

Decision of the FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Committee



8th Meeting on November 30, 2022

PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Project Number: | 22/122 |
| Higher Education Institution: | Business School Netherlands |
| Location: | Buren (the Netherlands) |
| Study Programme: | 1. Executive MBA (part-time) 2. Distance Learning MBA with two versions: - International Action Learning MBA (part-time, blended-learning, English language) - Action Learning MBA (part-time, blended-learning, Dutch language) |
| Type of Accreditation: | Initial accreditation |

The FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Committee has taken the following decision:

According to § 7 (6) in conjunction with § 9 (1) of the FIBAA General Terms and Conditions within the framework of procedures for the award of the FIBAA Quality Seal for Programmes from January 1, 2021, the study programmes are accredited with conditions.

Period of Accreditation: November 30, 2022 to November 29, 2027

Conditions:

For both programmes:

- **Condition 1** (see chapter 2):
BSN documents the process and the criteria it uses to assess the equivalence of professional experience at Bachelor level in a binding regulation, and demonstrates that this is in accordance with national law.
- **Condition 2** (see chapter 3.1):
BSN transparently presents the official name and degree of the programme on its website.

Executive MBA

- **Condition 3** (see chapter 2):
BSN adjusts the admission regulations and ensures that only applicants with appropriate work experience of at least seven years after the first higher education qualification can start the Executive MBA programme.

Proof of meeting these conditions is to be submitted by August 29, 2023.

All conditions are fulfilled.
The decision was made by the FIBAA Accreditation and Certification
Committee on September 20, 2023

The FIBAA Quality Seal is awarded.

Assessment Report

Higher Education Institution:

Business School Netherlands, Buren (the Netherlands)

Bachelor/Master programme:

1. Executive MBA (part-time)
2. Distance Learning MBA with two versions:
 - International Action Learning MBA (part-time, blended-learning, English language)
 - Action Learning MBA (part-time, blended-learning, Dutch language)

Qualification awarded on completion:

1. Executive MBA
2. Distance Learning MBA

General information on the study programmes

Brief description of the study programmes:

The **Executive MBA** is aimed at Dutch-speaking managers with extensive management experience, residing in the Netherlands. The language of instruction is Dutch.

The **Distance Learning MBA** is aimed at Dutch and international students. The version *International Action Learning MBA* is targeting English-speaking managers or management trainees, living anywhere in the world. The language of instruction is English. All international students study at least 25 % of the programme at the location in Buren. The version *Action Learning MBA* is targeting Dutch-speaking managers or management trainees. In both versions education is provided through a combination of online and offline teaching.

BSN's degree programmes are geared towards the development of middle and executive managers into Great Leaders, who (1) are responsible and create a positive impact on society; who (2) are capable to transform their own organizations; who (3) take well-informed decisions and who (4) are focused on performance management. BSN graduates will be able to apply the tools of Action Learning and other managerial and leadership tools in their own organizations. Action Learning is a process that involves a small group working on real problems, taking action and learning as individuals, as a team, and as an organisation. It helps them to develop creative, flexible and successful strategies to tackle problems. It requires the participants to act to learn, and learn to act.

Type of study programme:

For both programmes: Master programmes

Projected study time and number of ECTS credits assigned to the study programme:

For both programmes: 65 ECTS credits

Mode of study:

For both programmes: part-time

Didactic approach:

For both programmes: blended-learning study programme / eLearning study programme

Double/Joint Degree programme:

For both programmes: no

Programme cycle starts in:

both winter (February) and summer semester (September)

Initial start of the programme:

For both programmes: 1990

Type of accreditation:

Initial accreditation

Procedure

A contract for the initial accreditation of the Executive MBA and Distance Learning MBA was made between Hobéon, FIBAA and the Business School Netherlands (Buren, the Netherlands) on. On May 17, 2022, the BSN submitted a self-evaluation report, which included a detailed description of the programme and further documents in order to prove that the criteria for programme accreditation are met.

At the same time, FIBAA and Hobéon appointed a review panel. The HEI has agreed with the chosen experts. The panel consisted of:

Drs. Nies Rijnders

Chair of the panel

Avans University of Applied Sciences

Expert of the Centre for sustainable business and strategic policy advisor research and education and applied sciences

Drs. A.M. Andriol

The Hague University of Applied Sciences

Strategic advisor for the Executive board in the field of quality assurance, inclusion and internationalisation; strategic education advisor and teacher for MBA and IBMS (International Business and Management Studies); strategic policy advisor for the Dutch Ministry of Culture, Education and Science about internationalisation, digitalisation and collaboration.

Rob van der Hoorn, MBA

Business economist and entrepreneur, advisor on financial and economic issues, developer of new business concepts and quality issues

Margarita Jardim, MA

Student Master International Communication Hanze University of Applied Sciences.

Thesis: Behaviour and Change Communication, Encouraging Sustainable Fashion in Portugal & USA

Hobéon project manager (NVAO-certified secretary):

Roel van Krieken

FIBAA project manager:

Viktoria Dermanowski

The assessment is based on the self-evaluation report, amended by further documents, as requested by the panel, and an on-site visit. The panel conducted the assessment according to FIBAA quality standards and at the same time according to the assessment framework of NVAO (The Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders)¹. This was efficient due to an essential overlap of both frameworks. The on-site visit took place from June 27 to June 28, 2022, at the HEI's

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https://www.nvao.net/files/attachments/.139/Assessment_Framework_for_the_Higher_Education_Accreditation_System_of_the_Netherlands_2018.pdf

premises in Buren, the Netherlands. At the end of the on-site visit, the panel has given a short feedback on its first impressions to representatives of the HEI.

The assessment report based on this was delivered to the HEI for comment on September 6, 2022. The statement on the report was given up on October 20, 2022. It has been taken into account in the report at hand.

Summary

The Executive MBA and Distance Learning MBA offered by the Business School Netherlands fulfil with few exceptions the FIBAA quality requirements for master programmes and can be accredited by the Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA) for five years starting on November 30, 2022 and finishing on November 29, 2027 under conditions. The programme is in accordance with the national and the European Qualification Frameworks and the European Standards and Guidelines in their applicable version valid as of the time of the opening of the procedure, and with the Bologna Declaration. This includes fulfilling the requirements set by the EQUAL MBA Guidelines.

The panel members identified need for improvement regarding the following aspects² (admission requirements, transparent presentation of the official name and degree of the programmes and correct Diploma supplements). They recommend the accreditation on condition of meeting the following requirements:

For both programmes:

- **Condition 1** (see chapter 2):
BSN documents the process and the criteria it uses to assess the equivalence of professional experience at Bachelor level in a binding regulation, and demonstrates that this is in accordance with national law.
- **Condition 2** (see chapter 3.1):
BSN transparently presents the official name and degree of the programme on its website.

Executive MBA

- **Condition 3** (see chapter 2):
BSN adjusts the admission regulations and ensures that only applicants with appropriate work experience of at least seven years after the first higher education qualification can start the Executive MBA programme.

Proof of meeting these conditions is to be submitted by August 29, 2023.

The panel members also identified several areas where the programme could be further developed.

For both programmes, the panel recommends:

- considering whether Mintzberg is still relevant as a starting point for the programme profile (see chapter 1.1);
- making the vision on internationalisation more explicit and give it more prominence (see chapter 1.2);
- including the information on equality of opportunities for disabled students in a legally binding document for more transparency and security for the students (see chapter 3.2);
- reviewing possibilities in which the diversity of the teaching staff can better reflect the diversity of the students (see chapter 3.4);

² These aspects are asterisk criteria which means that they are essential for the study programme.

- bringing Dutch and international students into contact with each other more often in order to improve students' intercultural skills and enrich education in both Executive and Distance Learning MBA (see chapter 3.4);
- making the quality assurance instruments less dependent on individuals and more embedded in the working system of the organisation (see chapter 5.1).

For Executive MBA additionally:

The panel recommends that students be further educated in English language (see chapter 3.4).

The measures that the HEI takes in order to implement the recommendations of the panel members will have to be considered during the re-accreditation.

Furthermore, the quality requirement(s) that have not been fulfilled – internationality of student body (Dutch programmes) – is not an asterisk criterion and therefore does not lead to a condition. The measures the HEI takes to solve the identified problem are to be considered during the re-accreditation.

There are criteria in which **both programmes** exceed the quality requirements:

- Counselling for prospective students (see chapter 2)
- Integration of theory and practice (see chapter 3.1)
- Guest lecturers (see chapter 3.3)

Information

Information on the Institution

Business School Netherlands (BSN) is a private Dutch University of Applied Sciences, which was established in 1988. It was also the first in the Netherlands to offer MBA programmes based on Action Learning. The Action Learning philosophy was developed in the 1940's by the British management consultant and professor, Reg Revans (1907-2003). Since 1991 all BSN study programmes have been based on Action Learning.

BSN describes the Action Learning approach on its website as follows³:

Action Learning is a process that involves a small group working on real problems, taking action and learning as individuals, as a team, and as an organisation. It helps them to develop creative, flexible and successful strategies to tackle problems. It requires the participants to act to learn, and learn to act.

It took shape when Revans brought coal mine managers together in small groups to share experiences and ask each other questions about what they had seen and heard. Productivity increased by 30% because of that. In the following decades, he further developed his insights into a much-praised and applied methodology, which is used by many large organisations across the globe. Samsung, General Electric, Heineken and Boeing all use Action Learning to solve complex issues and increase the learning capacities of their organisations.

Action Learning process & components:

Action Learning is a process of insightful questioning and reflective listening.

Action Learning tackles problems through a process of first asking questions to clarify the exact nature of the problem, reflecting and identifying possible solutions, and only then taking action. Questions build group dialogue and cohesiveness, generate innovative and system thinking, and enhance learning outcomes.



³ <https://www.bsn.eu/action-learning/what-is-action-learning/>

1. A problem

The problem should be urgent, significant, and the responsibility of the team to resolve.

2. An Action Learning Group or Team

The Action Learning team is preferably composed of 4-8 people, ideally with diverse backgrounds and experiences.

3. A Process of Insightful Questioning and Reflective Listening

Action Learning tackles problems through a process of asking questions to clarify the exact nature of the problem. Action is taken after identifying and examining possible solutions. Questions build group dialogue and cohesiveness, generating innovative and systems-based thinking.

4. An Action Taken on the Problem

Action Learning requires that the group can take action on the problem it is working on. If the group makes recommendations only, it loses its energy, creativity and commitment.

5. A Commitment to Learning

Solving an organisational problem provides immediate, short-term benefits to the company. The higher, longer-term strategic value to the organisation is the learning gained by each group member and the group as a whole as well as the application of the learning throughout the organisation.

6. An Action Learning Coach

The Action Learning coach helps the team members reflect on both what they are learning and how they are solving problems. The coach enables group members to reflect on how they listen. They then reframe the problem, and give feedback on how the team plans and works together.

An Action Learning coach also helps the team focus on what they find difficult, what processes they employ, and the implications of these processes on what they achieve. With this information, teams can grow and become more cohesive.

BSN has been a World Institute for Action Learning affiliate for many years and has over 15 Certified Action Learning Coaches and over 60 teaching staff worldwide. The institute and its programmes are accredited and acknowledged by the following institutions: The Dutch Ministry of Education, the Dutch governmental accreditation Board NVAO, The American Accreditation Council ACBSP, the European ATHEA and the Swiss certification EduQua.

Programme Description and Appraisal in Detail

1. Objectives

1.1 Objectives of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)

BSN offers two part-time MBA programmes. These are the Executive MBA and the Distance Learning MBA.

The **Executive MBA** is aimed at Dutch-speaking managers with extensive management experience, residing in the Netherlands. The language of instruction is Dutch.

The **Distance Learning MBA** is aimed at Dutch and international students. The version *International Action Learning MBA* is targeting English-speaking managers or management trainees, living anywhere in the world. The language of instruction is English. All international students study at least 25 % of the programme at the location in Buren. The version *Action Learning MBA* is targeting Dutch-speaking managers or management trainees. In both versions education is provided through a combination of online and offline teaching.

The Learning outcomes of BSN's MBA programmes are transcribed in twelve general competencies indicating the knowledge and skills an MBA graduate will be able to demonstrate after successful completion of the programme. The learning outcomes are derived from BSN's Job Profile and based upon the generally accepted international accreditation criteria used by the Association of MBA's (AMBA, 2011). Furthermore, to further anchor the master's level, the exit qualifications are related to the Dublin descriptors.

BSN's degree programmes are geared towards the development of middle and executive managers into Great Leaders, who (1) are responsible and create a positive impact on society; who (2) are capable to transform their own organizations; who (3) take well-informed decisions and who (4) are focused on performance management. BSN graduates will be able to apply the tools of Action Learning and other managerial and leadership tools in their own organizations.

The professional profile that forms the basis of both programmes is based on Mintzberg's ten management roles. In addition, this professional profile has been and will continue to be tested annually against topicality, trends and developments, in consultation with the work field committee and based on student and teacher evaluations. Mintzberg's roles are subdivided into the following three groups.

| Interpersonal roles | Information roles | Decision-making roles |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Protocol | Observer | Entrepreneur |
| Leader | Information distributor | Firefighter |
| Connector | Spokesperson | Distributor |
| | | Negotiator |

In addition, BSN MBA programmes have a strong research component, in which the student investigates professional practice from a scientific perspective. In this way, the student develops a critical attitude with which she/he learns to look at daily practice independently, across disciplines and methodically in order to act professionally within it. In this way, the student creates context knowledge that forms the basis for strong and well-founded recommendations. The subject Research methodology (RM) serves as a support in this.

The BSN MBA programmes all lead to the following twelve exit qualifications.

| Programme: Executive MBA and Distance Learning MBA | |
|---|---|
| Programmatic Objectives | Intended Learning Outcomes |
| Is proficient in the development of, or contribution to, a challenging organisation strategy based on conceptual and visionary skills and taking into considerations recent and future developments. Is capable of formulating and implementing future plans in such manner that it creates support both within and outside the organisation. | 1.Strategic policy development |
| The independent development and/or improvement of a working method in which the approach demonstrates insight in both research methods as well as the work processes, and that the result leads to demonstrable improvements in efficiency quality, flexibility and sustainability. | 2. Improving/ developing working methods |
| Contributing to, developing and achieving policy objectives related to business issues or challenges. Takes into account the coherence between strategic, structural and cultural aspects of the organisation and anticipates future changes (internal and external). | 3.Policy development/ Implementation of year plan |
| Is capable of developing and utilising business opportunities for both new and existing products / services. Also knows how to stimulate and support such a pro-active, entrepreneurial attitude of co-workers / colleagues. Is capable of assessing risks and daring to take risks. | 4.Entrepreneurship |
| Can assess the effects and quality of his/her own leadership style at any desired moment within any context. Is capable - if necessary - to adjust in a natural way and does this in such a manner that co-workers consistently receive the correct guidance/direction in the light of both task fulfilment and motivation. | 5.Leadership |
| Can independently integrate relevant scientific insights, theories and concepts from the practice. Is able to generate new insights and solutions based on that and on behalf of complex, multidisciplinary problems. Can present these convincingly and have them implemented. | 6.Decision-making |
| Is able to justify his/her own actions based on a professional attitude which shows concern for normative cultural aspects, respect for others and regard for the social (living) environment. Can generate conditions in the organisation to enable this responsibility and stimulate it internally. | 7.Ethical responsibility |
| Is able to integrate relevant knowledge and skills through which all desired roles within the team can be assumed and which contribute to growth (individually or as a group) and to completion of set objectives | 8.Cooperation |

| | |
|--|--|
| Can convey information and conclusions in a convincing and understanding way and, if necessary, the recommendations and developed implementation plans that follow from this. Can also choose for the most appropriate form of communication in respect of the target group, type of information and anticipated effect. Is capable of accurately reformulating received messages irrespective of the form of communication. | 9.Communicating |
| Can manage problem-solving teams. Following a structured decision-making approach whereby the team members are stimulated to participate. Knows how to use existing, relevant theories and seeing to sufficient acceptance of the implementation of the decision. | 10.Analysing, information-processing and problem-solving abilities |
| Is capable to, on his/her own initiative, integrate existing knowledge with new, complex and abstract information from various sources. Hereby taking responsibility for further development of learning experiences and reflection thereupon. Can make sound decisions regarding the possibilities for improvement and independently developing a learning route by means of which this development can be realised. | 11. Learning and personal development |
| Can analyse relevant complex patterns and trends in the international business world. Based on this, he/she is also capable of formulating recommendations regarding the (im-) possibilities in the field of doing business internationally and, where necessary, on organising the execution thereof. | 12.International awareness |

The main difference between the Executive MBA and the Distance Learning MBA is in the target group. It leads to different concepts and other approaches for achieving the intended qualification objectives. The Executive MBA students are already senior managers and therefore, the application of the knowledge gained during their studies takes place on a more advanced level based on their needs and experience. In the Executive MBA more contact hours take place allowing the students discussing their own business cases and offering more interaction between the students for exchange. The programme is designed to broaden participants' strategic and global perspectives of business and to expand their capabilities towards a wider range of leadership and management skills.

The Distance Learning MBA is aimed to provide graduates with knowledge, skills and competencies required in the development and implementation of business strategies and leadership. It focuses on the personal and professional development of this target group. The programme is addressing managers, management trainees, supervisors or team leaders with at least two years of work experience. The target group for this programme benefits from intensive supervision of the practical assignments

Appraisal:

The qualification objectives of the study programmes are explained and convincingly presented in relation to the target group, targeted professional field and societal context of the discipline. They embrace academic proficiency, comprehensive employability, as well as the development of the individual student's personality. The programmes' profile is also in line with and tested against international standards of MBAs, including AMBA and EQUAL MBA Guidelines, and the needs of the professional field.

The study programmes lay down the intended learning outcomes in a programme profile. The programme profile is based on Mintzberg's ten roles. BSN has the ambition to incorporate the principles of great leadership in the profile and the programme. The panel sees this as a good development and **recommends** BSN consider whether Mintzberg is still relevant as a starting point for the programme profile. From the interviews, it appears that the profile of great leadership is more relevant to, among others, lecturers and students than Mintzberg's profile.

| | | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|------|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 1.1* | Objectives of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |

1.2 International orientation of the study programme design (Asterisk Criterion)

Both programmes define “International awareness” as a qualification objective. The graduates shall be able to analyse relevant complex patterns and trends in the international business world. Based on this, he/she is also capable of formulating recommendations regarding the (im-) possibilities in the field of doing business internationally and, where necessary, on organising the execution thereof.

Furthermore, BSN has international staff (teacher, coaches, examiners) located in the Netherlands, France, USA, Belgium, UK, China, Czech Republic, South Africa, as well as a South African academic director, and an International/South African director for International Programmes.

Within the group project assignment “International Management practice”, students in the Dutch programmes can go on a study trip to China. The international MBA students gain international experience through their study trips to the Netherlands and learn about many different cultures in their own study environment since the student body is very diverse. Almost half of the student body in the Distance Learning MBA is not from the Netherlands. All international students study at least 25 % of the programme at the location in Buren, the Netherlands.

Appraisal:

The programme design appropriately takes into account the required international aspects, with respect, too, to its graduates’ employability. The international context arises through the content of the programmes as well as the Action Learning Projects between the students and lecturers as well as the international environment at BSN.

However, the panel formed the view that that there is no explicit vision on internationalisation. Given the environment in which MBA programmes are located, the panel sees unrealized potential and room for improvement. The panel **recommends** BSN make the vision on internationalisation more explicit and give it more prominence.

In addition, a more systematic approach to bringing Dutch and international students into contact with each other more often would, for example, improve students' intercultural skills and enrich education in both Executive and Distance Learning MBA.

| | | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|------|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 1.2* | International orientation of the study programme design (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |

1.3 Positioning of the study programmes

MBA programmes are provided worldwide but BSN is one of the pioneers using the Action Learning method in the Netherlands. This is one of its advantages in gaining a better position in the educational market. Moreover, this teaching method applied by BSN seems to be becoming more and more attractive, not only for Executive MBA students, but also for young managers who want to strengthen and develop their own leadership skills in a pragmatic way. BSN is ranked by CEO Magazine 2022 Global MBA Rankings (#14 EXMBA and #2 Online MBA).

In the MBA sphere, BSN competitors range from NCOI Opleidingen and Nederlands Talen Instituut (NTI) to Rotterdam School of Management and Nijenrode University.

BSN MBA students are already employed. Research has shown in the past that there is a strong increase in jobs and salary two years after graduation (see self-evaluation report p. 11).

BSN has developed a professional profile for its (Executive) MBA programmes. It summarizes its understanding of “the” manager it strives to educate: “An entrepreneur or enterprising manager, a leader, decisive, knowledgeable, communicatively strong, and willing to learn and self-reflect”

The programmes at hand follow a professional profile that fits within a professional Master's, where the emphasis is on the use/application of theory.

MBA alumni of BSN work in a wide variety of organisations. Their qualities are deployed in multinationals, medium-sized companies, healthcare organisations, government and consultancy firms. Graduates also work as independent entrepreneurs.

Examples of BSN graduates in different positions and companies by way of illustration:

- Head of information management ABP heerlen
- Director/owner Emora balanced leadership sales director Content BV
- Director BMC group manager road assistance ANWB
- Corporate director HR Draka Holding publisher Het Parool
- Director Hungary, ING bank sales manager Sara Lee/ DE
- Commander Navy Caribbean, Ministry of Defence
- Chairman of the Executive Board of Stichting Centrum
- Head of the Bus Division, RET

- Manager Marketing and Communication, RTV Utrecht

In 2021, BSN has developed its own vision of leadership: Great Leadership

According to this vision, Great Leaders comfortably combine success with responsibility. Great Leaders (1) are responsible and create a positive impact on society; (2) are capable to transform their own organizations; (3) take well-informed decisions and (4) are focused on performance management.

All BSN education programmes are being restyled to reflect the four different pillars of Great Leadership. This shall strengthen the structure of the programmes and provide additional transparency in the learning outcomes.

Appraisal:

The reasons given for the positioning in the educational market of this study programme are plausible. The profile of BSN is attractive to the panel. Action learning distinguishes BSN from other MBA programme providers. The panel is very positive about the Action Learning concept. The programmes teach students to investigate their own workplace in a structural manner, according to the methodology of action learning. In doing so, students combine relevant (scientific) insights with doing action- and practice-oriented research.

The arguments in support of graduate employability on the basis of the stated qualification objectives are convincingly presented. The future fields of employment for graduates are plausibly set forth. The study programmes are convincingly integrated into the HEI's overall strategic concept and its vision of "Great Leadership".

| | | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|-------|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 1.3 | Positioning of the study programme | | | | | |
| 1.3.1 | Positioning of the study programme in the educational market | | | X | | |
| 1.3.2 | Positioning of the study programme on the job market for graduates („Employability“) | | | X | | |
| 1.3.3 | Positioning of the study programme within the HEI's overall strategic concept | | | X | | |

2. Admission

The admission requirements are regulated in Article 3 of the Education and Examination Regulation.

Distance Learning MBA

The applicant:

- a. holds (an equivalent of) a Bachelor's degree or higher,
- b. is a manager or management trainee,
- c. has a minimum of 2 years appropriate and relevant post graduate work experience,
- d. has approval from his/her organisation to do research and execute practical assignments within the own work environment,
- e. has internet and e-mail access and,
- f. if he/she applies for enrolment in the International Action Learning MBA version of the Distance Learning MBA programme, the following language requirements apply:
 - i. his/her first language is English or,
 - ii. he/she obtained the degree meant under sub a. in an English programme, or
 - iii. he/she achieved a score of at least 6.0 in the IELTS language test, or
 - iv. he/she achieved a score of at least 79 (internet based), 213 (computer based) or 550 (paper based) in the TOEFL language test.

Mature and experienced applicants who do not hold such a degree, may also be considered. The guideline here is a minimum of 7 years demonstrable, appropriate and relevant work experience at Bachelor's level.

Applicants who are not in a (formal) management position but to whose professional development the learning programme will significantly contribute, may also be considered. This would apply to professionals who operate at postgraduate level but are not necessarily (continuously) involved in management of people or a department. (For instance; policy officers, accountants, consultants etc.).

Based on a thorough verification of submitted documents in respect of the above and, if deemed necessary, a personal interview, BSN will determine the applicant's aptitude to participate in the MBA programme and achieve the programme learning outcomes.

Executive MBA:

BSN applies the following admission requirements for the Executive MBA:

The prospective student:

- a. is a (senior) manager with at least 3 years of managerial experience;
- b. has completed a bachelor's or master's degree programme or has extensive practical experience (guideline: at least 7 years) at bachelor's level
- c. is involved in business administration, strategic decision-making processes; and
- d. has permission from his/her employer to carry out practical assignments within the working environment

e. has had a successful intake interview.

Based on the submitted documents and the explanation thereof during an intake interview, the programme information department will determine whether the candidate can be admitted.

For student admissions, an application form is used, which gives the reader a good insight into the prospective studies and whether he/she fulfils all entry requirements.

On the website the requirements for prospective students are described. Thus, they can discover the possibility of enrolling in the MBA programmes at BSN.

For the MBA students, if required, a personal interview is held by phone or in person to check the admission requirements and the motivation of the students as well as the opportunities to complete action learning projects and the final thesis in their own working environment. MBA students on international programmes need to send in a declaration that they understand the concept of Action Learning and that they are able to do the needed projects in their working environment. Without such a declaration a student cannot start.

When enrolment officers have doubts about whether someone can enrol, they check with the Dean or the Programme Director/Education/Director International programmes. When enrolled, each student gets the timetable for his/her MBA set with fixed dates of classes, conferences, conference topics, subset meetings, assignments, dissertation, defence (viva voce).

The aspirant student will receive a final decision no later than two weeks after providing all supporting documentation and, if applicable, after the interview has taken place.

Appraisal:

Both programmes:

The admission requirements are defined and comprehensible. Both programmes allow experienced applicants who do not hold a Bachelor degree to be considered for admission. The guideline here is a minimum of 7 years demonstrable, appropriate and relevant work experience at Bachelor's level. However, there is no documented process containing the relevant criteria on how the equivalency of the work experience at Bachelor level is assessed. **Therefore, the panel recommends the following condition:**

BSN documents the process and the criteria it uses to assess the equivalence of professional experience at Bachelor level in a binding regulation and demonstrates that this is in accordance with national law.

The required language proficiency level ensures that students are able to successfully complete the study programme.

The selection procedure is transparent and ensures that qualified students are admitted. The interviews show that the study programmes pay sufficient attention to the information and selection of students.

Students indicate that they experience the selection and intake as very pleasant and informative. They know what they have to expect and what skills and competences they want to develop further. BSN ensures a constant availability for prospective students and reacts quickly to incoming enquiries. The counselling options are based on the target group's needs.

The admission procedure is described, documented, and accessible for interested parties. The admission decision is based on transparent criteria and is communicated in writing.

Distance Learning MBA:

The required professional experience corresponds to the defined qualification profile of entrants and the study programme's objectives. Certified proof of this experience must be shown at the time of the admission. According to the EQUAL MBA Guidelines, this translates into at least 2 years of professional experience after the first higher education qualification.

Executive MBA:

Regarding the requirements of the EQUAL MBA Guidelines, the Executive MBA does not fulfil the admission standards. For an Executive MBA programme, it means at least 7 years of professional experience after the first higher education qualification, with some at a leadership level. BSN only requires three years after the first higher education qualification. **Therefore, the panel recommends the following condition:**

BSN adjusts the admission regulations and ensures that only applicants with appropriate work experience of at least seven years after the first higher education qualification can start the Executive MBA programme.

| | | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--------|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 2.1* | Admission requirements (Asterisk Criterion) | | | | X | |
| 2.2 | Counselling for prospective students | | X | | | |
| 2.3* | Selection procedure (if relevant) | | | X | | |
| 2.4(*) | Professional experience (if relevant; Asterisk Criterion for master programmes that require professional experience) | | | Distance Learning MBA | Executive MBA | |
| 2.5* | Ensuring foreign language proficiency (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 2.6* | Transparency and documentation of admission procedure and decision (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |

3. Contents, structure and didactical concept of the programme

3.1 Contents

The first phase of the programme contains the elementary theory that every manager is supposed to comprehend, supplemented with knowledge development and training in Action Learning, research methodology and smart reading skills. The subjects that will be covered are as follows:

- Action Learning
- Research Methodology
- Leadership and Motivation
- Decision-making and Creativity
- Training Interpersonal Skills
- Teambuilding
- Organisational Structure and Culture
- Information Management
- Operations Management
- Marketing Management
- Financial Management
- Human Resource Management
- Strategic Management
- Business Law
- Smart Reading

The second phase of the programme involves the practical components of management and deepens the knowledge gained in Phase 1 through a series of seven core courses:

- Operations Management
- Human Resources Management
- Marketing Management
- Financial Management
- Information Management
- Strategic Management
- International Management

Throughout phase 2, four additional 1-day seminars on current management themes will be organised

The third phase comprises the independent execution of the following assignments:

- Dissertation
- Evaluative Assessment of Managerial Learning

| Phase | Teaching unit | Test / Order | Abbreviation | EC |
|---------|--------------------------------------|--|---------------|------|
| Phase 1 | Action Learning Development | Action Learning Literature Research | ALLO | 2.5 |
| | Management fundamentals | Organization Analysis | OA | 4.5 |
| | | | | |
| Phase 2 | Strategic management theory | Theory test 4 pills | TH SM | 2.0 |
| | Human resources management theory | HRM theory test | TH HRM | 2.0 |
| | Operations management theory | Theory test Operations | TH OM | 2.0 |
| | Financial management theory | Theory test Finance | TH FM | 2.0 |
| | Marketing management theory | Theory test Marketing | TH MM | 2.0 |
| | Information management theory | Theory test Information | TH IM | 2.0 |
| | International management theory | Theory test International | TH IntM | 2.0 |
| | Management practice 1 | Action Learning Project 1 | ALP 1 | 5.0 |
| | Management practice 2 | Action Learning Project 2 | ALP 2 | 5.0 |
| | Management practice 3 | Action Learning Project 3 | ALP 3 | 5.0 |
| | International management practice | Group assignment Int. Management | Int. M. opdr. | 5.0 |
| Phase 3 | Master's test | Dissertation | Diss. | 19.5 |
| | Analysis and evaluation | Evaluation Management Learning experiences | EML | 4.5 |
| | | | Total ECs | 65.0 |
| | Major (optional, supplementary. Art. | Personal Effectiveness Paper | PEP | 2.5 |

To sum up, in phase one, student receives introductions to all phase two subjects, supplemented by a skills programme, reading and research skills, and other organizational topics (e.g. law, culture, structure, change management).

In phase two, seven subjects and research methods are explored in more depth. Each subject receives approximately the same amount of attention. In the third phase, the student must prove that he can apply what she/he has learned at a strategic level and reflect on herself/himself. Also looking at the complex structure of the assignments, this creates a good vertical and horizontal coherence.

Degree and programmes' name

The Executive MBA is so named because the participant group consists of senior managers. The Distance Learning MBA with its two versions ((International) Action Learning MBA is so titled because action learning is an important part of the programme, and in the International MBA the group of students is truly international.

The degree awarded corresponds to NLQF level 7 based on the number of ECTS credits.

Integration of theory and practice

The programmes have an almost 50/50 split between acquiring theory and translating and applying theory into practice. The latter is done by carrying out analysis assignments, Action Learning projects and the concluding dissertation. Apart from testing the knowledge, the assignments are mainly aimed at learning in practice. In addition to studying the amount of basic theory distributed, consisting of ten compulsory books and more than ten articles per main subject, the student does literature research based on the practical assignments (Action Learning projects). They use the entire body of knowledge, such as books, articles, white papers and digital work, to obtain further depth and breadth within their case study. For the most part, students carry out these assignments within the practice of their own organization.

Interdisciplinary thinking and Ethical aspects

The students learn in small subset groups how to apply action learning methods by solving the problem in their own company. Action Learning (AL) coaches are involved here and teach the students about the AL methods in the practical way. By using this method and for solving their case, students are applying the knowledge they have gained from different courses in an interdisciplinary way. During the on-site visit the lecturers and students confirmed that in some courses also ethical aspects such as Diversity and Inclusion are covered and are also subject of Action learning activities.

Research: teaching and assignments

The students receive extensive classes in how to conduct practice-based research (4 days). They also receive very detailed manuals for the assignments. There is a separate sub-task for a first assignment in literature analysis (ALLO) in the first phase of the MBA. And a first assignment in business analysis (OA).

In the second phase of the MBA student does three or four Action Learning Projects (ALP), which provide solutions to business problems. Starting from a problem in the student's own organisation, a problem statement is formulated. Next, the student conducts field and literature research and participates in subset meetings supervised by the AL coach. On this basis, he/she generates a number of solution alternatives of which, with arguments, the most suitable solution is written out in an implementation plan. This entire process is recorded in a project report and assessed according to previously determined and communicated criteria. The student determines - within the framework set by BSN - the subject himself. This enables him to tackle problems that are most urgent for his/her organisation at that moment. The term 'frameworks' in the previous sentence refers to the format used by the student to draw up the ALP proposal and submit it for approval to the subject teacher.

In the third phase, students deliver a dissertation (Master thesis), which is about solving a problem at the strategic level. All the learning from the previous practical assignments (literature and organizational analysis and solving tactical business problems) and the acquired theory are integrally dealt with in this final dissertation.

Details such as requirements and assessment criteria on the Dissertation, are worked out in the manual 'Dissertation' accessible via the student site.

The educational unit Analysis and Evaluation requires the execution of an Evaluative Assessment of Managerial Learning (EAML). The EAML is presented in the form of a written report that needs to be submitted within two weeks after submission of the Dissertation. Students are required to do this exercise at the end of every six-month period and discuss the in-between evaluation with their Action Learning Coach.

Details such as writing instructions and assessment criteria on the EAML, are worked out in the manual 'Evaluative Assessment of Managerial Learning' accessible via the studentsite.

Appraisal:

Both programmes:

The curriculum adequately reflects the qualification objectives of the study programmes. The contents of the courses are well-balanced, logically connected and oriented towards the intended learning outcomes. The contents of the programmes are in line with the EQUAL MBA Guidelines and take into account the students' professional experience and refer to it.

Theory and practice are systematically interrelated throughout the curriculum and especially supported by the Action Learning method. Theoretical discourse and practical application complement each other in developing the students' qualification profile. The Action Learning approach also promotes students' interdisciplinary thinking. Ethical implications (for example diversity and inclusion) are appropriately communicated.

Students acquire methodological competences and are enabled to do scientific work on the Master level. All exams, as they are defined for the courses, are suited in format and content to ascertain the intended learning outcomes. The requirements are in accordance with the desired qualification level. The exams are characterised by a wide variety of test formats.

The final theses are evaluated based on previously published and coherently applied criteria, rules, and procedures. The students prove, especially in their thesis, their ability to do scientific work and the achievement of the study programme's qualification objectives.

Rationale for degree and programme name

Both programmes Executive MBA and Distance Learning MBA are nationally registered with the CROHO number 70054 and 70053 respectively. These are also the degrees awarded after graduation.

However, there is a non-transparent presentation on the BSN website. There, the Executive MBA is presented as Executive Action Learning MBA. In the (International) Action Learning MBA versions of the Distance Learning MBA, it is not transparently presented that the degree awarded is “Distance Learning MBA”.

During the on-site visit this topic was discussed with BSN. As a result, BSN decided to request NVAO to review a new name for the Distance Learning MBA. The new name should be Action Learning MBA. The panel is of the opinion that the new name fits the actual programme better and advises the NVAO positively on this matter.

However, in terms of transparency for the students at this moment, **the panel recommends the following condition for both programmes:**

BSN transparently presents the official name and degree of the programme on its website.

| | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|---|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 3.1 Contents | | | | | |
| 3.1.1* Logic and conceptual coherence (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.1.2* Rationale for degree and programme name (Asterisk Criterion) | | | | X | |
| 3.1.3* Integration of theory and practice (Asterisk Criterion) | | X | | | |
| 3.1.4 Interdisciplinary thinking | | | X | | |
| 3.1.5 Ethical aspects | | | X | | |
| 3.1.6* Methods and scientific practice (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.1.7* Examination and final thesis (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |

3.2 Structure

| | |
|--|--|
| Projected study time | Executive MBA and Action Learning MBA: 28 months International Action Learning MBA: 24 months |
| Number of Credit Points (CP) | 65 ECTS credits |
| Workload per CP | 28 hours |
| Time required for processing the final thesis and awarded CP | 6 months; 19,5 ECTS credits |
| Number of contact hours | Executive MBA: 463 Distance Learning MBA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Action Learning MBA: 155 Action Learning MBA: 363 |

The document Education and Examination Regulation (EER) intends to provide comprehensive information regarding the education, assignments and examination of the (two delivery modes of the) Distance Learning MBA offered by Business School Netherlands (BSN). The Regulations deal with the conditions regarding knowledge, insight and skills that are necessary in order to obtain the degree and provides insight into the relation between the aspects: learning outcomes, curriculum and assessment. The EER is therefore important for students, tutors, examiners, the examinations committee and management of BSN.

The planned duration of the programme is 28 months for the Executive MBA and Action Learning MBA and 24 months for the International Action Learning MBA. The programmes may be extended to a total duration of 48 months, calculated from the start-up date.

In case of an expected exceeding of the total duration of 48 months a student can apply for extension of a maximum of nine months on top of the total duration of 48 months. A student who wishes to make use of this opportunity, lodges a request with the registrar / student counsellor. The student is to motivate the request for extension and expected to present a rigorous study plan outlining how completion of the programme within the additional (maximum of) nine months will be accomplished.

Exemption from taking one or more examinations is granted by the examinations committee. In principle the examinations committee will base its decision on an analysis of the knowledge and skills the applicant gained through prior learning, set against the objectives of the examination(s) for which exemption is sought.

This request by the students contains a short description of the basis on which exemption is requested, and a proof of earlier successfully taken examinations and/or description of knowledge and experience gained outside of BSN, and if applicable, other supplementary documents. Applicants, whose request for exemption has been accepted, will automatically receive the ECTS credits that represent the educational unit pertaining the relevant test/assignment, once all other requirements to obtain the degree have been met.

Workload

At the start of the study, students are given a clear overview of what they can expect at any point during the study. This makes it easier to plan the study load. This is also taken into account in the planning. The study supervisor monitors the students' progress and, where necessary, offers an adjusted programme and extra support.

While working on their dissertation, students are guided by an internal examiner. This teacher guides on content and how to do research. The student is responsible for the process. In case of stagnation, the study supervisor intervenes. Sometimes an obstacle arises because one becomes unemployed and is therefore unable to carry out practical assignments. We then work with the student to find the most appropriate solution to this obstacle. In this way, we ensure that the student can complete the study to his and our satisfaction. In such cases, students are advised to either take a postponement or to find an organization that is willing to permit them to do their assignments on their organization. In most instances, NGO's are willing to permit this type of consultancy.

The student groups contain a mixture of cultures, countries (especially for the International Action Learning MBA version), religions, sexes, profit and non-profit, and differences in learning styles. In some groups there are seven or eight nationalities that are present in a group of ten to twelve. BSN encourages diversity in study groups and smaller subsets, because this is part of the Action Learning philosophy.

For students with a handicap, BSN has appropriate facilities such as an elevator in its building in Buren. Students with a handicap will be helped where needed, when doing the examinations. In case a student has difficulty on the way to graduation the programme support staff will approach the student individually to advise him how successfully complete his studies.

Appraisal:

The programme structure supports the smooth implementation of the curriculum and helps students to reach the defined learning outcomes. The programme consists of courses and assigns ECTS credits per course on the basis of the necessary student workload. The programmes include an appropriate proportion of structured contact. Practical components are designed and integrated in such a way that ECTS credits can be acquired. The course descriptions provide detailed descriptions of intended learning outcomes and the information defined in the ECTS Users' Guide.

The feasibility of the study programmes' workload is ensured by a suitable curriculum design, by a plausible calculation of workload, by an adequate number and frequency of examinations, by appropriate support services as well as academic and general student counselling.

There are legally binding study and exam regulations which contain all necessary rules and procedures and take into account, where applicable, national requirements. The recognition of degrees and periods of study at other HEIs is regulated. The final grade is supplied with an ECTS grading table.

BSN ensures gender equality and non-discrimination. In its self-evaluation report and during the on-site visit BSN confirmed that students with disabilities are provided with affirmative actions concerning time and formal standards/requirements throughout the programme and examinations. However, the panel could not find this information in the Education and Examination Regulation (EER). Therefore, the panel **recommends** including this information in this legally binding document for more transparency and security for the students.

| | | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--------|---|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 3.2 | Structure | | | | | |
| 3.2.1* | Modular structure of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.2.2* | Study and exam regulations (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.2.3* | Feasibility of study workload (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.2.4 | Equality of opportunity | | | X | | |

3.3 Didactical concept

BSN's didactic concept is based on the use of the Action Learning Principle, in which learning and problem solving in work practice are central. Within the MBA programmes, Action Learning in combination with Action Research is integrally applied in the teaching programmes and the assignments in the students' professional practice.

Programme courses focus on the development of skills in the field of personal and professional effectiveness and the technical application of various tools belonging to the specific fields of study. A varied approach guarantees an inspiring learning environment. Teaching formats used in the MBAs are diverse and include:

- Lectures and tutorials
- Skills programme and practical simulations
- Self-analyses, company analyses
- Projects in one's own professional practice with the aim of solving business problems
- International study trip
- Literature analysis assignment
- Guided Intervention
- Training in Action Learning technique
- Graduation guidance
- Blended learning/self-study in part of Phase 1 of the MBA

By applying action research, students contribute to development and learning within their own organisation. Practical research and the development of the necessary competences for this are central. Researching attitude, critical thinking, leadership, project and stakeholder management, management of change and implementation play a characteristic role.

Reflective ability is very important within Action Learning in order to develop the student to the level of reflective practitioner, needed to methodically and systematically identify, analyse and solve practice problems in cooperation with stakeholders.

The contents of the courses and training programmes are determined by the head lecturers and the BSN quality management department on the basis of the learning objectives per course. The practical assignments and their orientation are created and maintained by the director of education in consultation with the quality management team. All study materials are translated from Dutch to English, proofread and used in the English programme.

Some Dutch topics are replaced by international accepted topics where appropriate. The tests and instructions are submitted to the examination committee for approval. The programme uses the practical assignments to measure the twelve final qualifications to be achieved by the student. In these practical assignments, the chosen methodology is justified and the theory is demonstrably incorporated.

When updating all course material every 2 years, the QM department are to consult the student and tutor feedback questionnaires for quality control of material and incorporation of material

development ideas. BSN receives industry advice from the Advisory Board that is reviewed and implemented with each course material update. It is possible that the advice received can be for the whole programme, core courses or specific topics. In addition, the QM department from time to time produces research into what the main challenges, trending topics and the implications of the digital age for managers are in each of BSN's core course industries.

With the thematic meetings, which are organised eight to ten per year, eight of each student's choice are required, BSN follows trends, sometimes hypes, and new developments which complement the MBA programme and which can also be taken as 'permanent education' components.

For students, this is an addition to the MBA curriculum, for alumni it is a way of achieving 'lifelong learning', and for anyone else who is interested, it is a nice, low-threshold way of getting to know Business School Netherlands. The keynote speakers usually come from BSN wider network or from alumni with a very long experience in the specific field.

In the following some examples of organised theme meetings are presented:

17 June 2020 The secret of success, Bernd Mintjes

Why do so few start-ups succeed and what do investors look for?

April 14, 2021 Consumer Give and Take, Stefan van duin

Why do consumers provide data to platforms and how do you get a better balance?

12 May 2021 Rijksmuseum Digital, Rob Hendriks

How is the Rijksmuseum going through transitions and which disruptions are still to come?

26 May 2021 Sustainability FSC, Liesbeth Gort

What role does certification play in achieving sustainability goals?

24 November 2021 I have been hacked, Jan Martijn Broekhof

How to overcome a cyberattack?

12 January 2022 Get china smart, Annette Nijs

Will China become the policeman of the world? What about human rights?

24 June 2022 The Energy Transition, Mark van Rij

What role does Chint-solar play in the energy transition and what is in store for us?

Appraisal:

The didactical concept of the study programme is described, plausible, and oriented towards the programme objectives. It allows for the application of different teaching and learning methods, such as, for instance, case studies or practical projects. Through the Action Learning Method students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process. The panel observed that Action Learning is fully integrated into the organisation and the programmes. Students bring

in challenges from their own practice to work on a structural solution. The panel believes that this profile is supported by all those involved at BSN.

The accompanying course materials are oriented towards the intended learning outcomes and correspond to the required qualification level. They are up to date and digitally accessible for the students. They are user-friendly and encourage students to engage in further independent studies.

Guest lecturers are regularly invited, their contribution forms an integral part of the study programme's didactical concept. They come from a variety of occupations, which enhances students' chances of employment thanks to the profound insights they gain.

| | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 3.3 Didactical concept | | | | | |
| 3.3.1* Logic and plausibility of the didactical concept (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.3.2* Course materials (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.3.3 Guest lecturers | | X | | | |
| 3.3.4 Lecturing tutors | | | | | X |

3.4 Internationality

Both programmes define "International awareness" as a qualification objective. The graduates shall be able to analyse relevant complex patterns and trends in the international business world. Based on this, he/she is also capable of formulating recommendations regarding the (im-) possibilities in the field of doing business internationally and, where necessary, on organising the execution thereof.

In addition, one of the seven core courses is International Management, in which managing Intercultural aspects is an important topic. Students have to do the International Management Q and A assignment and have to do an International Management Action Learning Project as a group assignment. For Dutch students, almost all International Management Action Learning Projects before the Covid-19 pandemic were done during a study trip abroad.

However, also in other core courses international and intercultural aspects are discussed as students bring in their management practice into the classroom and such topics are part of Action Learning projects as well.

At the start of the Business School only Dutch materials (Dutch study guides, articles, books) were used. Nowadays, English materials, with also English articles and textbooks are used. In the Dutch MBA programmes BSN uses a mix of Dutch books and approximately 80 % English articles.

Internationality of the student body

The International Action Learning MBA version of the Distance Learning MBA has an international study body with students from for instance China, the Netherlands, Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Curacao and South Africa. Thus, 99 % of the student body are foreign students. The Action Learning MBA and the Executive MBA have Dutch students only.

Internationality of faculty

BSN has an international faculty that is quite diverse due to the partnerships that BSN has entered into over the years. BSN has partnerships in the United States, Ghana, Nigeria, China, Suriname, Czech Republic and South Africa, and previously the United Kingdom. Depending on the faculty required to deliver a programme, BSN will reach out to these partners for faculty, or for faculty from their network.

Appraisal:

International contents are an integral part of the curriculum. Students are thus prepared for the challenges in an international working environment. Through practical examples, students are enabled to act in an intercultural environment.

The proportion of foreign language courses and required foreign language materials corresponds with the qualification objectives of the study programmes. However, the panel observes that in the Dutch-language programmes there is a limited focus on the use of English language. To better prepare students for working in an international market, the panel **recommends** that students be further educated in the English language. This also reinforces the international character of BSN and its study programmes.

The official language of the International Action Learning MBA is English. The panel finds this choice sufficiently logical, considering the international inflow of students and the professional field of these students.

The international composition of the student body corresponds to the programme concept. However, in the Dutch-language programmes there are no measures taken to promote internationality of the student body.

The panel spoke with representatives of an international team of lecturers. From the interview and the documents provided, the panel concludes that the diversity in the team of lecturers (white and male) is much less than the diversity of the students. The panel **recommends** BSN review possibilities in which the diversity of the teaching staff can better reflect the diversity of the students.

In addition, a more systematic approach to bringing Dutch and international students into contact with each other more often would, for example, improve students' intercultural skills and enrich education in both Executive and Distance Learning MBA.

| | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 3.4 Internationality | | | | | |
| 3.4.1* International contents and intercultural aspects (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.4.2 Internationality of the student body | | | IALMBA | EXMBA, ALMBA | |
| 3.4.3 Internationality of faculty | | | X | | |
| 3.4.4 Foreign language contents | | | X | | |

3.5 Multidisciplinary competences and skills (Asterisk Criterion)

Action Learning helps students to develop creative, flexible and successful strategies to tackle problems but as well to improve soft skills. It requires the participants to act to learn and learn to act.

Action Learning covers a variety of pedagogical methods: lectures, case studies, own cases of students, questionnaires to improve personal and team insights, discussions, doing research to solve problems, use reflection to learn.

In the courses knowledge-activating, knowledge-enhancing and knowledge-creating work forms are used. Training courses focus on the development of skills in the area of personal and professional effectiveness and rating the technical application of various tools belonging to the specific fields of study.

In the programme, BSN implicitly pays attention to students' leadership qualities. This is interwoven in the way they work with the Action Learning Projects in their own organisation and in the way of working together in Action Learning subsets.

Appraisal:

The students acquire communication and public-speaking skills as well as cooperation and conflict handling skills in accordance with the course descriptions. This is supported by means of suitable didactical and methodological measures such as the Action Learning methods. The acquisition of further multidisciplinary competences, such as leadership skills and broad contextual knowledge, is ensured.

| | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 3.5* Multidisciplinary competences and skills (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |

3.6 Skills for employment / Employability (Asterisk Criterion)

In addition to the core subjects, students attend theme-based meetings in which attention is paid to current themes and trends, often transcending subject boundaries, thus guaranteeing an integrated character. Examples are risk management and ethical conduct.

Interaction with practice is guaranteed because students work with cases on a strategic and operational level from their own working environment. Issues and experiences are exchanged in the Action Learning subsets. The dissertation is generally entirely devoted to strategic issues in the participant's own organization.

Through discussions in the subsets and company visits, student gets to know other industries and business activities. If possible, every MBA student takes a study trip, linked to the Action Learning Project International Management.

Appraisal:

The panel notes that the study programmes have a very strong connection with the professional field. All interviews showed that Action Learning combines professional practice, practical relevance and doing action-oriented research. The panel is very positive about this. The documents show that there is a balance between theory and practice in the programmes. Students indicate that the programme pays sufficient attention to contributing their own practical case studies on the one hand, and to relevant theory to deepen their understanding of the subject matter and to become proficient in their role as leader on the other.

| | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|---|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 3.6* Skills for employment / Employability (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |

4. Academic environment and framework conditions

4.1 Faculty

BSN structure of faculty consists of freelance teachers and coaches. It has a pool of two to four teachers per subject. There are 17 teachers teaching in the International Action Learning MBA programme, and 38 in the Dutch language programmes (Executive MBA and Action Learning MBA). In addition, there are AL-coaches, internal and external examiners included. The permanent core team consists of internal employees who design and organise the education. The freelance teachers carry out the education.

The current teachers have at least a Master's degree, and most head teachers a PhD. The head teacher is responsible for the content of the curriculum, which he oversees in consultation with his teaching colleagues. Research and publications are to be found with freelance faculty members. These faculty members are, in most cases, also working for other universities, consultancy/research organisations or other businesses. All teachers hold managerial or senior consultant positions in business or the non-profit sector. This enables them to incorporate current professional practice at Master's level in their teaching and to provide students with input from this practice for their Action Learning Project (ALP) proposals. They are all experts, both from a theoretical perspective (holding a Master's degree is required for the MBA) and from didactic experiences (minimum of 4 years work experience for a teacher; 10 years for a head teacher). BSN trains its teachers in action learning methods, research methods and testing and assessment.

All teachers keep their personal knowledge and experience up to date. They are familiar with Action Learning and have knowledge and experience in using the method applied by BSN. BSN regularly organises workshops for its tutors, in which they actively take part.

BSN employs eight head teachers for the MBAs - all holding at least a Master's degree and preferably have done their DBA or a PhD within their field of expertise – whom are accountable for designing and updating all content of the eight core courses/main topics in Phase 2 of the MBA. They also carry responsibility for designing the introduction modules offered during Phase 1 of the programme. All criteria, final qualifications and suggestions and input given by the MBA Advisory Board shall be taken into consideration throughout the process.

Subject teacher / tutor

The subject teacher guides the students on substantive aspects during the course days. Of course, the students can also ask individual and/or subset questions. This allows them to shape their personal learning goals, fitting in with the formal learning goals of the course. The teacher is also the one who provides feedback on the plans of approach concerning the action learning projects (practical assignments) to be carried out.

Action Learning Coach (AL-coach)

During phase two and three of the programme, students are supervised, in subsets, by an assigned AL-coach. The supervised subset meetings offer students the opportunity to develop, deepen and link theory, methods and techniques taught in the core courses to professional practice. This

supports and stimulates the students in shaping the Action Learning Projects. The AL-coach's approach is aimed at the learning, reflecting and self-directing capacity of the students and thus the personal and professional effectiveness of the manager.

In phase three the AL-coach supports newly formed subsets in preparing for the concluding dissertations, such as making the organisational analysis and the research proposal. The subset members and the coach meet at least three times in phase three to discuss the study progress and to give input for the assignments to be carried out. In principle, the AL-coach concerned chairs the Viva Voce committee during the oral defence of the dissertation.

Examiners

A number of BSN lecturers have also been appointed as internal examiners. In this capacity they supervise the dissertation process. This runs from approval of the dissertation proposal to the final assessment. In the meantime, regular coordination takes place between the examiner and the student, whereby the role of the internal examiner, as the end of the project approaches, increasingly shifts from supervisor to that of assessor. Examiners are appointed by the board of examiners on the basis of established criteria.

BSN teachers keep in touch through phone, email or some BSN events. Furthermore, in the quality cycle of BSN, meetings are organised for each faculty. In those meetings, BSN gives the teachers the opportunity to exchange ideas, suggestions or solve some unclarities. In addition, BSN has a general faculty and AL-coaches meeting. In this way, BSN also supports mutual communication and cooperation.

Internal Cooperation

The Quality manager is organizing the faculty meetings once a year for each faculty where programme director is present as well. During this meeting the staff is discussing the student evaluations, reviewing the last academic year, exchanging the general experience and set the KPI for the next academic year. One of the most important part is discussion/reviewing about the study guide per course. A major update for the study guide is carried out every two years. This include adjustment in the literature, updates for topics and examinations.

Student support

Each programme has a central study supervisor. The study supervisor is the first point of contact for everything that is not directly related to the subject matter. He/she monitors the individual study process, gives advice in case of study-impeding situations, and mediates in case of controversies. In addition, he/she has individual discussions, often at the student's request, about the student's study progress. The supervision of the student is aimed at preventing, detecting and eliminating impeding factors during the study.

The information during the meetings of the research method and the extensive instructions per assignment help the student to set up and start up their action learning project (ALP). Students who are going to delay are signalled by the student administration and the study supervisor, after which an individual study plan is discussed with them.

When students are struggling and stop submitting assignments, the Registrar makes contact to ensure that a new study plan of submissions is provided. A mentor is appointed to motivate and assist ailing students, these are past graduates of BSN.

Appraisal:

The panel characterises the teaching team as an inspired and enthusiastic one. By far most of the lecturers have a long relationship with BSN. BSN organises meetings for lecturers several times a year to familiarise themselves with the concept of Action Learning, to discuss relevant developments and changes in the curriculum. BSN ensures that assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field. Teachers have sufficient opportunities for professionalization within the specificities and working methods of BSN.

In line with Action Learning, the teachers can take on different roles. These are roles such as Subject Teacher, Examiner or Action Learning Coach. The panel concluded from the interviews that lecturers are trained to perform their roles well. For each content subject, BSN has a pool of two to four teachers who can teach a subject. The interviews revealed that there is a high degree of consensus within the team of lecturers on the uniformity of the classes taught to the students. The students confirmed this during the interviews.

The panel spoke with a representative of an international team of lecturers. From the interview and the documents provided, the panel concludes that the diversity in the team of lecturers (white and male) is much less than the diversity of the students. The panel **recommends** BSN review possibilities in which the diversity of the teaching staff can better reflect the diversity of the students.

Based on the submitted CVs and the current research and publication lists, the panel concludes that BSN has an adequate personnel policy which ensures stability in the delivery of the MBA programmes. The practical business experience of the faculty corresponds to the requirement of the programme to integrate theory and practice.

The faculty members cooperate with each other for the purpose of tuning the courses towards the overall qualification objectives. Meetings of all those teaching in the programme take place regularly.

Student support is an integral part of the services provided by the faculty. It is offered on a regular basis and serves to help students study successfully. The ongoing support during the distance learning classes is ensured. A flexible methodology of individual study counselling is used.

| | | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|----------|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 4.1 | Faculty | | | | | |
| 4.1.1* | Structure and quantity of faculty in relation to curricular requirements (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 4.1.2* | Academic qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 4.1.3* | Pedagogical / didactical qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 4.1.4 | Practical business experience of faculty | | | X | | |
| 4.1.5* | Internal cooperation (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 4.1.6* | Student support by the faculty (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 4.1.7(*) | Student support in distance learning (only relevant and an Asterisk Criterion for blended-learning/distance learning programmes) | | | X | | |

4.2 Programme management

The programme director is responsible for the content and delivery of the programmes. He or she must ensure that the students receive the intended quality of training and take care of the innovation of the training.

The programme director is responsible to ensure

- the quality of all programmes, including the various Dutch and English-language online, offline and hybrid MBA programmes, remains at a good level and is up to date;
- that consultations with lecturers and other organisations, which review students' assignments, proceed smoothly and pleasantly;
- that the proposals for exemption submitted to the examination committee, including examiners, are satisfactory;
- that the programmes continue to meet the requirements of the guidelines of various Dutch and foreign accreditations that we have and the education policy of the Dutch government;
- that Action Learning, one of the main distinguishing features of the programmes offered by BSN, is properly anchored in all programmes and becomes more widely known in the world of management education;
- that annual reports are available in time for the Education Inspectorate and the Examination Board;
- that accreditations/recognitions are renewed/extended (NVAO, ACBSP, ATHEA, NRT0, CRKBO, CEDEO) and any new accreditations are obtained in time;

Furthermore, the programme director

- offers substantive expertise to the International Office Leadership Team when this is needed for the development or adjustment of the training courses given outside the Netherlands;

- organises the annual graduation in consultation and cooperation with the members of the International Office Leadership Team;
- strengthens the connection with the alumni after their studies;
- represents BSN in professional bodies (e.g. NRTTO, NVAO and ATHEA);
- maintains contacts with partners in Suriname, the Czech Republic, China and several African countries for professional development.

The Student Affairs Department provides logistical planning, education administration and course organisation. The department is also responsible for the administration around study assignments, as well as maintaining the student archive and transcripts. This department acts as a central information point for all education and study issues. Thus, if students need any study-related information, they can contact the department of Student Affairs. This concerns employees of the departments:

- Student Counselling, Student Administration, Programme Information
- Scheduling
- Quality Management
- Facility Management
- Finance and HRM

Appraisal:

The programme director coordinates the activities of everyone involved in the programme and ensures that the programme runs smoothly. Faculty members and students are supported by the administration in the organisation of the study programme. Sufficient administrative staff is available. Decision-making processes, authority, and responsibilities are clearly defined.

The HEI offers the administrative staff opportunities for continuous professional development.

| | | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--------|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 4.2 | Programme management | | | | | |
| 4.2.1* | Programme Director (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 4.2.2 | Process organisation and administrative support for students and faculty | | | X | | |

4.3 Cooperation and partnerships

BSN has partnerships with the National Banking College Ghana, Heart to Heart consulting, Egypt, IBSAE, Suriname, TC Business School, Czech Republic, WIAL Algeria as well as the with Cambridge College Global, a private institution based in Boston (USA), which is accredited as an institution by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE). These partnerships are especially used for the International Action Learning MBA.

BSN has agreement with managementboek.nl, pearson publishes, kluwer publisher and EBSCO for delivering study materials and inform BSN and tutors about new publications.

Teachers and staff are members of ACBSP to update knowledge and skills in business administration. Other agreements are with Spete, Urkund, Amplixs, Tractus, JPS media, NRT0 and Action Learning community. They deliver IT, plagiarism checks, evaluation tools, AL support, internet support, planning support and alumnus associations and a Dutch network of private higher education providers.

Business School Netherlands offers companies the opportunity to develop customised training programmes for teams or management groups. Programmes can be tailor-made to meet specific training needs in the company, or the MBA and executive programmes can be used as frameworks to develop specialised high-impact in-house training courses. Examples of In-company projects Business School Netherlands has executed: Agrifirm, Transfer Solutions, Chint, Falck Fire Academy. Mediq Apotheken/OPG, Gemeente Rotterdam, De Belastingdienst, RDW, DSB Bank, Facilicom Services Group, Nationale Nederlanden, ING Bank.

Appraisal:

The scope and nature of cooperation with HEI, other academic institutions and networks as well as business enterprises relevant for the programme are plausibly presented.

| | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|---|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 4.3 Cooperation and partnerships | | | | | |
| 4.3.1(*) Cooperation with HEIs and other academic institutions or networks (Asterisk Criterion for cooperation programmes) | | | X | | |
| 4.3.2(*) Cooperation with business enterprises and other organisations (Asterisk Criterion for educational and vocational programmes, franchise programmes) | | | X | | |

4.4 Facilities and equipment

Since 2000 Business School Nederland has been housed in "De Raadskamer", the former town hall of Buren. The school is easily accessible and there is ample free parking in the immediate vicinity. The building is wheelchair accessible, has a lift and disabled toilet. The building has air conditioning, Wi-Fi internet and a photocopier that students are free to use. The BSN host welcomes the students and is at their disposal throughout the day.

The ground floor houses the educational support disciplines, such as study information, student administration, planning and study guidance. The office garden has a workplace for lecturers to prepare for or take care of meetings. Workspaces and lecture halls are located both downstairs and on the first floor.

In the following the facilities on-site at BSN in Buren are described:

| Space | Purpose | Facility |
|--|---|---|
| 1 room for groups up to 80 persons | Introductory lectures Presentations of projects | Beamer with screen and flipcharts |
| 2 rooms for groups up to 40 persons 1 room for groups up to 20 people | Symposia and book reviews Interactive seminars and skills training | Beamer with screen and flipcharts |
| 7 smaller rooms for up to 10 people | As break-out workspaces for assignments in sub-groups, workshops, sub-set meetings, study guidance, study place | Whiteboard and flipcharts |
| 1 student relaxation room | Active seats, relaxation corner and intimate corner for two-way conversations | Soft drinks bar free of charge |
| Intimate work corners in public spaces 1 to 4 people | Subgroup assignments, discussions, study, relaxation | Whiteboard and flipcharts |
| Indoor garden with terrace | Relaxation and subgroup assignments | Bench seat |
| 2 dining rooms total 50 people | For staff and students, accessible all day | Lunch and/or dinner provided for students |

BSN has the electronic learning environment “Classe365”. Both lecturers and students have their own space here to offer and download study material, hand in assignments and keep track of relevant personal and study progress data. In addition to the general assignments for each faculty and training day. The transition from hard copy to digital study material is currently underway. E-books are introduced where possible.

The programmes make use of a student platform developed on Moodle to hold all student materials and makes use of e-books for the students which are sent to them upfront of their core courses. In addition, Zoom is used for all Action Learning Subset meetings, which are recorded and distributed to the students after each session.

For the faculty the Vital Source Bookshelf is made available that they have access to tutor materials, as well as presentations, videos and other supportive materials.

The students have access to a small library in Buren with approximately 800 titles and a number of (professional) magazines such as ManagementTeam and Holland Management Review. However, this room is almost not used due to the digital availability of most of the literature.

The MBA students have access to electronic subscriptions which have been taken out with:

- EBSCO: English-language, very comprehensive, high-quality journals such as HBR, Economist, Times (750 titles)
- Kluwer database including articles from the specialist journal M&O and the management executive journal.
- Research Gate entrance
- Magazine for HRM database

Appraisal:

The quantity, quality, media and IT facilities of the teaching rooms meet the standards required for the programmes. The rooms are properly equipped for disabled students and give them barrier-free access. Access to the internet through laptops via wireless LAN is provided free of charge. A sufficient number of group rooms is available. The technical equipment is adequate and satisfies modern multimedia requirements.

Access to the literature and journals as well as to digital media (electronic media, databases) is ensured. The literature expressly required for the study programme is available.

| | | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--------|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 4.4 | Facilities and equipment | | | | | |
| 4.4.1* | Quantity, quality, media and IT equipment of teaching and group rooms (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 4.4.2* | Access to literature (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |

4.5 Additional services

BSN values the importance of supporting students and alumni throughout their entire career. It is BSN's ambition to help the student and alumni network on their journey to become 'responsible leaders' with a focus on 'impact' using the Action Learning methodology.

BSN keeps in close contact with their alumni network in order to realize its ambition of supporting the 'long life learning' principle. Some examples of current alumni engagement activities are:

The training of students to become Action Learning coaches, supporting both students and other professionals in the career ambitions

Organization of 'theme events' around relevant themes and hot topics (around 6-8 events every calendar year)

Organization of visits to companies of interest or significance in a certain business segment (high tech, semicon, construction, finance etc)

BSN actively keeps track of their alumni through BSN LinkedIngroups and regional alumni networks such as "ACT". BSN maintains a database with all relevant contact details. Newsletters are sent out regularly to update alumni about ongoing events, new developments at BSN, masterclasses and theme events.

BSN (Executive) MBA students are already employed. There are no specific career consultancy services offered by BSN. However, in personal dialogue with BSN lecturers and with the help of the students and alumni network, exchange on this topic takes place and offers opportunities.

Appraisal:

An alumni organisation has been set up with the aim of developing an alumni network. Career counselling takes place informally through exchange and networking among students and alumni.

| | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 4.5 Additional services | | | | | |
| 4.5.1 Career counselling and placement service | | | X | | |
| 4.5.2 Alumni Activities | | | X | | |

4.6 Financing of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)

In its self-evaluation report BSN states that it is ensured that students who start the programmes can finish their studies. On the one hand, BSN makes sure that it has sufficient cash flow for the next two years when setting up the budget. At the same time, BSN has a strong shareholder organisation that guarantees support in case of any financial problems.

Appraisal:

During the on-site visit the panel discussed the financial continuity of the programmes with the BSN Management. It was confirmed that the support of BSN shareholders is a stable source in case of emergency. Furthermore, based on Dutch law the financial stability of each private Higher Education Institution is checked on a regular basis by public authorities.

Given this information and the national regulations, the panel came to the conclusion that the study programmes are funded for the entire accreditation period so that students will definitely be able to complete their studies.

| | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 4.6* Financing of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |

5. Quality assurance and documentation

The Quality Management Policy describes how BSN monitors and continuously improves the quality of its study programmes. It also indicates the role of students, teachers, alumni and other important stakeholders. In its Policy BSN describes its quality system as a cyclic process comprising the following activities:

Defining quality

Measuring the quality and analysis

Organising the quality improvement cycle.

Over the years, BSN has built a system for internal and external quality assurance consisting of student and teacher evaluations, accreditations, customer satisfaction surveys (CEDEO), and working with external examiners.

The data required for the evaluation of the quality aspects are retrieved through different methods:

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Students: | Regular digital questionnaires, supplemented with yearly face-to-face evaluation. |
| Alumni: | Bi-annual individual structured interview. |
| Employers: | Meeting between the Advisory Board and BSN Management. |
| Tutors: | Regular questionnaires supplemented with scheduled face-to-face evaluation, yearly course-specific faculty meetings, annual MBA faculty meeting. |
| Action Learning Coaches: | Biannual digital questionnaires supplemented by the biannual meeting between all Coaches and BSN Management |

The quality and performance improvement system is based on students' feedback, tutors' feedback, feedback from accreditation councils and from organisations that send new MBA students to BSN on a regular basis. A Quality Manager was appointed to collect and analyse all feedback data and to inform the BSN Board on a regular basis about the results. Further, actions that need to be taken for quality improvement are completed and reported on. Thus, quality improvements are embedded in a PDCA cycle; innovations/changes are implemented on a regular basis. In the last years, BSN invested in information systems to get appropriate information from our databases, and thus, appropriate management information.

In 2018, BSN started monitoring and improving the quality of the collected data as well as data analysis, including comparative analysis. The new feedback/evaluation system for students was implemented in June 2018. The system developed by Amplix offers the possibility to monitor both the substantive quality of education (lessons, teachers) and the process of education (Start-up, Graduation, facilities).

The evaluation of the study programme by the students is carried out as follows:

- Student Feedback Questionnaire (SFO) on programme components, content, teachers and facilities. This is done per lesson day/block. Two weeks after the SFO distribution date the received feedback is summarized and distributed to tutors, students and relevant BSN staff.
 - Half-yearly evaluation among the students evaluating the facilities and the experienced study efficiency.
 - Oral evaluations with a delegation from the various MBA groups.
 - Teacher evaluations at the end of lesson day/block about atmosphere, effort, materials.
- Responsible units: student administration, QM; implementation outsourced to Amplixs. Complaints are then analyzed and appropriate action taken.

The students' evaluation results lead to extensive discussions with lecturers during faculty meetings. Based on the scores of the assessments, the faculty discusses what needs to be improved in the future and draws up a roadmap. If somewhere an assessment is lower than 7 points, this is immediately discussed with the teachers concerned.

The effect of evaluations is therefore general improvement plans and specific sub-plans for improvement. Additional examples are the recent replacement of furniture, the creation of more sub-set rooms, the development or tightening of policy on fraud, exemptions and examiner selection.

The following quality assurance instruments are used with regard to BSN faculty staff:

- Annual progress discussion with the teachers (management and QM).
- Annual faculty/professional consultation and evaluation (2 to 4 teachers per subject) (management and QM).
- Half-yearly consultation with the action learning coaches (management, study supervisor and QM).
- Assessment, Q&A's and test instructions (BSN board).
- Sample mid-term and final papers with corresponding assessments (board of examiners).
- Evaluation and advice on curriculum adjustment, partly based on student evaluations (head lecturers, director of education and QM).
- Tutor Feedback Questionnaire (base for the annual course-specific faculty meetings between the tutors and the BSN Management as well as the annual MBA Faculty meeting)
- Action Learning Questionnaire

Teachers/Tutors

After each (series of) the plenary session(s), the acting tutor(s) receive a digital Tutor Feedback Questionnaire (TFO). The aim is to have the TFO available to tutor(s) on the last day of the series of plenary sessions. 14 days after the TFO distribution date the received feedback is summarized and distributed to the relevant BSN staff.

The cumulative results from the TFO form a base for the annual course-specific faculty meetings between the tutors and the BSN Management, as well as the annual MBA Faculty meeting. The annual tutor meetings offer tutors an opportunity to share their perspective on student performance and general BSN performance as a higher education provider. The agenda and supporting documentation for these meetings are prepared by the OA manager in collaboration, with the

relevant BSN staff. The outcomes of these meetings, including action points, are consolidated in the meeting notes and reported to the tutors and all relevant BSN staff.

Action Learning Coaches

On a biannual basis, the Action Learning coaches are invited to complete a digital evaluation questionnaire (ALFO) as part of the regular evaluation of the subsets. Students assess their experience with the Action Learning coach, the collaboration with the subset, and the added value of the subset and Action Learning coaching for their learning process. The Action Learning coach assess, among other things, student participation in the group, the quality of the questions and the development of the Action Learning skills.

All quality aspects indicators as assessed on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 is 'weak', 10 is 'strong'). The norm for each quality aspect is an average score of 7. The ALFO also offers a possibility to provide written feedback and includes the agree/disagree questions. The results of each evaluation are processed by Amplixs. The OA manager consolidates the results and distributes a summarized report to the Student Counsellor, the AL coach and the relevant BSN staff.

Twice a year all AL coaches are invited to a group meeting at BSN organized by the Student Counsellor and OA Manager. Among the standard agenda items are the following topics:

Update from management about the course of events Progress of the AL coaching process

Update on evaluation of the subset meetings

Specific points of attention and development for the AL coaches

Mutual experiences are shared and discussed during these meetings. The meeting agenda, meeting notes, including any action points, are consolidated and distributed by the OA (also in collaboration with other relevant BSN staff).

Furthermore, external partners are involved in the quality assurance process:

- Consultation with the BSN Advisory Board (consisting of employers, consultants, alumni and professionals employed in both the private and the public sector) regarding the competences required in the future and the related learning goals for the MBA students.
- Two-yearly external evaluation by the independent certification body CEDEO. This independent institute carries out customer satisfaction surveys among BSN alumni. The most important aspects measured are: service by BSN, cooperation with BSN and the results achieved.

In the student handbook students receive information on the access to all learning sources, the learning management system or where students can meet in groups in BSN building in Buren for studies. Study and Exam regulations related to the programmes are described in the "Education and Examination Regulation" in detail. Information on the study programmes and the Action Learning method is also provided on the BSN website.

Business School Netherlands strives to be a transparent organisation that communicates both general information and information about activities during the academic year to the public, students, alumni and other stakeholders.

This information is shared via:

- BSN websites www.bsn.eu and www.bsn.nl
- Facebook, Twitter
- Linked in BSN groups (groups, companies, individual shares)
- BSN's youtube channel and BSN's community site
- BSN newsletters and dedicated emails, shared with all who have agreed to receive this information
- Hardcopy brochures and leaflets, whitepapers, booklets (graduation, testimonials)
- Chamber of Commerce publication
- Referring websites (for example StudyinHolland, studiekeuze 1,2,3, masterstudies, Millian, studyportals, springest, masteropleidingen, mba opleidingen).

Appraisal:

A quality assurance and development procedure, which systematically and continuously monitors and develops the quality of the programme with respect to its contents, processes, and outcomes, has been set up. Responsibilities are clearly defined. It takes into account the evaluation results and the analysis on student workload, success rate, and graduate employment as well as the profile of the student population. Faculty members and students participate in the respective committees to plan and assess the quality assurance and development procedures.

However, from the interviews, the panel concludes that BSN has a formal and informal quality system and culture. The panel sees that the informal quality culture makes it possible to respond quickly and flexibly to the needs of the student. The panel also spoke with BSN about the formalised quality system and what role the various stakeholders have in this system. Based on these discussions, the panel sees that the formalised quality system offers room for further development. The panel **recommends** making the quality assurance instruments less dependent on individuals and more embedded in the working system of the organisation.

Evaluation by the students is carried out on a regular basis and in accordance with a prescribed procedure; the outcomes are communicated to the students and provide input for the quality development process.

Quality control by the faculty is carried out on a regular basis and in accordance with a prescribed procedure; the outcomes are communicated and provide input for the quality development process.

An external evaluation by alumni, the BSN Advisory Board and third parties such as the CEDEO is carried out on a regular basis and in accordance with a prescribed procedure; the outcomes are communicated and provide input for the quality development process.

The study programme's content, curriculum and examination scheme have been suitably documented and published in the Student Handbook, the Education and Examination Regulation as well as on the website. The HEI regularly publishes current news and information about the study programmes on its website and other communication channels such as social media.

| | | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--------|---|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 5.1* | Quality assurance and quality development with respect to contents, processes and outcomes (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 5.2 | Instruments of quality assurance | | | | | |
| 5.2.1 | Evaluation by students | | | X | | |
| 5.2.2 | Evaluation by faculty | | | X | | |
| 5.2.3 | External evaluation by alumni, employers and third parties | | | X | | |
| 5.3 | Programme documentation | | | | | |
| 5.3.1* | Programme description (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 5.3.2 | Information on activities during the academic year | | | X | | |

Quality profile

HEI: Business School Netherlands, Buren (the Netherlands)

Bachelor / Master programme:

1. Executive MBA (part-time)
2. Distance Learning MBA with two versions:
 - International Action Learning MBA (part-time, blended-learning, English language)
 - Action Learning MBA (part-time, blended-learning, Dutch language)

| | | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|----------|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 1 | Objectives | | | | | |
| 1.1* | Objectives of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 1.2* | International orientation of the study programme design (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 1.3 | Positioning of the study programme | | | | | |
| 1.3.1 | Positioning of the study programme in the educational market | | | X | | |
| 1.3.2 | Positioning of the study programme on the job market for graduates („Employability“) | | | X | | |
| 1.3.3 | Positioning of the study programme within the HEI's overall strategic concept | | | X | | |
| 2 | Admission | | | | | |
| 2.1* | Admission requirements (Asterisk Criterion) | | | | X | |
| 2.2 | Counselling for prospective students | | X | | | |
| 2.3* | Selection procedure (if relevant) | | | X | | |
| 2.4(*) | Professional experience (if relevant; Asterisk Criterion for master programmes that require professional experience) | | | Distance Learning MBA | Executive MBA | |
| 2.5* | Ensuring foreign language proficiency (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 2.6* | Transparency and documentation of admission procedure and decision (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3 | Contents, structure and didactical concept | | | | | |
| 3.1 | Contents | | | | | |
| 3.1.1* | Logic and conceptual coherence (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.1.2* | Rationale for degree and programme name (Asterisk Criterion) | | | | X | |
| 3.1.3* | Integration of theory and practice (Asterisk Criterion) | | X | | | |
| 3.1.4 | Interdisciplinary thinking | | | X | | |
| 3.1.5 | Ethical aspects | | | X | | |
| 3.1.6* | Methods and scientific practice (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.1.7* | Examination and final thesis (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |

| | | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|----------|--|-------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 3.2 | Structure | | | | | |
| 3.2.1* | Modular structure of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.2.2* | Study and exam regulations (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.2.3* | Feasibility of study workload (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.2.4 | Equality of opportunity | | | X | | |
| 3.3 | Didactical concept | | | | | |
| 3.3.1* | Logic and plausibility of the didactical concept (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.3.2* | Course materials (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.3.3 | Guest lecturers | | X | | | |
| 3.3.4 | Lecturing tutors | | | | | X |
| 3.4 | Internationality | | | | | |
| 3.4.1* | International contents and intercultural aspects (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.4.2 | Internationality of the student body | | | International Action Learning MBA | Executive MBA, Action Learning MBA | |
| 3.4.3 | Internationality of faculty | | | X | | |
| 3.4.4 | Foreign language contents | | | X | | |
| 3.5* | Multidisciplinary competences and skills (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 3.6* | Skills for employment / Employability (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 4. | Academic environment and framework conditions | | | | | |
| 4.1 | Faculty | | | | | |
| 4.1.1* | Structure and quantity of faculty in relation to curricular requirements (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 4.1.2* | Academic qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 4.1.3* | Pedagogical / didactical qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 4.1.4 | Practical business experience of faculty | | | X | | |
| 4.1.5* | Internal cooperation (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 4.1.6* | Student support by the faculty (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 4.1.7(*) | Student support in distance learning (only relevant and an Asterisk Criterion for blended-learning/distance learning programmes) | | | X | | |
| 4.2 | Programme management | | | | | |
| 4.2.1* | Programme Director (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |

| | | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|----------|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 4.2.2 | Process organisation and administrative support for students and faculty | | | X | | |
| 4.3 | Cooperation and partnerships | | | | | |
| 4.3.1(*) | Cooperation with HEIs and other academic institutions or networks (Asterisk Criterion for cooperation programmes) | | | X | | |
| 4.3.2(*) | Cooperation with business enterprises and other organisations (Asterisk Criterion for educational and vocational programmes, franchise programmes) | | | X | | |
| 4.4 | Facilities and equipment | | | | | |
| 4.4.1* | Quantity, quality, media and IT equipment of teaching and group rooms (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 4.4.2* | Access to literature (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 4.5 | Additional services | | | | | |
| 4.5.1 | Career counselling and placement service | | | X | | |
| 4.5.2 | Alumni Activities | | | X | | |
| 4.6* | Financing of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 5 | Quality assurance and documentation | | | | | |
| 5.1* | Quality assurance and quality development with respect to contents, processes and outcomes (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 5.2 | Instruments of quality assurance | | | | | |
| 5.2.1 | Evaluation by students | | | X | | |
| 5.2.2 | Evaluation by faculty | | | X | | |
| 5.2.3 | External evaluation by alumni, employers and third parties | | | X | | |
| 5.3 | Programme documentation | | | | | |
| 5.3.1* | Programme description (Asterisk Criterion) | | | X | | |
| 5.3.2 | Information on activities during the academic year | | | X | | |