that consistency in examiners' substantiation varies within an acceptable range. The panel sees room for improvement and recommends increasing consistency among examiners. This will contribute to the reliability of assessments.

Design-Based Education

The panel notes that the deliverables of graduation projects often consist of advisory reports, and in some cases, prototypes. The panel sees opportunities to align the final product more closely with NHL Stenden's new educational vision: Design-Based Education. Based on this vision, the panel would expect more prototypes. The panel recommends exploring ways to further translate Design-Based Education into students' final deliverables.

APPENDIX I Overview of judgements

Results overview NHL Stenden Bachelor programme International Business Full time	
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

Site visit 1 : 14 October – Location Emmen

Activity	Location	Time	Alignment
Reception panel	1043	12:00-12:15	Management (academy director & team leaders)
Presentation programme Location Leeuwarden and Emmen	1043	12:15-12:45	Management (academy director & team leaders)
Visiting educational students' activity		12:45-13:00	Team leaders and teachers
Internal consultation panel (sharing findings/readings & material review) including lunch	1043	13:00-15:00	Panel
Presentation curriculum IB	1043	15:00-15:45	Colleagues and/or students IB
Internal consultation Setting Agenda	1043	15:45-16:00	Panel
Closing discussion; feedback	1043	16:00-16:15	Management (academy director & team leaders)

Site visit 2 : 4 November – Location Leeuwarden

Activity	Location	Time	Alignment
Reception panel	A0.112 en A0.114	9:00-9:30	Management (academy director & team leaders)
Interview 1 - Teachers	A0.114	9:30-10:30	Teachers
Interview 2 - Students	A0.114	10:45-11:45	Students
Campus tour		11:45-12:15	Teamleaders and panel
Lunch break	A0.114	12:15-13:00	Panel
Interview 3 - Committees	A0.114	13:00-13:45	Representation from committees: Examination Committee Test Committee Programme Committee
Interview 4 - Workfield and alumni	A0.114	14:00-14:45	Workfield and alumni
Interview 5 - Management	A0.114	15:00-15:30	Management (academy director & team leaders)
Pending Issues & Consultation panel	A0.114 or A0.113	15:30-16:45	Panel
Oral feedback	A0.114	16:45-17:15	Panel and training stakeholders

Working methods

Selection of the delegations / the auditees

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.

During the site-visit the audit panel members spoke randomly to students and reviewed a number of additional theses.

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.

Alignment between all sub-panels within the site visit cluster was first ensured through the instructions provided to panel members regarding the assessment framework. The calibrated assessment criteria agreed upon between Dutch assessment agencies in higher education formed part of these instructions. Prior to this, alignment was also secured through overlapping membership across all sub-panels. Furthermore, taking into account that each programme assessment constitutes an individual evaluation, the overlapping membership allowed for progressive reflection on earlier visits within this cluster, where relevant. In addition, consistency between the panels was safeguarded by the support of, as much as possible, the same secretary from both Hobéon and by the involvement of trained chairs.

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

- Self-evaluation Report IB
- Course documents and module books
- Curricula overview
- Teaching and Examination Regulations
- Student charter
- Education policies
- Test policy and manuals
- Annual reports examination committee
- Overview faculty
- List of all recent final all projects/papers examined prior to the audit

The panel reviewed a stratified sample of fifteen final projects, which were representatively distributed across the different locations, grades and cohorts. 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 Composition of the audit panel

On September 17th 2025 the NVAO endorsed the composition of the panel to assess the hbo-bachelor programme International Business of NHL Stenden. (PA-2407)

Name site visit cluster	HBO IBMS Groep 1 Noord
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Name	Role	Succinct CVs
Vladimir Bartelds	Chair	Program Manager Impact, Senior Advisor Research, Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen / Independent Consultant
Thomas Blanc de la Carrere	Member	Quality advisor Internationalisation at Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences and ECA trained auditor
María Ángeles Aragón Morán	Member	Lecturer-researcher at the IB programme at The Hague University of Applied Sciences and international marketer.
Carla López Segura	Member	Student IB at the HAN University of Applied Sciences
Roel van Krieken	Secretary	NVAO trained 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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