

Interview accreditation process U.S.E.

Date: 5 July 2023, 14.00-15.30
Location: Online (teams)
Participants: Hans van Ees (HvE), chair (RUG)
Lonneke Nillesen (LN), member accreditation panel (MU)
Niels Bosma (NB), director of Studies (U.S.E.)
Rients Galema (RG), coordinator of Undergraduate Studies (U.S.E.)

The agenda included three items for discussion based on the assessments: Real World Perspective, thesis processes and endterms of the bachelor.

1. Real World Perspective (RWP)

The assessment committee recommended to further concretise the RWP, as well as to improve communication towards (potential) students.

HvE and LN reiterated the value of having a Board of Advice. NB confirmed that this suggestion will be implemented for the master's programmes. NB and RG mentioned that they plan to liaise with student bodies to exemplify where in the curricula and *how* the RWP elements are integrated. At the moment the RWP is explained in generic introductory texts but more can be done to extend this to e.g. the dedicated minors, the learning tracks and the master's programmes. This would also prevent students expecting that RWP merely boils down to connection with practice. HvE and LN mentioned that the conversations with the student panels also signaled that more can be done, in the sense that opportunities to capitalize on the RWP approach are being missed. Some potential examples of how this could be achieved were briefly discussed. NB mentioned that USE would start this discussion within the teaching staff as changes will need to be carried and co-developed in order to be successful.

2. Thesis process – especially qualitative methods

NB and RG shared initial thoughts how to improve the thesis process for both master's and bachelor theses. One of the measures would be to draft a clear guideline for both students and teaching staff concerning the (minimum) requirements when pursuing theses based on qualitative methods. HvE and LN also suggested the option to not allow theses based on qualitative methods for the bachelor programme, an approach practised at some other economics bachelor programmes in the Netherlands. RG indicated that we could consider this, but that there will still be a good rationale for such theses in e.g. the dedicated minor economics & law.

Another measure would be a clearer, distinctive and more independent role for the second reader for the academic master programmes, as suggested by the assessment committee. Measures towards independent grading assessments are currently being taken. HvE and LN underlined the importance of this and acknowledged that in the bachelor programme such an independent role may be less fitting considering the specific input from other disciplines in the dedicated minors that many of the bachelor students participate in.

3. Endterms Bachelor and freedom of choice

With the wide range of options available, the assessment committee expressed some concern all students still achieve the attainment targets. RG mentioned/proposed that there are two possible ways to better ensure the endterms are met. First, include more skills in the mandatory part of the bachelor. Second, in the long term we might force students to choose one of the four study routes. By ensuring that in each study route students are sufficiently trained in skills and deepen their knowledge, it can be better

guaranteed that the endterms are met than in the current situation in which students are completely free in terms of choosing their economics electives.