

Support and cooperation

Annual Report 2010 Summary

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Foreword

The year 2010 marked NVAO's fifth anniversary, which was celebrated on 1 February at The Hague University of Applied Sciences. Three hundred representatives from Dutch and Flemish universities, assessment agencies, umbrella organisations and student unions attended the meeting entitled 'Five years of NVAO. Five years of bi-national co-operation'. Lieven Verstraete, anchorman with the Flemish current affairs programme *Terzake*, interviewed Dutch and Flemish (former) Education Ministers Loek Hermans, Marleen Vanderpoorten, Ronald Plasterk and Pascal Smet about the choices made during their term of office and their view of the future of accreditation and (quality assurance within) higher education. NVAO presented a 'certificate of merit' to Zjef Beerten, Theo Bellekom, Hiltje Burgler-Feenstra, Yvonne Eppink, Romain Hulpia, Anke Leloux-Schuringa, Ferd Sturmans and Luc van de Poele, as peer and quality assurance representatives within the Dutch and Flemish higher education sectors who have made a valuable contribution to quality awareness over the past few years.

In addition to its regular assessment activities, NVAO launched and (partially) implemented various projects in 2010. For the Netherlands, these projects comprised the fourth pilot round of the Associate Degree programmes and the extensive information rounds regarding the new system. For Flanders, we continued our work on the assessment of research-embedded programmes, the newly introduced professional higher education level, HBO₅ and the drawing up of a regulation concerning learning outcomes. In the Netherlands and Flanders, a pilot project was implemented focusing on the distinctive feature of internationalisation.

The second half of 2010 was primarily dominated by the new accreditation system. NVAO was pleased to find a wide consensus – both among politicians and within the education sector – on the new assessment frameworks. From September up to and including November, NVAO called administrative information meetings for representatives of Executive Boards and deans of government-funded and privately funded universities, in preparation for the new system. In Amsterdam, Eindhoven, Rotterdam, Utrecht and Zwolle, regional information meetings were held for nearly 500 department and programme leaders, quality assurance staff and teachers at higher education institutions. During that same period, some hundred panel secretaries / co-ordinators and the first cohort of panel chairs for the institutional audits embarked on their training courses. From September 2010, all panel secretaries / co-ordinators will be certified by NVAO.

In September 2010, NVAO organised the seminar entitled 'Research and Entrepreneurship in Arts Programmes', based on its first system-wide analysis of arts programmes, for representatives of this sector. The seminar addressed the main points for attention presented in this analysis: 'research' and 'entrepreneurship in the programmes'. The NVAO report also served as a reference framework for the Dijkgraaf Committee in preparation of the sector plan to be drawn up by the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences.

The scope of the international activities pursued by NVAO is increasing. For example, during the past year agreements in the area of international collaboration were concluded with the Chinese Education Association for International Education (CEAIE) and the Japanese National Institute for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (NIAD-UE). Together with the NARICs, NVAO published a guide to the assessment of key skills and the description of learning outcomes at the curriculum level. In the year under review, NVAO was again represented on the boards of the main international quality assurance organisations: INQAAHE, ENQA, ECA and the European register. This provides us with a great deal of information on interesting international developments, while at the same time imposing obligations: an increasing number of contributions to conferences and seminars, as well as more requests for collegial support and initiatives.

NVAO is looking forward to the year ahead. We will be dealing with many interesting dossiers, among which the assessment of institutional quality assurance, the completion of the Flemish 'research-embedding dossiers' and HBO₅ will require careful attention. In addition, the leading role played by NVAO in the international quality assurance circuit will have to enhance the recognition of Dutch and Flemish higher education in the international context.

NVAO is well aware that collaboration is conducive to (fostering) quality in higher education. For that reason, a word of gratitude to the umbrella organisations of institutions and students, the assessment agencies, the panels and secretaries, the Flemish and Dutch governments and especially to institutions, programmes, teachers, staff and students. Together we will focus on further improving the quality of our higher education.

Karl Dittrich
Chair

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Chapter 1

Wide support

In 2010, the new accreditation system continued to require due attention and time. In the past year, based on the pilot projects (2008) and the extensive consultations with the sector (2009), NVAO presented the Dutch government with assessment frameworks which commanded maximum consensus in the higher education sector.

Even though the parliamentary discussions took quite some time, NVAO Chair Karl Dittrich underlines the unanimity with which the Dutch parliament endorsed the new system. He is pleased at the large number of representatives from the sector that participated in the information meetings on the new system and the wide support during the administrative presentations organised for the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (HBO-Raad) and the Dutch Training and Education Council (NRTO). In order to professionalise the panels, NVAO trained some hundred secretaries and the first cohort of chairs in the second half of 2010. Dittrich: 'Our preparations and the wide support we have experienced enable us to implement the new system in 2011 and keep a close eye on the proceedings.'

In Flanders, the introduction of the new system is lagging behind, due to a different phase structure in the initial stage. There is, however, ample consensus regarding its points of departure, which are in line with the Dutch situation. Vice Chair Guido Langouche: 'We have not succeeded in making preparations during 2010 in order to commence the institutional assessments in 2012, a year earlier than we have agreed. With regard to the draft legislation pertaining to the new system, the Flemish government is now aiming to submit the first bills by March 2011, which means that we might still be able to carry through the 2012 schedule. On the one hand because we can use our experience with the pilot projects and on the other, because the parliamentary work can progress at a faster rate, since we largely tie in with the experiences gained in the Netherlands.'

Internationalisation a top priority

Another point of focus during the past year was the distinctive feature of internationalisation and the corresponding certificate. NVAO regards the effect of internationalisation on the quality of our education as a top priority and strove to develop an instrument that could provide an extra stimulus.

Karl Dittrich: 'Our proposal to try out an assessment framework on a voluntary basis by means of pilot projects, met with approval. In 2010, we evaluated the projects and awarded a first series of distinctive features, plus a certificate for those that scored an assessment of 'good' or higher. This idea is in keeping with the report by the Veerman Committee on profiling and diversity in higher education. In the spring of 2011, the Dutch government will present its viewpoint in this regard. Assuming that they support the plea for increased profiling and diversity, our accreditation system should tie in to a certain extent. One of the options is for institutional assessments to focus more on quality and reflect how institutions stand out in that respect. Another option is found in the distinctive features. The distinctive feature and the Internationalisation certificate are, therefore, profiling elements. We explored ways to encourage internationalisation in order to enable Dutch and Flemish programmes to demonstrate their achievements in that field. Based on the results of the pilot projects, we can develop a regular set of instruments for programmes that volunteer to expend an extra effort towards internationalisation.'

Flanders also participated in the pilot projects but the sector was rather unresponsive. Vice Chair Langouche: 'Although the Flemish higher education sector does not underrate the importance of internationalisation, it is not keen on the additional bureaucracy involved in a separate feature with a separate assessment framework. Flanders rather regards this additional feature as an integral component of the accreditation process in general. Whatever the case may be, both Dittrich and Langouche are pleased that the European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education (ECA) is planning to develop a European version of the Internationalisation certificate.'

Fine and performing arts programmes

In 2010, NVAO published its first system-wide analysis of Dutch fine and performing arts programmes: *Analysis of assessment reports on fine and performing arts programmes*, based on a thorough analysis of 52 programmes in the disciplines of Autonomous Fine Arts, Design, Dance, Theatre and Music. The analysis showed that fine and performing arts programmes are characterised by a professional orientation and their encouragement of individual artistic development and the acquisition of technical skills. Their attention to the preparation for entrepreneurship and the formal involvement of alumni and the professional field leaves room for improvement. Additionally, the programmes could strengthen their theoretical lessons and the research component.

Karl Dittrich: 'Perhaps it is because of the specific nature of this sector or the authority of the panels, but this publication has had a significant impact on the sector, for example in the debate on the future of the fine and performing arts programmes. Although this publication is a first, we had already carried out some system-wide analyses. For example, one focused on teacher-training colleges, prompted by severe political pressure on these programmes. Based on the analysis, the then State Secretary of Education, Culture and Science expressed her support for the NVAO assessments, which meant that the programmes met the generic quality standards. The system-wide analysis legitimised the teacher-training programmes.'

Specific Flemish dossiers

In Flanders, NVAO is dealing with a number of specific dossiers. Guido Langouche: 'The research-embedded programmes – programmes with both a professional and an academic orientation – required additional attention last year. It is up to NVAO to judge whether these programmes reflect their academic nature to a sufficient extent by 2013. However, many reports are unclear or inconsistent in some respects. In part, this can be explained by the fact that the reports have been submitted over a long period of time; in some cases, assessment panels were required to indicate as early as 2008 whether a programme would live up to its academic orientation by 2013. In order to create more clarity and because the world is changing rapidly, we organised extensive hearings during the past year. The resulting additional assessments enable us to properly process these applications. The programmes have also accomplished a great deal over the past few years: the number of doctors has increased, the goals have been revised and the emphasis on research has clearly been reinforced. This deserves a compliment.'

Langouche: 'Another typically Flemish feature is the validation of learning outcomes. Under Flemish law, all related programmes, such as Architecture, must collaborate to lay down their attainment targets and create a distinct profile among themselves. Take, for example, the profile of industrial versus civic engineers. NVAO is responsible for a procedural rather than substantive validation of these attainment targets. Together with the Council of Flemish University Colleges (VLIR) and the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLHORA), several pilot projects have been set up which seem to run successfully. First of all, the attainment targets are well-structured and limited. In addition, the participants are satisfied because the pilot projects were instructive and jointly reflecting on common attainment targets proved useful.'

Karl Dittrich adds: 'NVAO also coached pilot projects aimed at converting Flemish programmes to the new HBO₅ level, which compares to the Associate Degree in the Netherlands. This is a textbook example of an appealing project: the pilot projects provide good information and interesting results that constitute useful underpinning for the institutions on which to base their future conversion dossiers. For example, they have learnt to take the results into account as well, rather than concentrate on the procedures only.'

Substantiated findings

In conclusion: the quality of higher education. Dittrich: 'In the Netherlands, the quality of our higher education is one of the primary topics in the public debate. That is a good thing and necessary as well. During the past year some serious incidents occurred, involving the award of diplomas, among other issues. This should not have happened. Such issues have a negative impact on both the image of the institution in question and that of the sector as a whole. Unfortunately, however, some actors in the debate tend to be guided by rumours rather than basing their opinions on substantiated findings. Accreditation bolsters the empirical substantiation of the quality provided. By creating doubts, one in fact proclaims to be incapable of providing the quality that is required. However, the quality of higher education is not bad. Thousands of peers are involved in quality assessment and these thousands of experts cannot possibly all be taken for a ride. There is always room for improvement but our higher education definitely meets the generic quality standards.'

Chapter 2

Results of the core process

2.1 / Accreditation

In 2010, the total number of accreditation applications lagged behind that of the previous peak years. During the year under review, NVAO processed 539 accreditation applications (424 from the Netherlands and 115 from Flanders) versus 638 applications in 2009; 732 in 2008 and 646 in 2007 (see Chapter 9.2, Tables).

2.1.1 / The Netherlands

In 2010, NVAO issued 412 positive accreditation decisions following 424 accreditation applications for Dutch programmes (see Chapter 9.2, Tables).

2.1.2 / Flanders

In Flanders, a total of 115 accreditation applications were processed in 2010, resulting in a positive judgement for 111 programmes (see Chapter 9.2, Tables).

2.1.3 / Distinctive (quality) features

Until the introduction of the new accreditation system in 2011^{1>}, the Netherlands awarded two distinctive hallmarks: 'distinctive features' and 'distinctive quality'. A distinctive feature is warranted by 'achievement' and a 'distinguishing nature'. The distinctive quality hallmark is awarded to programmes excelling with regard to a specific standard as compared to other, similar programmes. In 2010, NVAO awarded a distinctive feature to 23 programmes and a 'distinctive quality' to three programmes, of which one received two distinctive quality hallmarks for two different standards. Overall, 40 distinctive features and 19 distinctive quality hallmarks have been awarded in the Netherlands so far.

In Flanders, institutions can apply for a distinctive quality feature when submitting their accreditation application. Flanders does not distinguish between 'distinctive features' and 'distinctive quality' when it comes to distinctive quality features.

In 2010, NVAO awarded two distinctive quality features ('expertise centre for civic security' and 'creative passion in relation to the professional field'). Until now, a total of 12 Flemish programmes have received a distinctive quality feature.

^{1>} In the new accreditation system, a distinctive feature can be applied for at either the institutional level or the programme level. Separate applications for a distinctive quality hallmark are no longer possible. In the new system, 'excellent' is incorporated into the regular assessment scale, alongside the concepts of 'unsatisfactory', 'satisfactory' and 'good'. 'Distinctive feature' is the term used in the Netherlands; in Flanders, it is called a 'distinctive quality feature'. Hence, we will subsequently use the term 'distinctive (quality) feature of internationalisation'.

Pilot projects for distinctive feature of internationalisation

In 2010, NVAO implemented the 'distinctive feature of Internationalisation' pilot project (see Chapter 5, Internationalisation). NVAO launched a pilot involving the distinctive feature of 'Entrepreneurship' at the request of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. Thereby also Flanders has been involved. This will be covered in the annual report on the year 2011.

2.2 / Initial accreditations

2.2.1 / The Netherlands

In 2010, NVAO processed 106 applications for initial accreditation in the Netherlands (2009: 117; 2008: 114 and 2007: 102). Nearly 75 per cent (79) of the Dutch applications for new programmes resulted in a positive judgement in the year under review (see Chapter 9.2, Tables).

Half of the positive decisions (38) involved government-funded master's programmes (professional orientation). The majority of the withdrawals involved applications for academic master's programmes (15 out of 27 applications).

2.2.2 / Flanders

In 2010, NVAO processed 19 Flemish applications for initial accreditation (2009: 11; 2008: 12 and 2007: 9). Eleven of these involved applications from (non-statutorily) registered institutions (see Chapter 9.2, Tables).

Four applications received a positive judgement, 15 were withdrawn. Two positive decisions involved professionally-oriented bachelor's programmes, the others a master's programme and an advanced master's programme. The majority of the withdrawals (six) involved master's programmes.

2.3 / Research master's programmes

Dutch research master's programmes train talented students for high-quality research careers within universities as well as in the private and public research sectors. The programmes are provided by qualified researchers who have access to excellent research environments. The Royal Netherlands Academy for Arts and Sciences (KNAW) advises NVAO in this respect. For six scientific fields, it has appointed six committees composed of authoritative scientists.

In 2010, 55 applications were processed (2009: 60; 2008: 6 and 2007: 5). A positive decision and advice were issued in 47 cases (2009: 52; 2008: 6 and 2007: 5), of which 19 within the Language and Culture domain (see Chapter 9.2, Tables).

2.4 / Appeal procedures

2.4.1 / The Netherlands

In 2010, NVAO did not submit any internal appeals to its Appeals Committee. Nor did NVAO make any decisions after appeal in the year under review. In 2010, the Appeals Committee drew up a report on its activities during the period from 2005 to 2009. Following from this report, the committee formulated a number of points for attention and improvement. Most notable points for improvement are communication with the institutions and compliance with the statutory timeframes for decisions.

NVAO will heed the points for attention and improvement. Over the past five years, by the way, only ten dossiers have been submitted to the Appeals Committee for advice.

On 16 June 2010, the Administrative Jurisdiction Division of the Council of State ruled in the case between the Institute for Psycho-synthesis in Utrecht and NVAO. The Administrative Jurisdiction Division dismissed the appeal lodged by the Institute for Psycho-synthesis. This ruling terminated the accreditation (by virtue of law) of the bachelor's programme (professional orientation) Psycho-synthesis provided by the Institute for Psycho-synthesis.

2.4.2 / Flanders

Following a number of negative judgements regarding research-embedded programmes provided by Flemish university colleges, three internal appeals were lodged in 2010. These appeals are still under consideration by the appeals advisory board.

2.5 / Other activities

2.5.1 / Research-embedded programmes (Flanders)

In Flanders, the former two-cycle university college programmes are being converted into academic bachelor's and master's programmes. These programmes are developing into fully-fledged academic programmes with possibly an additional professional orientation. This gradual conversion process was initiated in 2004. In the educational curricula, for example, the focus is shifting towards research, thus enabling the graduates to acquire clear research competencies. By 2013, these programmes must meet the same requirements as academic programmes provided by research universities. Under the Flemish Higher Education Act, a transitional arrangement is in place regarding the embedding of education in research. NVAO has integrated this transitional arrangement into its assessment framework and the assessment agencies VLIR/VLHORA have operationalised

the arrangement in a supplementary protocol. In addition, NVAO has elaborated the matter in an explicit guideline for research-embedding and a guideline for the embedding of art programmes in research.

In 2010, NVAO initially received applications from 12 institutions for the accreditation of 22 academic bachelor's and master's programmes in the clusters of electronics / IT and electro-mechanics / electrical engineering. In its analysis of the assessment reports concerned, NVAO focused a great deal of attention on the development of the research-embedding process, in order to verify whether the achievements and plans underpinning the panel judgement provide sufficient grounds for assuming that the research-embedding goals will be realised in 2013 and that the programmes will fully meet the accreditation criteria.

The criteria considered in that respect include:

- a) is the academic orientation pursued clearly expressed in the objectives and research competencies?
- b) is the research-embedding reflected in the structure and design of the programme, is teaching visibly embedded in research, at least in the initial set-up, and do the plans and intentions inspire confidence that the objectives of the conversion dossier will be achieved?
- c) is the institution developing a research environment that is supported and fed by the programmes and are the teachers sufficiently involved in research?
- d) is it likely that the programme will have realised the research-embedding objectives by 2012/2013, so that it will then meet the criteria laid down in the accreditation framework in every respect?

NVAO recognises that the assessment has not been an easy task for the panels. After all, the self-evaluation reports date back to 2007, while the site visits to the programmes by the assessment panel were conducted in 2008. By the time the applications for accreditation were submitted, in 2010, these programmes had undergone further development.

NVAO notes that in most cases, the panels came across programmes that had made a good start with the research-embedding process, as demonstrated by the concrete results presented in the assessment reports. Yet the panels also state a number of risks involved in the full realisation of the research-embedding objectives by 2013. For that reason, NVAO decided to set up ten hearing procedures in order to acquire maximum certainty regarding the evolution that can be expected in research-embedding. For 9 out of the 22 applications concerned, the hearing justified the conclusion that NVAO could continue to process the application without any additional assessment activities. In 13 cases, the panel was

requested to perform an additional assessment, while minimising the extra assessment burden for the programmes.

During the course of 2010, NVAO received applications from the following clusters: audio-visual arts; bio sciences; drama; industrial sciences: industrial design; industrial sciences: computer science; industrial sciences: environmental studies; industrial sciences: nuclear technology; industrial sciences: packing technology; nautical sciences and product development.

It turns out that the programmes have made serious efforts to meet the new academic standards. Virtually all of them have made substantial investments in order to increase the number of active researchers in the programmes. In addition, they have invested in creating research facilities and they are aware that the curricula need(ed) to be revised, in some cases to a considerable extent. The bulk of the programmes are aware of the difference between 'academic' programmes and programmes 'of an academic level'. This creates a solid foundation for embedding their teaching in research, as required. At the same time, it became clear that most programmes do not yet meet all of the standards set for academic programmes. The interrelationship between education and research in particular, needs to be reinforced. A number of programmes have recently embarked on this process. Other programmes see opportunities in building a younger workforce: since younger generations have received more training in research skills and conducting independent research, they tend to be given more of a free rein to practise those skills.

2.5.2 / Associate Degree programmes (the Netherlands)

At the end of 2009, the Minister of Education, Culture and Science decided that a fourth round of pilot projects involving Associate Degree programmes would be launched in 2010 (the first rounds took place in 2005, 2006 and 2008). Up to and including round 4A, universities of applied sciences have submitted applications in an entirely independent fashion. Round 4B is different in the sense that it was specifically intended for programmes both developed and provided in concert with institutions for vocational training and adult education, with no more than half of the AD programme being provided at the premises of the vocational training and adult education.

In round 4A (May - June 2010), NVAO processed 65 applications, 40 of which received a positive recommendation. In round 4B (October - December 2010), NVAO processed six applications, five of which were awarded a positive recommendation. For round 4B, a protocol has been developed that

sets explicit requirements for the collaboration between the university of applied sciences and the institution for pre-vocational education; thus, it differs from the protocol used in every one of the previous rounds. The assessment approach has also been revised in round 4B.

Up to and including round 4A, the assessment was based on the information dossier, supplemented with a verbal explanation by the programme if need be. In round 4B, a site visit is a standard component of the assessment process. This visit focuses primarily on the quality of the collaboration between the university of applied sciences and the institution for pre-vocational education. The assessments in rounds 4A and 4B are carried out by a permanent committee, supplemented with an audit expert in round 4B. In addition to the permanent committee, a subject expert is called in for each application to be assessed.

2.5.3 / Teaching specialisations (the Netherlands)

In 2009, the State Secretary of Education, Culture and Science requested NVAO to advise on the quality of teaching specialisations provided by research universities. Students enrolled in academic bachelor's programmes may opt to follow an additional (teaching) specialisation. This leads to a teaching qualification comparable – albeit more limited in scope – with that of grade two teachers [qualified to teach the first three years of secondary education]. With this initiative, the State Secretary aims to encourage more students to opt for a career in education.

The previous round of teaching specialisations (May – June 2009) focused on research universities providing grade one teacher-training programmes [qualifying graduates to teach at all levels of secondary education]. NVAO subsequently formulated ten positive recommendations. In October 2009, the second round was launched, aimed at research universities that did not as yet offer any grade one teacher-training programmes. These applications were subject to a more extensive assessment framework.

In February and April 2010, NVAO issued positive recommendations regarding the applications from three research universities.

2.5.4 / HBO₅ (Flanders)

Under the Act of 30 April 2009 concerning advanced secondary education and professional higher education, a new short cycle was introduced in the higher education system in Flanders: professional higher education (HBO). This HBO leads to teaching qualifications at level 5 of the Flemish qualification structure (HBO₅) and graduates are awarded a graduate diploma. Both new and converted existing programmes qualify

for this scheme, as do the secondary vocational education programmes organising the BSO nursing degrees.

At the request of the school advisory services of the educational umbrella organisations (GO!, OVSG, POV and VSKO), NVAO initiated a pilot project aimed at streamlining the conversion and generating a maximum of learning effects on both sides. The kick-off meeting took place in May 2010, whereupon the participating programmes submitted their dossiers. Explanatory meetings were held in September, as was an exemplary site visit to one of the participating programmes. In mid-October, the final assessment reports were forwarded to the institutions. During this pilot project, all parties involved (five participating programmes, school advisory services, VLHORA, NVAO, panels) were continually requested to provide feedback.

On 17 December 2010, the learning effects and the *Learning effects report on the HBO₅ pilot projects* were presented to the professional field during the workshop entitled *HBO₅ ready to go – Learning from pilot projects*.

Another preparatory step concerned the development of assessment frameworks for converted and new HBO₅ programmes. Key points of focus were the relationship between the intended learning outcomes and the recognised teaching qualifications; reference to the Dublin descriptors and the professional orientation; and the relationship between the HBO₅ programme and any short or adapted supplementary curricula in subsequent bachelor's programmes. Following the framework, several regulations were revised and expanded. In February 2010, the assessment frameworks were approved by the Flemish parliament. The existing adult education programmes and the secondary school nursing programmes that wish to be recognised as HBO₅ programmes must submit a conversion dossier to NVAO no later than 1 January 2014.

2.5.5 / Higher education register (Flanders)

The Flemish government has commissioned NVAO to develop and update the Higher education register (HOR - www.hogeronderwijsregister.be/ www.highereducation.be). This register contains information on all higher education establishments in Flanders and all Flemish bachelor's and master's programmes. NVAO is responsible for the central management of the register but institution managers are free to enter their own information. In addition, the institutions may produce specific exports from the database by selecting the information they wish to receive. The database sends the information on accredited programmes and/or institutions to the databases of NVAO and the European Crossroads (www.crossroads.eu).

In 2010, the Higher education register underwent regular maintenance.

2.5.6 / Education Act XX (Flanders)

In 2010, NVAO adapted its regulations and guidelines to Education Act XX. For example, by introducing language variants and some other modes of study and by allowing accreditation periods of less than six years, in order to preserve the clustered assessments.

2.5.7 / Training in the school (the Netherlands)

In line with the quality agenda *Powerful mastery* for teacher-training programmes during the period from 2008 to 2010, 'Training in the school' was anchored in the structure of the Dutch education system with effect from the 2009-2010 school year.

On 11 November 2010, the then State Secretary of Education, Culture and Science invited the 56 recognised training schools for a conference on the topic of 'Results and ambitions of the training schools'. Here, NVAO presented an analysis of 83 applications assessed. This analysis ensued from the five key factors for success and associated risks for training within the school. A written version of the analysis will be published in *VELON*, the journal for teacher educators.

2.5.8 / Transition from old to new system (the Netherlands)

As a new accreditation system will take effect on 1 January 2011, the year 2010 will go down in history as the final year of the old accreditation system. NVAO is aiming for a smooth transition from old to new; in 2010, a number of transitional arrangements were developed to that end.

2.5.9 / Legal body for higher education (the Netherlands)

The recognition procedure was abolished with effect from 1 September 2010. From that date, the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (WHW) distinguishes two types of organisation qualified to provide accredited programmes: government-funded institutions and legal bodies for higher education. Institutions must follow a specific procedure to become a legal body for higher education (and thus be qualified to provide accredited programmes). NVAO has laid down its role in the NVAO protocol for more stringent initial accreditations. Following a recommendation by the Education Inspectorate, the Minister of Education, Culture and Science will make a decision on the basis of the policy guideline for the authorisation to award degrees in higher education (*Staatscourant* 23 September 2010, no. 14710).

In 2010, NVAO issued two positive recommendations within the context of the recognition procedure in place until 1 September 2010. In two cases, NVAO issued a negative recommendation. As yet, NVAO has not made any decisions under the new legal body for higher education procedure in the year under review.

2.5.10 / Validation of subject-specific learning outcomes (Flanders)

The Flemish Qualification Structure Act (30 April 2009) regulates, inter alia, the formulation of joint subject-specific learning outcomes by the Flemish university colleges and universities. In this respect, it has laid down a new task for NVAO.

The subject-specific learning outcomes are developed in concert by all the institutions offering a specific programme. Subsequently, these outcomes are endorsed by the VLUHR (Flemish Council of Universities and University Colleges) and validated by NVAO. Thus, the learning outcomes are automatically ranked at the correct level in the Flemish qualification structure. The joint subject-specific learning outcomes will be used during external assessments instead of the current subject-specific reference frameworks drawn up by assessment panels.

In 2010, NVAO was involved, in an observer capacity, in the development of the procedures by the steering group of the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR) and the Flemish Council of Flemish University Colleges (VLHORA) (Flemish Council of Universities and University Colleges – VLUHR). This steering group also organised pilot projects for programmes in the Communications and Construction sectors.

NVAO has formulated regulations concerning the validation of joint subject-specific learning outcomes. These regulations apply to both existing and new programmes.

Upon approval of four applications for initial accreditation, NVAO has already validated the proposed subject-specific learning outcomes.

2.5.11 / Broadened programmes (the Netherlands)

Two or more programmes registered on the Central Register of Higher Education Programmes (CROHO) can be combined into a single broadened programme without the need for initial accreditation; this is known as a planning-neutral conversion. The Minister of Education, Culture and Science decides whether or not the consolidation results in a new programme. At the request of the initiating institution, NVAO conducts a marginal assessment based on its 'Broadened Programmes Protocol' and advises the Minister. Upon a

positive decision, the board of the institution may enter the changes into the CROHO register. Once the broadened programme is open to enrolment, students can no longer enrol in the original programmes.

In 2010, Leiden University submitted two applications for planning-neutral conversions to NVAO. In both cases, NVAO issued a positive recommendation.

On 1 April 2010, the Director of Higher Education and Student Finance of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science requested NVAO to voice its views on the intended integration (planning-neutral conversion) of master's programmes (academic orientation) in the field of the humanities. In essence, the joint deans in the humanities sector propose to reduce the aggregate of more than 250 unique, CROHO registered academic master's programmes to 21 broader programmes. Thus, the existing range will be concentrated into a well-organised and manageable number of broad programmes or academic domains. This operation will restructure the humanities programmes on offer in the Netherlands in such a way that the overall range will be contained within acceptable bounds in terms of the curriculum. This justifies a planning-neutral conversion. On 6 July 2010, the NVAO Board expressed its approval of the intended planning-neutral conversions within the framework of restructuring the range of academic master's programmes in the humanities sector.

2.5.12 / Management Enforcement Legislative Act (the Netherlands)

In the Netherlands, the Management Enforcement Legislative Act (*Staatsblad* 2010, 119) was put into operation on various dates during the year 2010. This Act contains stipulations that are of direct significance for NVAO. The main changes affecting NVAO are outlined below.

- › On 30 April 2010, the following regulations came into effect:
 - the *improvement period in accreditation procedures* (Higher Education and Research Act (WHW), article 5a.12a). If NVAO finds that a programme fails to meet the Accreditation Framework, it may extend the validity of the last accreditation or initial accreditation decision by a single maximum period of two years. NVAO will exercise this authority if, in its opinion, the programme is likely to meet the Accreditation Framework within the stipulated period of time;
 - the *extended accreditation in case of overrun of the procedural timeframe* by NVAO (WHW, article 5a.9, paragraph 7). If NVAO fails to make a decision prior to expiry of the current accreditation, the accreditation period will be extended to the end of the academic year or, if necessary, until the end

of the subsequent academic year. As a result, the stipulation that the (current) accreditation will, by virtue of law, continue until NVAO has made an irrevocable decision regarding an application (the so-called suspending effect of appeals) will lapse.

- › On 1 July 2010, the regulation regarding the introduction of joint degrees came into force (WHW, article 7.3c). A joint degree programme is a bachelor's or master's programme which is provided by two or more institutions in concert. The institutions may be located in the Netherlands or abroad. The joint degree can be awarded both at the programme level and at specialisation level. NVAO decides whether a programme or specialisation qualifies as a joint degree and can be accredited as such or needs to be assessed in an initial accreditation procedure. In close consultation with the Ministry of Education, the Association of Universities in the Netherlands and the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences, NVAO has developed two protocols on that subject. The higher education sector anxiously awaited the implementation of this stipulation. This explains why NVAO already made several decisions regarding joint degree programmes in the year under review.
- › On 1 September 2010, the recognition procedure was abolished and replaced by the *Legal body for higher education* procedure (cf. 'Legal body for higher education').
- › Another regulation entering into force on 1 September 2010 is the one stipulating that upon making an initial accreditation decision, NVAO is to indicate which *CROHO section* it deems appropriate for the programme (WHW, article 5a.11, paragraph 5). The CROHO sections are outlined in article 3.1 of the WHW 2008 Implementation Decree.

'Room for Talent' will be considered

After the collapse of the Balkenende IV cabinet, the *Room for Talent* bill, containing proposals for 'selection on admission' and higher tuition fees, was declared controversial by the Dutch House of Representatives. In December 2010, the Rutte cabinet requested the House of Representatives to continue its consideration of this bill. The bill gives institutions more leeway to select and charge higher tuition fees for programmes of a residential nature. NVAO was requested to design an assessment framework to serve as a basis for advising the minister on whether or not to allow selection on admission and/or an increase in tuition fees. The assessment framework was submitted to parliament in December. NVAO expects to be able to conduct these so-called approval assessments by the autumn of 2011, provided the Act is endorsed by both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Chapter 3

Higher education in the Netherlands and Flanders



The large number of positive accreditation decisions issued by NVAO on the basis of assessment reports bears witness to the generic quality provided by Dutch and Flemish higher education institutions. The current accreditation system does not (yet) allow a differentiation in the extent to which programmes surpass the generic quality. In the Netherlands, however, this will be possible in the next phase of the system and according to the expectations also in Flanders.

Differentiation will do more justice to the diversity in quality. This will have a positive effect on the sector, because 'meeting the generic quality standards' can be interpreted as 'barely satisfactory', i.e., mediocre, whereas a substantial part of the programmes will probably turn out to surpass that level.

The Netherlands

By now, all existing programmes in the Netherlands have been assessed once under the accreditation system. The first round of assessments and accreditations has laid a quality foundation for the higher education system. Poor programmes have disappeared and moreover, quite a few existing programmes have not applied for accreditation over the past few years. Consequently, the Dutch Central Register of Higher Education Programmes (CROHO) has been cleared and now only contains accredited programmes.

Accreditation and the preceding external assessments have had a boosting effect on quality. Increasing attention is paid both to well-structured quality assurance and the quality achieved. The professional higher education programmes in particular have introduced more structure in their teaching, in part under pressure from the public and political opinions: the required number of contact hours for students has been raised, the number of hours students spend on their studies seems to have increased and the training level of professional higher education teachers receives considerably more attention. In addition, there is a greater emphasis on practice-oriented research and its interconnection with education.

In the assessment process itself, over the past few years undeniably more attention was focused on the quality of examinations and students' final projects. This enhances quality awareness. In combination with other instruments, such as intake interviews, entrance tests for language and

arithmetic and the attention paid to dropout issues, this seems to justify the expectation that the quality of professional higher education programmes will continue to improve over the years to come.

This applies for both government-funded programmes and legal bodies providing higher education (recognised universities of applied sciences). Some of the institutions in the latter category, for that matter, continue to have difficulty attaining the required bachelor's and master's levels. In part, this could ensue from a lack of experience in determining the levels in question but in other cases, it can be attributed to the necessity of competing in an apparently rather limited market. NVAO greatly appreciates the efforts expended by umbrella organisation NRTO (which has succeeded PAEPON) in this respect, as the members of this organisation hold one another to account regarding the manner in which they conduct information and marketing activities. This provides an additional guarantee for quality awareness. For that reason, it is sometimes distressing to note how non-associated private institutions seek out and occasionally cross the boundaries of 'decent information'.

NVAO was pleased to note that many programmes have started to pay attention to the issue of students exceeding the nominal duration of studies. Often, intensive courses are initiated in order to allow these slow students, many of whom have been fully absorbed into employment, to graduate as yet. This in itself is an excellent development because a diploma, after all, offers a good guarantee for a successful career. A prerequisite, however, is that the value of such a diploma is undisputed. For that reason, NVAO was appalled to learn that alternative graduation routes have been created, which have lowered the diploma threshold and – understandably and rightly so – generated great indignation and concern. For NVAO, this means that the final level attained by students will be the object of maximum scrutiny in the years to come. Self-evidently, the higher education institutions and assessment panels are expected to observe the same strictness in monitoring quality. In the opinion of NVAO, the existing statutory and assessment regime offers sufficient scope for stringent assessment, while institutions, programmes, teachers and students can obviously be expected to behave in a proper, ethical and professional manner.

The apparent increase in the substantive attention for internationalisation in Dutch higher education is certainly promising. This trend is demonstrated by the pilot projects involving the internationalisation certificate. NVAO emphasises that the mobility of students and teachers is but one of the options for acquiring international and intercultural

competencies. The highly desirable and necessary internationalisation of education can also be given shape through curricular contents, 'internationalisation at home', multilingualism, working visits and guest lectures.

Flanders

In comparison with the incidents and the fierce public and political debates in the Netherlands, Flemish higher education appears to sail in relatively smooth waters. However, this impression is deceptive, considering that a radical reform of the two-cycle university college programmes is in full swing in Flanders. On the one hand, the university colleges are expanding the academic orientation of their bachelor's and master's programmes and on the other, they are preparing the integration of these programmes into the research universities with exception of the art and nautical programmes.

In 2010, NVAO noted that the university colleges put in substantial efforts to meet the requirements for academic bachelor's and master's programmes by the end of the academic year 2012-2013. By means of hearings and additional assessments, NVAO attempted to obtain maximum certainty that these programmes will indeed succeed in their pursuits. Although the assessments generally inspire confidence and hope, the associated university colleges and universities will have to continue to pay attention to the research-embedding process in the years to come.

Apart from that, the quality of the Flemish programmes is not a source of great concern to NVAO. On account of its rather reticent attitude towards educational reforms, Flanders places more emphasis on the knowledge component than the Netherlands. Thinking in competencies is gaining ground but knowledge is permanently integrated. The competencies concept is implemented step by step and in a well-considered manner. Although this may occasionally create the impression that little attention is paid to the development of skills and attitudes, the labour market seems to be satisfied with the level of knowledge and expertise among the graduates – as it is in the Netherlands, by the way.

Flanders is very careful about offering and permission to offer new programmes. Consequently, some programmes have considerable difficulty in convincing the assessment panels of the potential quality of the programmes developed. In part, this can be attributed to lack of experience: whereas the Netherlands occasionally conveys the impression of converting each and every social trend or change into a new programme and, as a result, developing a great skill in that area, Flemish institutions still tend to adopt a tentative stance and temporary withdrawals of applications in order to make

amendments are the rule rather than the exception. A remarkable phenomenon, for that matter, is the appearance of private and foreign providers on the higher education market in Flanders, albeit with highly variable success.

Because of the language regulations, Flemish institutions are less easily accessible to students from abroad than Dutch institutions. This has consequences for the manner in which internationalisation and interculturality feature in their teaching. The impression prevails that the Flemish institutions still have a world to gain by internationalisation, at any rate at the bachelor's level. Although the need for internationalisation is fully endorsed, the steps taken towards the meaningful internationalisation of education are relatively small. The university colleges in particular – with the exception of the arts programmes – have not yet managed to acquire sufficient prestige in international terms to serve as the sole basis for further development.

Chapter 4

New accreditation system implemented in the Netherlands

On 31 December 2010, the 'assessment frameworks for the higher education accreditation system' were gazetted in the *Staatscourant* and on 1 January 2011 the new accreditation system came into force. Early in 2011, an Order will be published regulating the improvement period and stipulating detailed requirements for the award of a 'conditional' decision, the so-called 'Accreditation Decree'.

The implementation of the new Act marks a new chapter in the development of quality assurance in Dutch higher education. The preceding legislative process can be regarded as a classic example of the Dutch consultative model, in which a large number of stakeholders were very closely involved in the design of the new legislation. Furthermore, in 2008 and 2009, nine institutions tested the new accreditation system in practice. As Flemish institutions also participated in the trial run, field-testing drafts for a new system was good practice for Flanders as well. The experiences gained in these pilot projects were subsequently used to (re)formulate the assessment frameworks that have now been published. The next few years will have to show whether the new Act can do justice to the ambition of arriving at a more focused and substantive assessment of the quality of higher education, involving less paperwork.

Transitional arrangement

Upon the consideration of the Act in the House of Representatives and the Senate, the Dutch parliament agreed to a transitional arrangement enabling an accelerated introduction of the lighter accreditation regime. Contrary to the regular procedure, in which an institution must first pass the quality assurance test before a limited programme assessment can be conducted, under the transitional arrangement assessments can be carried out according to the limited framework right away.

Until 1 March 2011, Dutch higher education institutions that have obtained NVAO accreditation for at least 50 per cent of their programmes – that are covered by the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW) – may apply to NVAO for an institutional quality assurance assessment. By doing so, the institutions indicate that they are opting for limited programme assessments with effect from 1 January 2011, which carries the obligation to pass the institutional assessment within a maximum period of three years. The accredita-

tions and initial accreditations awarded during this period of time will be valid for no more than three years (until the institutional assessment has been conducted). The term will be extended to six years following a positive institutional assessment.

Institutions that do not apply for an institutional quality assurance assessment will be subjected to an extensive programme assessment. Institutions that fail the institutional assessment or have failed to submit their application in time will fall back into the extensive regime. This means that programmes with a three-year accreditation will be subjected to a supplementary assessment, in order to ascertain that each and every programme meets the requirements of the accreditation system.

NVAO decides on the timeframe of these institutional assessments at its own discretion: some institutions may be assessed within a few months, others within a maximum period of three years. Higher education establishments that do not take part in the accelerated implementation arrangement may apply for an institutional assessment three years after the Act has come into operation (i.e., commencing in 2014), unless NVAO has sufficient capacity available at an earlier date. This will be communicated by NVAO.

Certification of secretaries / co-ordinators

In 2010, NVAO trained some hundred secretaries / co-ordinators in the new method of working and by now prepared 25 potential chairs for the institutional quality assurance assessment. The training highlights the need to arrive at a procedure that takes less of a toll on teachers and focuses more on the content of a programme. When NVAO and the institutions jointly keep a close eye on these goals, the reduction of administrative burdens within the new system will have a chance of success. For that reason, NVAO will be monitoring the developments with meticulous care and using a broad-based feedback group to regularly gauge whether the implementation of the new system is achieving the intended goals.

And how is Flanders getting on?

In Flanders, the debate with the education agencies, the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR) and the Council of Flemish University Colleges (VLHORA; now amalgamated into the Flemish Council of Universities and University Colleges – VLUHR) on the next phase of the accreditation system is in full swing but has not yet been laid down in legislation or proposals. Consensus seems to have been reached regarding the key principles, which tie in closely with the Dutch situation. However, some remarkable differences exist.

In Flanders, the institutional assessment will be mandatory and all programmes will be subjected to a limited programme assessment. Formally, the institutional assessment does not carry any consequences other than that it is published and the results may be taken into consideration in the limited programme assessments. Expectations are that these principles will result in decree proposals within the next few months. In principle, Flanders will enter the next phase of the accreditation system around 2013.

Chapter 5

The international context

5.1 / International networks and projects

In 2010, NVAO once more played a highly active role within the networks of accreditation and quality assurance organisations. NVAO provided the secretariats of the European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education (ECA) and the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). NVAO managers continued their positions on the boards of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), ECA and INQAAHE.

Furthermore, NVAO takes an active part in various projects implemented by ECA and INQAAHE. With regard to the INQAAHE projects, which are funded by the World Bank and UNESCO, NVAO is responsible for their organisation, administration and justification, in its capacity as INQAAHE secretariat. The ECA project Transparent European Accreditation decisions & Mutual recognition agreements II (TEAM II), for which NVAO acted as co-ordinator, was successfully completed in September 2010. In June, a European convention on joint programmes was organised in Austria and various reports on the accreditation and recognition of joint programmes were published. More information on the TEAM II project, co-funded by the European Commission, is available on:

<http://www.eacaconsortium.net/main/projects/team-ii->

In October, two new ECA projects were launched, subsidised by the European Commission, in which NVAO also plays a co-ordinating role.

1. The object of the European Training of QA Experts (E-TRAIN) project is to train international experts who can be called in for procedures across Europe. To that end, training programmes will be developed and a database of experts from various countries will be set up for use by the accreditation organisations. In addition, training will be provided to accreditation organisation staff. For information: <http://www.eacaconsortium.net/main/projects/e-train>

2. The object of the Joint Programmes: Quality Assurance and Recognition of Degrees Awarded project is to facilitate both the accreditation and the recognition of joint programme diplomas. For information: <http://www.eacaconsortium.net/main/projects/joqar>

One of the aims pursued by ECA is mutual recognition of accreditations. In December 2010, a meeting was held at the NVAO office in the Hague during which a number of ECA members signed a multi-lateral agreement regarding the

mutual accreditation of joint programmes. At the same time, several bi-lateral recognition agreements between ECA members were renewed; NVAO is involved in four of these agreements. An accreditation awarded in one of the countries concerned does not need to be repeated in another country involved; the relevant programme can be recognised straight away.

5.2 / Joint degrees

Since 1 July 2010, higher education institutions in the Netherlands have been legally entitled to provide joint degree programmes. Flanders has already offered that option for some time. In the Netherlands, a joint degree programme is one that is provided by a Dutch institution in concert with one or more Dutch or foreign higher education establishments and which leads to the award of a joint diploma. In consultation with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) and the umbrella organisations, NVAO has developed protocols for the assessment of applications regarding joint degree programmes (initial accreditation and accreditation). NVAO has explained the protocols and regulations regarding joint degrees in several meetings with the institutions. The Ministry of Education consults with NVAO and the umbrella organisations on a regular basis in order to discuss the implementation of the regulations.

Meanwhile, a few applications for joint degree programmes have been submitted and NVAO has issued the first positive decisions. As yet, most of the applications ensue from a collaboration between Dutch institutions. Discussions with the institutions indicate that in 2011, applications can be expected for the (initial) accreditation of joint degree programmes provided by Dutch and foreign institutions.

5.3 / Pilot project regarding distinctive feature of internationalisation

At the end of 2009, in collaboration with a number of experts, NVAO took the first steps towards an assessment framework for the distinctive feature of internationalisation. Programmes wish to have the internationalisation aspect assessed by means of a distinctive feature for various reasons. Firstly, in the open economies of the Netherlands and Flanders, it is a matter of course that higher education graduates possess the competencies required to function in an international and multi-cultural environment. Secondly, the time seems ripe for further professionalisation and finally, many programmes have a need for recognition of the efforts they have expended. Such recognition is the distinctive feature of internationalisation.

In 2010, the framework was field-tested in a number of pilot projects. Interest among institutions turned out to be considerable; the number of applications for participation amply surpassed expectations. Eventually, 12 institutions from the Netherlands and Flanders participated in the pilot project with 21 programmes. The points of departure have been laid down in the *Framework for the assessment of internationalisation as a distinctive (quality) feature*.

The pilot project was carried out in the latter half of 2010. Over the period from June to October, 16 site visits took place, resulting in 16 panel reports that were discussed by the panel chairs, process co-ordinators and secretaries in two clusters. Following analysis of the results, NVAO presented the distinctive feature of 'Internationalisation' to 18 Dutch and Flemish programmes during the seminar *Assessment of Internationalisation*. Ten of these programmes additionally received the Internationalisation certificate with a judgement of 'good'.

The suggestions for improvement will be incorporated into an evaluation report to be issued in March 2011, together with the revised guidelines and the assessment framework. Under the improved frameworks, programmes may apply for a distinctive feature of internationalisation as part of their accreditation. By means of an 'exchange mart', NVAO is going to amass the good practices in the field of internationalisation on the digital quality platform *qazine.eu*. This will allow institutions to exchange experiences pertaining to internationalisation. With these initiatives, NVAO hopes to foster a quality improvement in internationalisation while at the same time encouraging institutions to focus attention on internationalisation in order to improve the overall quality of higher education.

The pilot project was also well received by the European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education (ECA). ECA is currently working on a proposal regarding the development of a European internationalisation certificate. Programmes in Europe that regard their level of internationalisation as good or excellent may apply for this European certificate. The pilot projects for the European certificate are expected to launch in 2012.

5.4 / Collaboration agreements

On 17 June 2010, NVAO signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Japanese National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (NIAD-UE). NIAD-UE evaluates Japanese universities and performs tasks relating to the recognition of academic degrees. On account of the latter tasks and in order to promote international co-operation

between Japanese and Dutch higher education institutions, Nuffic also signed a Memorandum with NIAD-UE. Both memoranda were signed during a meeting at the Dutch Embassy in Tokyo, in the presence of representatives from Flanders and the Belgian and Dutch Embassies. In addition, NVAO gave three presentations during the Japan - Europe Quality Assurance Seminar, at the invitation of NIAD-UE.

On 15 October 2010, NVAO concluded agreements on international co-operation with the Chinese Education Association for International Education (CEAIE) in Beijing. In addition, both parties signed a Letter of Intent. During the conference in Beijing, from 15 to 17 October 2010, NVAO board member Leendert Klaassen spoke about various developments and experiences gained by NVAO and the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) regarding international co-operation in the field of quality assurance.

CEAIE engages primarily in student mobility. The organisation has entered into a joint venture agreement with Nuffic for the establishment of a Netherlands Education Support Office (NESO) in Beijing, which opened its doors on 15 October 2010. As CEAIE aims to initiate other ventures in China pertaining to quality assurance, it has expressed its intention of engaging in collaboration with the British Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) and NVAO, among others.

International activities in 2010

- › In 2010, NVAO participated in several projects co-ordinated by Dutch or Flemish organisations. In addition, NVAO was responsible for the co-ordination of a project in Croatia, involving institutional audits at three Croatian universities of applied sciences. This project is implemented with subsidy from the Flemish government.
- › After the National Qualification Frameworks for the Netherlands and Flanders were found to meet the requirements set by the ministers of the Bologna countries, the year under review also saw initiatives to develop national qualification frameworks that comply with the European qualifications framework. NVAO is involved in these endeavours, among other things by participating in a group of experts (the Netherlands) or steering group (Flanders).
- › In 2010, NVAO issued a positive judgement regarding two applications from Curacao. These assessments do not fall under the regular statutory tasks of NVAO (as the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act does not apply outside the Netherlands); they are carried out as an additional assignment and at the expense of the applying institution. Furthermore, questions were answered and consultations were held regarding the intended submission of applications from the (former) Dutch Antilles and Aruba, as well as from Surinam.
- › During the past year, NVAO received delegations from a wide range of countries, including Aruba, China, Curacao, Eastern Timor, Ethiopia, France, Ghana, India, Japan, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Saudi-Arabia, Surinam, Sweden, Taiwan and Trinidad and Tobago.
- › In December 2010, the two ECA and NVAO *Assessment of Internationalisation* seminars were held regarding the distinctive (quality) feature of internationalisation.

Chapter 6

Appendices

6.1 / NVAO Board and Advisory Council

Board

The Board of NVAO consists of a maximum of 15 members. The Chair and a maximum of four other members make up the Executive Board.

The board members are appointed for a term of four years by the Committee of Ministers (the Dutch and Flemish Ministers responsible for higher education). The board members have expertise in the field of higher education, the professional practice of higher education, scientific research or the area of quality assurance. The Board decides on the policy, the management regulations, the budget, the annual report and the annual accounts and the decisions that are open to external appeal. In addition, the Board provides guidelines for the structure of the organisation, information provision and the financial-economic running of the organisation. The Executive Board directs the organisation on a daily basis and is accountable to the Board for its actions.

In 2010, the Executive Board of NVAO was made up of Dr K.L.L.M. Dittrich (Chair), Prof. Dr G. Langouche (Vice Chair), L. Bollaert and L.J. Klaassen.

Composition of the NVAO Board

(in alphabetical order, as from 1 January 2011)

Dr K.L.L.M. Dittrich (Chair)
Prof. Dr G. Langouche (Vice Chair)
Lic L. Bollaert (member Executive Board)
Mr E. Derycke
Bsc K. Geven
L.J. Klaassen LLM (member Executive Board)
Ms Prof. Dr P. Meurs
Mw C. Tillekaerts
Ir B. van Nederveen
Ms I. van Riet
Lic G.E.D. Vanleenhove
Drs P.M. van Roon
Prof. Drs J. Weitenberg

Composition of NVAO Executive Board

(in alphabetical order, as from 1 January 2011)

Dr K.L.L.M. Dittrich (Chair)
Prof. Dr G. Langouche (Vice Chair)
Lic L. Bollaert
L.J. Klaassen LLM

Advisory Council

The board appoints an Advisory Council that provides unsolicited or requested recommendations on general policy.

The members of the Advisory Council are appointed for a maximum term of three years and come from the circles of: the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (HBO-raad), the Dutch Training and Education Council (NRTO), the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR), the Council of Flemish University Colleges (VLHORA) – now combined into VLUHR, the Dutch National Students Association (ISO), the Dutch National Union of Students (LSVb), the Flemish Union of Students (VVS) and the Flanders Social and Economic Council (SERV).

Composition of NVAO Advisory Council

(in alphabetical order, as from 1 January 2011)

Dr K.L.L.M. Dittrich (Chair)
Prof. Dr G. Langouche (Vice Chair)
Lic L. Bollaert (member Executive Board)
B. Buijs
T. Demeyer
Drs H.A.P. de Greef
Prof. Dr T. van Haaften
Ms H. Keijzer-Lambooy
L.J. Klaassen LLM (member Executive Board)
Prof. Dr H. Martens
Dr T. Martens
J. Mijs
R. Van Renterghem
P. Verboven

Substitutes

H. Deckers
J. Deryckere
Prof. Dr P. Geerlings
Dr B. Hoogewijs

6.2 / Tables

Totals

Total number of applications processed

Settled as of 31 December

	Total	Accredited in the accredi- Nether- lands	Initial accredi- tations	Research master's pro- grammes	Extended master's pro- grammes	Accre- dited in Flanders	Initial accredi- tations
2010	719	424	106	55	-	115	19
2009	827	506	117	60	1	132	11
2008	859	573	114	6	4	159	3
2007	770	523	102	5	8	123	9
2006	503	336	91	10	11	42	13
2005	461	371	59	27	1	-	3
2004	345	232	35	78	-	-	-
2003	40	-	5	35	-	-	-

Total number of applications withdrawn

Settled as of 31 December

	Total	Accredita- tions	Initial accredi- tations	Research master's programmes	Extended master's programmes
2010	61	12	42	7	-
2009	47	9	36	2	-
2008	28	2	24	-	2
2007	27	5	22	-	-
2006	48	8	31	3	6
2005	39	14	15	10	-
2004	37	2	35	-	-
2003	2	-	2	-	-

The Netherlands

Accreditation applications dealt with in the Netherlands in 2010

Settled as of 31 December

	Total	Positive	With- drawn	Negative	Report rejected
> Architecture	-	-	-	-	-
> Economics	107	104	3	-	-
> Behaviour & Society	40	40	-	-	-
> Health care	22	22	-	-	-
> Arts	7	7	-	-	-
> Agriculture (and the natural environment)	10	10	-	-	-
> Natural sciences	30	30	-	-	-
> Education and teacher- training programmes	163	155	7	1	-
> Law	2	2	-	-	-
> Language and culture	32	32	-	-	-
> Engineering and Technology	11	10	-	1	-
Total	424	412	10	2	-
> Research universities	125	125	-	-	-
> Universities of applied sciences	285	276	7	2	-
> Privately funded institutions	14	11	3	-	-
Total	424	412	10	2	-
> Bachelor's programmes (professional orientation)	267	256	9	2	-
> Master's programmes (professional orientation)	29	29	-	-	-
> Bachelor's programmes (academic orientation)	52	52	-	-	-
> Master's programmes (academic orientation)	76	75	1	-	-
Total	424	412	10	2	-

Initial accreditation applications dealt with in the Netherlands in 2010

Settled as of 31 December

	Total	Positive	Withdrawn	Negative (with internal appeal)
> Economics	33	24	9	-
> Behaviour & Society	22	16	6	-
> Health care	7	6	1	-
> Arts	10	10	-	-
> Agriculture (and the natural environment)	1	-	1	-
> Education and teacher-training programmes	17	13	4	-
> Law	4	3	1	-
> Language and culture	5	2	3	-
> Engineering and Technology	4	2	2	-
> Natural sciences	3	3	-	-
Total	106	79	27	-
> Research universities	32	16	16	-
> Universities of applied sciences	39	34	5	-
> Privately funded institutions	35	29	6	-
Total	106	79	27	-
> Bachelor's programmes (professional orientation)	24	19	5	-
> Master's programmes (professional orientation)	42	38	4	-
> Bachelor's programmes (academic orientation)	6	3	3	-
> Master's programmes (academic orientation)	34	19	15	-
Total	106	79	27	-

Applications regarding research master's programmes dealt with in the Netherlands in 2010

Settled as of 31 December

	Total	Positive	Withdrawn	Negative
> Economics	3	3	-	-
> Behaviour & Society	21	18	3	-
> Health care	5	5	-	-
> Arts	-	-	-	-
> Agriculture (and the natural environment)	-	-	-	-
> Education	1	1	-	-
> Law	2	-	1	1
> Language and culture	21	19	2	-
> Engineering and Technology	1	-	1	-
> Natural sciences	1	1	-	-
Total	55	47	7	1
> Research universities	55	47	7	1
Total	55	47	7	1

Applications regarding teaching specialisations dealt with in the Netherlands in 2010

Settled as of 31 December

	Total	Positive	Withdrawn	Negative
Total	3	3	-	-

Applications for recognition / legal HE body dealt with in the Netherlands in 2010

Settled as of 31 December

	Total	Positive	Withdrawn	Negative
Total	4	2	-	2

Flanders

Accreditation applications dealt with in Flanders in 2010

Settled as of 31 December

	Total	Positive	Withdrawn	Negative	Report rejected
> Archaeology and art sciences	4	4	-	-	-
> Bio-engineering sciences	1	1	-	-	-
> Biosciences	-	-	-	-	-
> Biotechnology	4	4	-	-	-
> Veterinary medicine	1	1	-	-	-
> Economic and applied economic sciences	1	1	-	-	-
> Combined fields of study	7	7	-	-	-
> Medicine	1	-	1	-	-
> Health care	7	7	-	-	-
> Theology, religious studies and canon law	1	1	-	-	-
> Commerce and business administration	1	1	-	-	-
> Industrial sciences and technology	55	52	1	2	-
> Music and performing arts	5	5	-	-	-
> Education	-	-	-	-	-
> Political and social sciences	3	3	-	-	-
> Psychology and educational sciences	4	4	-	-	-
> Law, notarial law and criminology	1	1	-	-	-
> Social and community work	1	1	-	-	-
> Social medicine	2	2	-	-	-
> Applied biological sciences	-	-	-	-	-
> Applied science	8	8	-	-	-
> Science	6	6	-	-	-
> Philosophy and ethics	2	2	-	-	-
Total	115	111	2	2	-
> Universities	36	35	1	-	-
> University colleges	73	70	1	2	-
> Registered institutions	6	6	-	-	-
> Non-registered institutions	-	-	-	-	-
Total	115	111	2	2	-
> Bachelor's programmes (professional orientation)	18	18	-	-	-
> Bachelor's programmes (academic orientation)	38	37	-	1	-
> Master's programmes	51	49	1	1	-
> Advanced master's programmes	8	7	1	-	-
Total	115	111	2	2	-

Initial accreditation applications dealt with in Flanders in 2010

Settled as of 31 December

	Total	Positive	Withdrawn	Inadmissible
> Economics	9	-	9	-
> Combined fields of study	2	1	1	-
> Law	1	-	1	-
> Social and community work	6	2	4	-
> Applied science	1	1	-	-
Total	19	4	15	-
> Universities	1	1	-	-
> University colleges	6	2	4	-
> Registered institutions	1	-	1	-
> Non-registered institutions	11	1	10	-
Total	19	4	15	-
> Bachelor's programmes (professi- onal orientation)	7	2	5	-
> Bachelor's programmes (academic orientation)	4	-	4	-
> Master's programmes	7	1	6	-
> Advanced master's programmes	1	1	-	-
Total	19	4	15	-

6.3 / List of terms and abbreviations

CDHO	Commissie Doelmatigheid Higher education Committee for Effective Higher Education
CROHO	Centraal Register Opleidingen Hoger Onderwijs Central Register of Higher Education Study Programmes
DUO	Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs
ECA	European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education
ECTS	European Creditpoint Transfer System
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
ENIC	European National Information Centre
EUA	European University Association
Quality assessment agency	VLIR/VLHORA
EVCs	Elders verworven competenties Prior learning
HBO-raad	Vereniging van Hogescholen Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences
HOR	Hogeronderwijsregister Higher Education Register
Inspectorate	Education Inspectorate
INQAAHE	International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
ISO	Interstedelijk Studenten Overleg Dutch National Students Association
KNAW	Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences
LSVb	Landelijke Studenten Vakbond Dutch National Union of Students
NARIC	National Academic Recognition Information Centre
NRTO	Nederlandse Raad voor Training en Opleiding (voorheen Paepon) Dutch Training and Education Council (formerly Paepon)
Nuffic	Netherlands organisation for international cooperation in higher education
NVAO	Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders
SERV	Sociaal-Economische Raad van Vlaanderen Flanders Social and Economic Council
TEEP	Transnational European Evaluation Project
VBI	Visiterende and Beoordelende Instantie Quality assessment agency
VLHORA	Vlaamse Hogescholenraad Council of Flemish University Colleges
VLIR	Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad Flemish Interuniversity Council
VLUHR	Vlaamse Universiteiten en Hogescholen Raad Flemish Council of Universities and University Colleges
VSK	Vlaamse Scholierenkoepel Flemish Pupils Association
VSNU	Vereniging van Universiteiten Association of Universities in the Netherlands
VVS	Vlaamse Vereniging van Studenten National Union of Students in Flanders

WHOO

Wet op het hoger onderwijs en onderzoek
Higher Education and Research Act

WHW

Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek
Higher Education and Research Act

Colophon

NVAO Annual Report 2010 Summary
© May 2011

Text: NVAO

Design: Smidswater

Printing: Albani drukkers

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