

### **Development meeting 9<sup>th</sup> of April 2026**

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> of April 2026

Time: 10:30–12:00

Location: online

#### **Summary**

After the successful assessment in December 2025 of the Bachelor programme International Business of the Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences, the recommendations of the panel were discussed during a development meeting. A discussion was held to reflect upon the recent developments since the visitation. The following four recommendations mentioned in the accreditation report were addressed during this meeting:

- A) The panel sees room for improving of assessment when it comes to unity in communication regarding assessment assignments and the depth in which assessors provide students with feedback.
- B) Domain-specific themes such as finance and accounting, HR, leadership and ethics—although addressed in the curriculum—are not always explicitly reflected in the submission guidelines or rubrics. The panel recommends clarifying expectations by making these themes more visible in the criteria for assessing PLOs. The panel encourages the programme to increase transparency in how these elements are expected and assessed.
- C) Connections with the professional field are present, but the programme could benefit from a more strategic approach to collaborating with professionals and companies in the work field.
- D) The panel recommends to keep paying close attention to the high drop-out rate amongst both MBO students and VWO students and find ways to decrease both.

## A) Alignment in Instruction and Depth of Feedback Among Lecturers

### **Introduction**

IB invited the panel to provide input on how to strengthen alignment in instruction, grading practices, and the depth of feedback provided by lecturers. The aim is to ensure a shared understanding of the holistic approach used across the programme and to improve consistency in feedback/feedforward. Questions were raised regarding the ideal timing of feedback, the balance between rubric-based and individual feedback, and the role of calibration among lecturers.

### **The Discussion**

The panel noted that similar challenges occur in other programmes that use a holistic approach. Several suggestions were offered, including organising kick-off sessions before the graduation phase to clarify the holistic approach for both lecturers and students. The panel also recommended providing a detailed written explanation of the grading structure, supported by concrete examples to illustrate differences across the grading scale.

The panel highlighted the value of using existing feedback examples to define clearer criteria for lecturers. They emphasised the importance of calibration sessions and student check-ins to ensure feedback remains meaningful. IB confirmed that calibration is already a key focus of the programme and was recently addressed during the IB Seminar Day, where several colleagues expressed enthusiasm for further developing quality alignment.

IB questioned when feedback/feedforward moments are most effective and whether individual feedback should accompany rubrics, especially given time constraints. The panel noted that well-designed rubrics can support alignment and reduce workload, though they may limit opportunities for personalised feedback/feedforward. As a solution, the panel suggested adding a field for an overall summary or individual feedback/feedforward alongside the rubric.

Additional suggestions included building on feedback from previous courses, with students preparing for upcoming feedback moments, implementing collective feedback from all lecturers involved, and incorporating peer or group feedback. For calibration exercises, the panel advised focusing on what is most important for the student and maintaining clarity by removing one element when another is added.

## **Conclusion**

The discussion demonstrated a shared commitment to improving alignment in instruction and feedback/feedforward. IB is already taking steps to strengthen calibration and quality alignment, supported by growing interest among staff.

## **B) Explicit Inclusion of HR, Finance & Accounting, and Leadership and Ethics in the Curriculum**

### **Introduction**

IB sought clarification on the panel's suggestion to strengthen the explicit presence of HR, finance & accounting, and leadership and ethics within the curriculum. The panel explained that they would advise including the topics more visibly in the student's projects.

### **The Discussion**

The panel explained that their recommendation was not to introduce new standalone modules but to ensure these topics are explicitly addressed within student projects. The example of reflecting on ethical considerations while working on a risk management assignment was given. The panel noted that these areas are already part of the curriculum's focus, but they are not always visible in final reports. Strengthening awareness and moving from implicit to explicit integration was encouraged.

The panel suggested shifting from broad thematic coverage to more specific applications within projects. IB confirmed that efforts are already underway to reinforce the inclusion of these topics, particularly within the graduation project.

### **Conclusion**

The discussion highlighted the importance of making existing focus areas more explicit in student work. IB is already working toward stronger integration of these topics and will continue to develop this approach.

## C) Strategic Cooperation with the Work Field

### **Introduction**

IB introduced how they are strengthening their strategic cooperation with the work field, particularly through the Advisory Board. Alumni engagement and broader professional networks were highlighted by the panel.

### **The Discussion**

IB presented an overview of its evolving cooperation with the Advisory Board, noting a shift from reactive discussions to co-creation. The programme is reviewing membership structures, including potential term limits, and aims to expand the Board's diversity and network reach. Meetings are increasingly held at member locations to foster a stronger professional environment. An avatar illustrating the competencies of a Marketing student was shared with the Board to provide clearer context.

The panel endorsed these initiatives and advised IB to choose partners strategically, both nationally and internationally. They noted that Advisory Board members often belong to broader networks such as business clubs, professional associations, or industry collectives. These could be leveraged to benefit students.

The panel also highlighted the strong potential of alumni, who expressed interest in acting as ambassadors. Bringing alumni back as lecturers, guest speakers, or Advisory Board members was seen as highly beneficial. IB shared that a questionnaire was recently sent to alumni, and the results will inform a new strategy and policy. The Dean fully supports this direction, and alumni are enthusiastic about deeper involvement.

Additionally, IB is exploring ways to integrate the work field into other specialisations, inspired by a Marketing project where industry specialists review student work during an award-style event.

### **Conclusion**

The discussion underscored the value of strategic partnerships and alumni engagement. IB is actively strengthening its cooperation with the work field and will continue expanding these initiatives across the programme.

## D) Dropout Among MBO and VWO Students

### **Introduction**

The final development question concerned dropout patterns among MBO and VWO students. The goal was to understand contributing factors and identify strategies to support student success throughout the programme.

### **The Discussion**

IB explained that a university-wide dashboard is being developed to analyse dropout data. The results will soon provide insights into performance differences across educational backgrounds. Early findings show that delays in year 1 often continue to affect students throughout their studies, highlighting the importance of early intervention.

A more data-driven approach is needed to track students from year 1 through graduation. Existing data suggests that MBO students perform well in years 1 and 2 but face challenges in years 3 and 4, particularly in conceptual thinking. IB suggested introducing conceptual thinking earlier, potentially already in MBO schools.

IB shared that MBO students can join the programme for a week-long elective taught by IB lecturers, helping them assess whether the programme is a good fit. The panel responded positively to this initiative.

The panel mentioned the usage of peer mentoring, which IB confirmed was already in place for students re-sitting exams. Though the programme does not want to create the impression that peer coaching replaces classes, it has proved to be highly effective for re-sit students.

When asked what triggered the panel's feedback on dropout concerns, the panel explained that some students reported differences in atmosphere and dynamics linked to diverse educational backgrounds. This was identified as an important factor to consider moving forward.

### **Conclusion**

The discussion highlighted the need for early intervention, data-driven monitoring, and targeted support for students from different educational backgrounds. IB is actively developing tools and initiatives to better understand and address dropout patterns.

### Next steps

Following this discussion, the recommendations and agreed actions will be formulated into a Development Plan as per the previous accreditation. This will be in place and implemented by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026.

The meeting ended by the panel complimenting the great working atmosphere of IB. IB also complimented the panel on their approach to the visitation, as this had been commented on by several members of IB staff. The accreditation was a positive experience because of the approach taken by the panel.