



Joint accreditation processes: NVAO and THE-ICE

Department The Netherlands

11/10/2018

Rationale (1)

- Several programmes are accredited by multiple organisations (public and private)
- Recognition from a professional and/or international accreditor as a means to
 - ... distinguish a programme (professional field, internationalisation, 'triple crown')
 - ... stimulate internationalisation in HE
 - ... build an international network
 - ... discuss the programme with international peers
 - ... perform international benchmarking
 - ... share best practices

Rationale (2)

- Accreditation processes show many overlapping elements
 - Peer review
 - Scope of assessment standards
 - Preparations prior to site visit
 - Site visit elements
- Joint processes to reduce the experienced ‘accreditation burden’

Current agreements for joint processes



Business schools / Economics



Development studies



Public administration



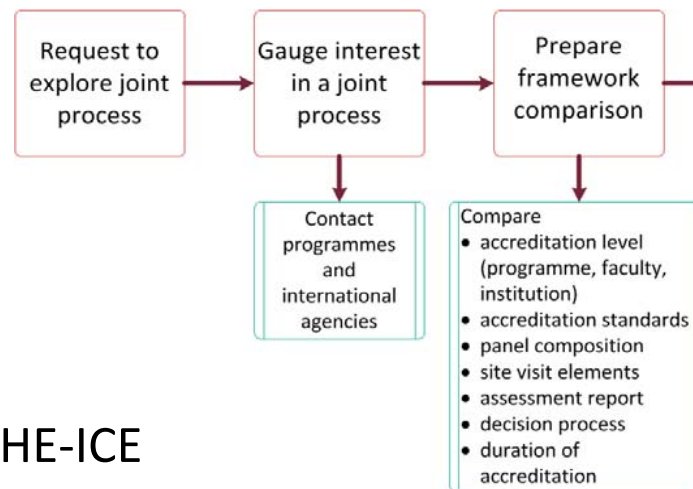
Hospitality



Medical education (in progress)

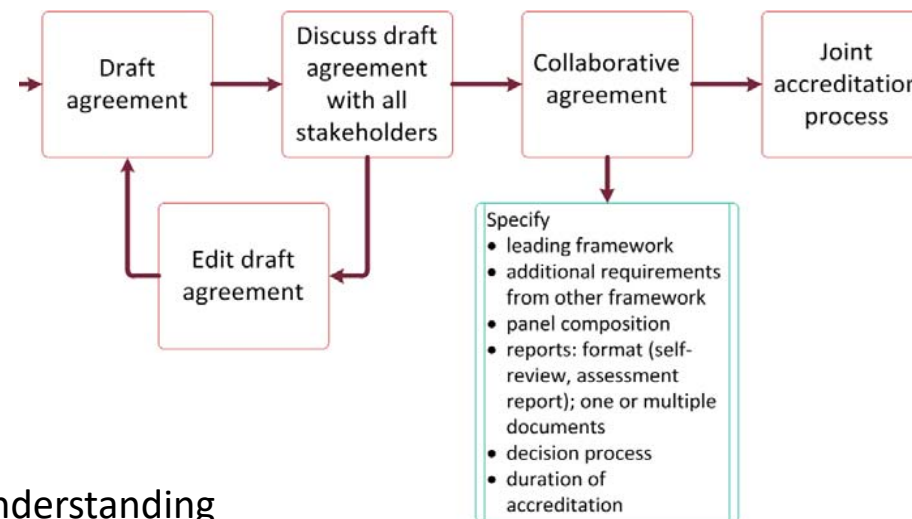
...to be extended...?

NVAO and THE-ICE (1)



- 2015: contact NVAO – THE-ICE
 - First draft comparison (feasibility)
- 2016-2017: multiple meetings with hotel school representatives

NVAO and THE-ICE (2)



- 2016-2017:
 - Memorandum of Understanding
 - Agreement
- 2017: site visit preparations (panel composition)

General experiences so far (NVAO)

- Noticeable enthusiasm, both from programmes and accreditors involved
- Close contact between NVAO, professional accreditors and HEIs
- Agreements are tailored to specific contexts and preferences of programmes involved
- Points of attention
 - Good collaboration and communication with (experienced) panel members is key
 - Briefing of international panel members on Dutch context required
 - Create sufficient opportunities to evaluate joint process

Points of discussion (1)

- How did programmes, panel members and THE-ICE experience this joint process, with regard to ...
 - ... information about the joint process?
 - ... organisation?
 - ... contact with NVAO, THE-ICE, other programmes?
 - ... preparation of panel members?
 - ... coverage of all topics / standards from both frameworks?
 - ... points of improvement?

Points of discussion (2)

- What is the added value of a joint process in terms of the previously mentioned goals?
 - ... distinguish a programme
 - ... stimulate internationalisation in HE
 - ... build an international network
 - ... discuss the programme with international peers
 - ... perform international benchmarking
 - ... share best practices

Questions and/or comments?

Any other experiences you would like to share?

Would a more 'formal' evaluation of the process (after accreditation) be useful?





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Reflections from the panel chairs and secretaries

11-10-2018

1. Introduction
2. Overview
3. Suggestions for the future

Ad. 1 Introduction

On behalf of the seven panels I would like to start with the comment that we are very impressed with the initiative of the Dutch hotel schools to collaborate with regard to the seven accreditations. The fact that The Association includes both (five) publicly financed and (two) privately financed schools makes this an even more courageous collaboration. And on top of that, NVAO and THE-ICE recognized good opportunities in collaborating in the accreditation of schools.

We experienced the accreditations as a very intensive and inspiring job with quite a workload. The seven panels were well-composed, each had its own dynamics as a group. Five panels included two auditors of THE-ICE. This unique collaboration between NVAO auditors and THE-ICE auditors was very instructive. In addition, each panel had one or two student members, who brought an extra insight in the process, which was highly appreciated. The representatives of the industry were very well qualified, as well as the auditors for the special features internationalization and small scale.

As chairs and secretaries we gained a unique overview and understanding of the seven Dutch hotel schools. In this presentation we will inform you about our overview and we will make some suggestions for your collaboration as Association of Dutch hotel schools.

Each of the seven schools was very well prepared. You provided us with extensive documentation, the interviews were well prepared, open and honest, the guided tours were helpful and our hotels, food & beverage were very well taken care of. We felt ourselves welcome and experienced great hospitality. In reflecting on your preparation we would like to suggest some limitation in the self-evaluation (for some schools the material was quite “glossy” and extensive). Another remark is the sometimes large number of people participating in the interviews.

For us as a panel each site visit started with a “day 0”. The added value of this day 0 consisted of several aspects: the presentation by Anne Klaas on the assessment frameworks to be used, the general aspects of the visitation and the specific menu of the school in question, sharing our comments and questions on the offered documentation, preparing the interviews, collecting the needs for extra information and, last but not least, the introduction of each panel member. Very quickly, the individual auditors, regardless of which organization or framework they were representing, became an audit *team*.

We experienced a great variety in programs: associate degree, bachelor & master level, full time & part time, 3 year & 4 year curricula, focus on the hotel branche or on a broader hospitality perspective, focus on preparing for the labour market & focus on continuing education at a research university or starting to work. The broader perspective was very instructive, it includes amongst others E-commerce, healthcare, gastronomy, catering and hospitality in all kinds of industry.

In the panels in which panel members representing the NVAO framework had to work with panel members representing the THE ICE framework, we experienced a broad consensus regarding the relevant issues and observations made. There were hardly any differences in perception. Although the NVAO and the THE ICE assessment frameworks demonstrate a vast amount of overlap, there are also some differences between the frameworks, for instance in the extent to which they focus on specific aspects and in how they value specific aspects of a program. These differences sometimes translated into (slightly) different judgements on aspects.

Most of the schools emphasized that preparing the self-evaluation was an instructive process within the institute and the team. As panels we consider this a form of double loop learning.

We hope that our reports will also help you in further improving your programs. Some of you observed with some anxiety that the panels' judgements were not always as high as those in the previous accreditation exercise. We strongly emphasize that this is a reflection of our strict interpretation of the NVAO criteria, and not that your programs have deteriorated over the years. Another artifact of the NVAO framework is that it is easier to score 'excellent' in the extended framework (with its eleven very specific standards) than in the limited framework. In the limited framework standard two encompasses so many different aspects that it is almost impossible to score 'excellent' on all of them. We want to stress that in the Dutch higher education system a consistent score of 'good' on all four standards is rather exceptional, so it is really 'good'.

Ad.2 Overview and reflections of the whole

We would like to continue with some impressions from our overview.

Students and staff

The panels very much appreciated the small-scaled learning environment we generally encountered in the schools. In all programs we observed small groups, intensive student support by staff and in some schools peers and a variety of community driven activities. During this accreditation two of the public and one of the privately funded schools even successfully applied for the Small Scale special feature. Some of the other schools could consider applying for this feature as well.

We were also very positive about the students we met during the interviews and the guided tours. They were positive, sociable and highly motivated. The same goes for the staff. At all schools there is highly qualified staff and almost all staff members, especially teaching staff, have work experience in the international industry. Between the schools there is a difference in the percentage of lecturers with a master degree and a difference in number of staff members performing research.

"Many roads lead to Rome"

We rather liked to see that schools that more or less have the same goal, use different ways to reach that goal, ways which perfectly reflect and match their individual characters and contexts. We encountered different approaches to various topics, each of which was not worse nor better than other ones.

- For instance, the admission procedures of the schools differ quite a lot. We noticed a range with on the one hand (in the privately funded schools) practically direct enrolment after open days or enrolment depending on an interview of the manager with student and

parents, to, on the other hand, an extensive procedure with a written paper, a day at school, several interviews regarding motivation and professional orientation and skills.

- Another aspect on which the schools differ from one another is their vision regarding the acquisition of practical skills. Some schools have their own facilities for the training of operational skills in a controlled environment, some explicitly chose for direct exposure to the real business. Placements vary in length, their place in the curriculum and the execution of research during or parallel to the final placement. However, each of the schools is consistent in its policy and implementation.
- Also, we encountered a variety of models for student support. In all of the schools we experienced highly dedicated individual student support, well-appreciated by the students. In the implementation of this support, there are some differences reflected in the roles and tasks of teaching staff and non-teaching staff.
- Finally, all schools have advisory boards to establish an intensive relationship with the industry. They consist of very experienced representatives of the industry. The boards do differ, however, in focus (strategical, tactical and/or operational). We very much appreciate the initiative to create a next generation advisory board, as one of the schools recently initiated.

Research

Research is a quite recent development in the Dutch universities of applied sciences. In all bachelor and master curricula we established the implementation of the relevant Dublin descriptors to assure the appropriate level of the exams of the program. The schools differ, however, in the involvement of staff in research programs. We observed some impressive examples of research activities with positive impact on the curricula. The privately funded schools do not yet have specific research programs in which staff members participate.

Thesis

Also in the theses (processes) we found big differences between the various programs. The panels perceive different perspectives in preparing students for doing research and writing a thesis. We would like to argue that for all students it is necessary to strengthen their understanding of the research process. In each of the curricula there is a research “stream”, but there is a difference in intensity, although in all curricula this is a quickly developing issue. In the support of the students we noticed a big difference as well. There is a range from obligatory formats, phases and intensive feedback to a rather large degree of independence.

Internationalization

With respect to internationalization the programs demonstrate a variety of stages of development. The schools really differ in their maturity with regard to internationalization. We experienced first steps but also mature embedding of internationalization in curricula as well as tight relations and a variety of activities including admission of non-Dutch students, obligatory international placements, alumni network and an international advisory board. Four programs successfully applied for the CeQuInt-certificate.

Alumni

As for the alumni, the panels noticed some differences as well between the schools. Due to their history and tradition, the schools differ in the number of alumni and the connection between school and alumni and the alumni amongst each other. However, it was wonderful to see how attached the alumni we spoke with were to “their” school and how willing they were to perform activities, for example guest lectures. We saw some impressive international alumni networks.

Extended program assessments: quality assurance and human resource management

For the programs that were assessed according to the NVAO extended assessment framework, we also had a look at quality assurance and human resource management (HRM). Each of the schools possesses an adequate combination of evaluations, analysis, reflection and improvement. Some schools perform this in a methodical, systematic and cyclic way, which is an example for others. HRM includes recruitment, on boarding programs, coaching and evaluation. We found out that each school offers possibilities for professional training and development. The privately funded schools most explicitly relate evaluation of staff, as an aspect of quality assurance, to HR.

Ad. 3: Suggestions for the future

In the Netherlands, we offer an interesting variety of educational programs, which is in line with our pluralistic society and the aims for global citizenship. The Dutch hotel schools still have opportunities to reflect society even more.

The collaboration of the seven hotel schools is a very forward-thinking approach, which the panels applaud. The schools realize that they, although obvious competitors, will benefit from working together. The existing and potential market is sufficiently large for them all to co-exist quite safely and in the industry as well there is room for co-existence for different schools, each with its own profile, history and background.

The Dutch hotel schools perform very well internationally, which is appreciated by THE-ICE.

According to us, as representatives of the panels, the association of Dutch hotel schools offers possibilities for further growth in several aspects. We would like to mention the following possibilities for growth for which we think a joint approach or sparring/peer review among the schools could be of added value.

1. Hospitality branch

- Hospitality in new domains, e.g. health care. The programs could discuss with one another whether it would be desirable to support students to understand other industries and, if desirable, how this could be incorporated into the curricula.
- Industry engagement at the ground level, from year one onwards could be further improved.

2. Thesis and design of the thesis process

Most programs could further improve on some of the following points:

- Tighter requirements for guiding student projects could be developed;

- Students could benefit from more support with their development projects and the thesis process. In this respect, we suggest that an important point of attention be the question how students' understanding of the research process could be strengthened and how it could be supported during the thesis process;
- Thesis assessments could be further improved. The transparency of the written feedback on the thesis grading forms in relation to the grade awarded is not always optimal. Not only the students could benefit from more transparency. It is also essential that the assessment be transparent to third parties, as well as to Boards of Examiners/assessment committees in order to be able to do their work properly. We have already seen some examples of calibration of theses and assessments between programs and suggest that this practice be applied on a larger scale.
- Some programs make use of external examiners in the thesis/graduation process. We regard this as a best practice which could be considered to be applied on a larger scale.

3. Placement

- Maintaining quality contact with students while they are on placement should receive constant attention;
- Since the quality of the placement is of direct impact on what the student learns from the placement, more quality control of the placement companies is suggested;
- Controlled environments to expose students to the hospitality environment are good, but it is important that students are sufficiently exposed to a variety of real environments in practical work as well. Real environments make students experience the *real* pressures of the hospitality environment.

4. Internationalization

- The integration of international students and mingling of national and international students inside and outside the classroom is an important condition to benefit from internationalization. Since it is so important to prepare students for their future multicultural work environment, constant and sometimes more attention could be paid to the integration of international students and explicitly addressing intercultural aspects;

5. Future developments

- Given the rapid evolvments in the information technology (IT), it seems wise to stay prepared for the future influence of technology. Simply teaching the use of current IT applications seems inadequate preparation for future careers as managers. We suggest to develop a conceptual strategic understanding of the scope and integration of technology, especially IT, in the hotel and hospitality sector.
- The pace of technological innovation does not slow, and there is little doubt that the traditional delivery modes in all accommodation and food service operations will change dramatically over the next few years. With these changes will come new ways of staffing and the potential for requiring less vocationally skilled people. Ownership of hospitality businesses also becomes ever more obscure at both a strategic and operational level, and

this is impacting on the manner in which managers have to deliver services on a daily basis. For these reasons, it is important for hospitality programs to continually adapt in order to ensure that they are preparing future managers in the industry. The pace of change is such that it is probable that processes and skills acquired by students in their first year may well become obsolete or less important by the time they graduate. Therefore, we think that the inclusion of change management within programs and at every level is essential if they are to remain pertinent.

- At the same time, it can be argued that the World has become a far less predictable place, where tensions abound, and the incessant involvement of social media has created much 'fake news'. This often inflames opinion, leading to greater instability within society, both politically and socially. In such circumstances a crisis can erupt and spread rapidly, and this is in addition to acts of terrorism, natural disasters and economic challenges. Crisis management must therefore be a key skill acquired by hospitality professionals, and we suggest featuring it prominently within programs.
- Finally, use and misuse of resources is an obvious issue. Poor regard for sound environmental operating standards within a business can result in complete failure of the enterprise. So whether it be in purchasing, day-to-day operations or the management of the immediate environment where the business is situated, managers must be constantly alert to their responsibilities, both to their customers and to society at large. We suggest reinforcing understanding the need for sound environmental practices from an early stage onwards.

On behalf of the panels for Hotel Management,

Feedback from the panels

Observations and suggestions

Introduction (1)

- Impressed by bold initiative of collaboration of the 7 schools, private and public, and collaboration of NVAO and THE-ICE!
- Experiences:
 - Panel compositions
 - Good preparation of all schools
 - Added value of 'day 0'

Introduction (2)

- Great variety of programs
- Consensus among NVAO and THE-ICE panel members, but differences in framework sometimes leading to different judgements
- Effects of difference between limited and extended program assessment frameworks NVAO

Overview and reflections (1)

- Students and staff
 - Small scale
- “Many roads lead to Rome”
 - Admission procedures
 - Vision regarding acquisition of practical skills
 - Student support
 - Advisory Boards

Overview and reflections (2)

- Research
 - differences in staff involvement
- Thesis
 - Differences in intensity research stream
 - Differences in student guidance/support
- Internationalization
 - Variety of stages of development

Overview and reflections (3)

- Alumni
 - Number
 - Contacts with alumni
 - Contacts among alumni
- Extended program assessments
 - Quality assurance
 - HRM

Suggestions for the future (1)

- Hospitality branch
- Thesis and design thesis process
- Placement
- Internationalization
- Future developments

Suggestions for the future (2)

Hospitality branch

- Broadening to and learning from other industries (e.g. health care)?
- Strengthening industry engagement at the ground level, from year one onwards

Suggestions for the future (3)

- Thesis and design thesis process
 - Tighter requirements for guiding student projects
 - More support/guidance wrt development projects and thesis process, in particular more attention for better understanding research process.
 - Transparency of thesis assessments
 - Use of external examiners

Suggestions for the future (4)

- Placement
 - Maintaining quality contact with students while on placement
 - More quality control of placement companies
 - Controlled environments \leftrightarrow real environments

Suggestions for the future (5)

- Internationalization
 - Integration of international students
 - Addressing intercultural aspects explicitly

Suggestions for the future (6)


- Future developments
 - Staying prepared for future influence of technology: develop conceptual strategic understanding of the scope and integration of technology, especially information technology, in the hotel and hospitality sector
 - Inclusion of change management within programs
 - Inclusion of crisis management as a key skill
 - Inclusion of environmental management

Thanks and keep up the good work!




THE DUAL ACCREDITATION PROJECT: NVAO & THE-ICE HOTEL MANAGEMENT

Utrecht, 11 October 2018



**The preliminary
outcomes are quite
positive:**



NHL Stenden	NVAO THE-ICE (re-accreditation) CeQulnt Real world learning	V V V V
NHTV	NVAO THE-ICE CeQulnt	V V V
Hotelschool The Hague	NVAO THE-ICE CeQulnt Small-scale and intensive education	V V V V
Saxion	NVAO THE-ICE	V V
Hotel Management School Maastricht	NVAO THE-ICE Small-scale and intensive education	V V V
TIO	NVAO Small-scale and intensive education	V V
EuroCollege	NVAO	V

Tips and tops (1)

- ✓ Many tops were expressed concerning the overall process, organisation and outcomes 😊
- ✓ Tips can be divided in these categories:
 - Expectations and formal requirements between NVAO and THE-ICE, eg 2 evaluation reports instead of 1 and maximum number of pages
 - Perhaps different focus between NVAO and THE-ICE, as in governance, process and academic results
 - Preparations by project management (planning, financial overview, and preparing foreign panel members for the Dutch educational system)

Tips (2)

- Provide a better overview of task division between the bureau and the panel secretary
- THE-ICE also focusses on institutional aspects
- How to align better between THE-ICE framework and limited NVAO standards
- Additional investments for a three day site visit plus a large panel (auditors THE-ICE stay for more days)

Lessons learned (1)

- ✓ Rooftiling and harmonization between panels was not an easy task; NVAO has strict requirements before approving the (7) panels
- ✓ A stricter project management approach overall for a next occasion would be good
- ✓ Alignment and extra contacts via live sessions, Skype, Zoom are essential (with schools, but especially with and between NVAO and THE-ICE)

Lessons learned (2)

- ✓ It would be good to have the auditors from THE-ICE approved within NVAO-requirements. This will benefit any next project
- ✓ NVAO can stimulate even further that institutions in Higher Education 'do it themselves'. The involvement of NQA, AeQui or Hobeon should not be a given, a standard reflex
- ✓ Further alignment between standards and procedures in dual accreditation projects like this
- ✓ Schools should strengthen their strategic cooperation even further, public and private schools

Lessons learned (3)

- ✓ The formal requirements before approving panel members are too complicated with the cluster approach; please revise
- ✓ Especially if there is dual accreditation, and several special features to reckon with
- ✓ Nationally, this project has the keen attention of several HE-institutions and associations. We're invited as speaker in different platforms
- ✓ Further modernisation of the accreditation process is quite welcome and fits the sign of the times!

In closing

It was a great pleasure to work with you. You gave us trust and responsibility in a complicated process, with lots of sensitive matters.

Thank you for this 😊 !

Good luck!

‘Reflections of THE-ICE on the Cluster Accreditation ’

October 2018

TOPS

- Long lead time/ dialogue/ flexibility/ desire to succeed
- Project bureau
- Key liaison persons
- Regular ('face to face') contact
- Limited number of expert chairs and secretaries
- Long lead before audits

TIPS

- Roof tiling – challenges
- Approval of auditors
- Understanding/ use of THE-ICE approach
- Limitations ‘mandatory’ requirements/ procedures
- Operational challenges – particularly travel

The Future

- ADHMS is a 'unique' partnership
- Develop and promote the ADHMS brand
- THE-ICE will support and promote this development in any way it can
- THE-ICE will continue to explore ways to develop the partnership with the NVAO, to the benefit of the ADHMS

For more information

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