

Development conversation external visitation
IB

Saxion Enschede Tromplaan
International Business School
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Location meeting H1.04
Present Drs. D. Rijnders (chair audit panel)
Drs. J. Ossewold (member audit panel)
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The evaluation framework for accreditation in Higher Education of the NVAO stipulates that a development conversation is an obligatory part of the accreditation process. During the conversation, the programme consults the panel on potential areas for improvement. This development conversation has taken place as part of the external visitation of the programme International Business (IB), of which the site visit took place on November 7, 2019.

In advance of the development conversation, the programme has formulated four themes which it would like to discuss with the chair and a member of the audit panel:

1. The further development and deepening of the International Business School's (IBS) and IB's vision on internationalisation;
2. Intensifying the relationship with both the professional field and alumni;
3. The further development and strengthening of Conscious Business as the programme's profile;
4. The expansion of the portfolio of the IBS.

Ad 1: Further development and deepening of the IBS' and IB's vision on internationalization.

Added value by means of internationalization is created not just by quantitative KPI's and TPI's, but also by qualitative indicators. The advice is to start with a benchmark and an analysis of best practices both nationally and internationally on internationalization. The scope of internationalization should be broader than just exchange programmes: opportunities arise when there is also cooperation on the content of programmes (e.g. Short Degree Programmes), and research.

It is strongly advised to position IB strongly according to its profile of Conscious Business and determine adjacent domains in business, law, creative business etc. Then, map out which potential partners of those domains overlap on IB's Conscious Business profile accordingly by means of a Venn diagram. Only then, internationalization strengthens IB's core profile and a dilution of its vision is avoided. The alignment of profiles is key to successful internationalization.

Another key component of internationalization is internationalization at home. This requires first and foremost a certain mindset. At the programme level, it is recommended to safeguard that international staff and students are included in the various committees and boards. By appointing internationals in

such positions, an international and diverse culture within the school is stimulated. Saxion's Executive Board views internationalization as a catalyst for the region, international highly educated professionals should foster the business climate for international companies. However, environmental factors play an important role as well to ensure international students settle in the region. The living environment needs to be attractive to international students. Once a city has more to offer and develops an ecosystem that is attractive enough for international students to stay, the region will attract international businesses. It is pivotal that the IBS and Saxion cooperate with the municipality on such matters.

Ad 2: Intensifying the relationship with both the professional field and alumni.

It appears that the programme currently underutilizes its alumni and professional field. Alumni are your programme's ambassadors. They act as role models for current students, triggering the latter's intrinsic motivation. Alumni as well as the professional field can be utilized to teach master classes, and through these provide valuable feedback to the programme and its teachers on the practical usefulness of the contents of the curriculum. In this way, they become influencers that help change the organizational culture from a predominantly internal focus to a more outward and international focus. The IBS could further develop the relation with alumni by means of facilitating social media environments. A social media hub per country could greatly help in developing a long-term relationship with alumni and utilizing their ambassadorship, not just for the contents of the programme, but also for recruiting new international students.

Ad 3: The further development and strengthening of Conscious Business (CB) as the programme's profile.

The Conscious Business profiling of the IBS and IB is very well chosen as it appears to be the 'next big thing'. The CB-lab is a great platform by its inception, but is currently underutilized. The CB-lab should become a knowledge hub, a source of inspiration for students, staff, and the professional field. In order to truly make CB an integral part of all educational activities, the CB-lab requires to be embedded further in the organization and curriculum. A key recommendation is to incorporate research, and skilled researchers (lectorate) into the CB-lab. A lector can serve as a figurehead that is capable of translating new ideas to concrete projects and products. Part of the struggle of the CB-lab is to connect to teachers without becoming/being experienced as prescribing. That has partly to do with its current composition, which underlines the need for the inclusion of skilled researchers in the lab, but also by the current conceptualization of the three levels (I, We, It). Rather than inclusive circles that overlap, the three levels are related through partial overlap (Venn diagram). Such a reconceptualization might help resolve the tension between teachers and the CB-lab as it grasps the areas of overlap as well as that it recognizes partial the autonomy on each of the three levels. The areas of overlap help all actors to recognize where potential projects are positioned, and foster reciprocity.

Ad 4: The expansion of the portfolio of the IBS.

Saxion strategizes on 'Living Technology', and the IBS explicitly has to relate to this strategy. It appears however that Saxion emphasis the 'technology' part rather than the 'living' (people in their environment) part. As a Business programme, the IBS should emphasize the 'living' side – How do technologies influence people in their (business) environment? Businesses are shaped increasingly in novice ways (e.g. communities, neighborhoods etc). What is the impact of entrepreneurship in such new ways of conducting business and how can technology be utilized as a tool? IBS-students play a pivotal role in enabling existing businesses to cope with the necessary technological transitions as key enablers. At the same time, new domains as well as forms of businesses are emerging as part of the societal transition. Cross-overs become increasingly important. The study-route International Creative Business (ICB) IBS is currently developing in close cooperation with ACT is such a cross-over that encapsulates technology, creativity, design and, last but not least, business. While designing ICB it is pivotal to include the professional field from the start to ensure a synergy between the various domains

and to clarify what the professional role is of graduates of said programme. Best practices might be found at Avans' centre of Expertise Sustainable Business.

Another avenue for expansion could be the development of (unfunded) Master programmes. Many Master programmes in the Arts are unfunded and international and perform better than their related Bachelor programmes. Strongly positioned international Master programmes have a pull-factor that also positively affects the influx of international Bachelor students. A key international development is 'modular stacking' – certificates obtained at various institutions together result in a degree. This is considered the educational model of the future.

The further development and expansion of the portfolio of IBS' Language School has high potential for growth as well. Many (international) students want to distinguish themselves by following two parallel bachelors, or by adding to their skill set by learning another foreign language. It is advisable to offer languages in a modular fashion at different levels, and to consider adding the possibility of obtaining a teacher's qualification for such languages.