

Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences
Faculty of Sports and Nutrition

Bachelor programme Sportkunde/Sport Studies

External Assessment Visit – Panel Feedback

***** FINAL *****

25 January 2022

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	5
PLAYING FOR KEEPS	7
Overall impressions	7
The World of Sport.....	8
Sport Manager Competencies.....	8
Core Values and Educational Vision.....	9
Building Blocks and Themes per Year.....	9
Critical issues to be addressed on site	10
SITE VISIT	11
Students	11
Alumni.....	11
Professional field	12
Management	13
Staff	13
Curriculum.....	14
Assessment	15
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	17
Conclusions	17
Recommendations	19
ANNEXES	21
Annex 1 – Panel.....	21
Annex 2 – Programme of the site visit	22
Annex 3 – Materials reviewed.....	23

INTRODUCTION

This document contains the feedback of the external assessment panel that visited the bachelor programme Sportkunde/Sport Studies at the Faculty of Sports and Nutrition of the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences. This feedback addresses first and foremost the findings, considerations and recommendations of the panel with regard to the curriculum, the assessment, the role of external stakeholders, and the future development of the Sport Studies programme. Other topics, notably the programme's intended and achieved learning outcomes are addressed in a separate advisory report to the NVAO.

While this assessment was undertaken in view of the programme's application for reaccreditation by NVAO on the standards 1 and 4, it was the explicit wish of the institution and the programme that the panel would also look at other components of the programme. This extended assignment followed from the positive experience the programme has had with its internally organised mid-term review. This review was held in 2019; four external experts who had participated in the mid-term review joined the panel for the current assessment.

In order to allow the panel to prepare for its tasks, the programme produced an extensive Self-Assessment Report called *Playing For Keeps*, addressing the history and future plans of the programme, as well as its current status. Prior to the visit, the panellists reviewed the self-evaluation report and a set of graduation projects, and reported their findings in writing to the panel secretary.

The site visit took place on 1 and 2 December 2021. Panel members spoke to the Faculty management, programme management, staff, graduation supervisors, exam board members, students, alumni and representatives of the professional field. The panel appreciated the open atmosphere during the discussions and sensed a positive spirit among all interviewees, as well as a clear commitment to the institution, the faculty and the programme. The panel wants to thank the programme management and the support staff for creating a welcoming and safe environment in Corona-times, whilst facilitating a hybrid setting for those who could not attend in person.

This document is structured as follows: in addition to this introduction, the report focuses on the first impressions of the panel on the *Playing for Keeps* document and on the key findings from the site visit. The final chapter presents the panel's conclusions and recommendations. The annexes contain short CV's of the panellists, the site visit schedule and the materials the panel has used for its assessment.

After the site visit, the panel secretary wrote a draft version of this report and circulated it to the panel for review and feedback. The comments of the panel members were incorporated in a pre-final version, which was validated by the chair on 20 December 2021 and sent to the programme management for a check on factual errors. Following their feedback, the chair established the final version of this report on 25 January 2022.

PLAYING FOR KEEPS

In order to allow the panel to prepare for its tasks, the programme produced an extensive Self-Assessment Report called Playing For Keeps. This document describes how the bachelor degree in Sport Studies prepares students for a career as manager, leader, activist, practitioner, entrepreneur, coach, etc... in the world of sport. In the run-up to the site visit, the panel members reviewed the document and reported their findings on each of the chapters to the panel secretary. What follows is a summary of these first impressions, which are in part (edited) quotes and in part compilations of like-minded inputs. The initial template asked panellists to report positive elements, as well as critical elements and questions. The first five headings emphasise the positive appreciations. The final section of this chapter lists the topics the panel wanted to discuss or get clarified during the site visit.

Overall impressions

- The Playing for Keeps document is a comprehensive account not only of the way the SM&O/ISMB programme is undertaken but a review of the rationale behind the development of the programme over its life cycle. It recounts the process and dynamics of the changes that have been made over that cycle and demonstrates, uniquely in my view a high degree of self-criticism rare in many organisations, academic and non-academic. In addition, the programme has intentionally opened itself to the wider world of academics and practitioners to verify its relevance in the modern world and to take on board the necessary recommendations for change coming out of those engagements.
- Playing for Keeps reflects what the academic community and the world of sport in the Netherlands has come to expect. The programme has at its core internal retrospection of values and content but more importantly the drive to maintain its ‘gold medal’ standard by its strong links and relevance.
- This is an excellent document. It is well written and provides evidence of insight and understanding of the complexities of providing a curriculum that has a strong rationale, the integration of theory and practice and outcomes that are both relevant and achievable. It clearly articulates the purpose, context and developmental thinking behind the programme and uses student stories well.
- Well thought through approach. Clear vision on what they want to be and what kind of students they want to deliver. I get enthusiastic of their ambition, clear vision on sports and on the way they want to let the students become leaders of their own progress.
- The guide is very professional and extensively covers the different topics. The alumni profiles are a very nice addition giving a good view of what the programme is able to create for the students.
- Very good set-up, a great mix of different elements. A very strong and inspiring educational programme with a solid foundation and clear future ambition.
- I am very positive about Playing for Keeps. Clear Story. Complete. Good underpinning of and for their education. They know what they educate students for and have a good quality programme to do so.

- The quality of the team is very important and leadership is essential. The teamwork of Katelijne and Matthijs seems to be effective. The team should be congratulated for this work.
- I found the document motivational, insightful, and forward thinking. It does reflect the recommendations of the mid-term review and I am looking forward to seeing elements of the documentation in practice.

The World of Sport

- Good picture of the sports world, profit and not for profit. Well structured with the division of the sports world into Sport Commerce, Sport Development and High Performance Sport. It gives a complete overview of the sports sector, what type of people function within it and how the course aligns with these demands.
- This section sets the context of the world of sport as a global activity, a global market place with employment opportunities locally and internationally. It also provides a clear and important background which distinguishes AUAS programs as relevant, forward thinking and vocationally responsive.
- Clear structure into Sport Commerce, Sport Development and High Performance Sport are three strong foundation pillars. It helps profiling the (different types of) sports manager.
- I particularly liked ‘‘what kind of professional attitude Sport Managers will need to develop in order to be successful’’.
- The lists of comparisons with other programmes and accolades it regularly receives bears testimony to the quality of the programme. The pragmatic, applied approach throughout is the key to this programme’s success. It truly prepares students who apply themselves to the modern ‘World of Sport’.

Sport Manager Competencies

- Very thorough and structured approach. Competencies seem to be well thought out. Good combination of theory and practice. Well aligned with major societal trends.
- Very descriptive and detailed explanations of the ten competencies, how these go hand in hand with putting knowledge into practice and with the top five of future competencies required of sports managers according to the New Age of Sport Management Education in Europe project.
- For me they describe the right competences to be a sport manager, so I’m enthusiastic of what they want to achieve. The order in which they tutor the students seem all coherent and suitable to the future jobs.
- Clear link to the competencies in the appendices and the alignment to the competencies in the Dutch National Education Profile for Sports Studies.
- Recognition of developments as a result of the mid-term review and the addition of two new competencies.
- It is a well thought-out mix of various competencies, ranging from business skills to sensitivity for cultural and societal developments.

- Very strong list of core competencies that help calibrate the program for each student, especially because they are being regularly reviewed and adjusted based on audits, etc.
- It is good to see that they put the Heart for Sport first. There is a strong link between the competencies, the mastery criteria and the learning goals of the courses, and the study manuals and the assessment provisions.

Core Values and Educational Vision

- Putting core values in the spotlight of the educational vision is a strong positive statement. The choice of values is complete, culturally and environmentally sensitive, with an encouraging growth mindset for each individual in mind.
- Very clear, I have done a couple of accreditations but never were the values described as well as in this document.
- Values are clear and explicit. Each core value has its unique purpose and is thoroughly described.
- Clear vision on what they want to be, what they stand for and how they achieve these goals.
- The section about autonomous motivation gives a great perspective on how things are done at SM&O and ISMB.
- Right core values: inclusive, safe, personal growth, integrity, sustainable, autonomy
- An honest interpretation of the journey to articulate the Core Values.
- I particularly liked the learning community explicitly includes both students, staff and alumni.
- Evidence exists throughout the document that the recommendations of the Mid-term Review have been taken on board and in many areas incorporated.
- The focus on the learning community: the learning culture in a team is crucial for good quality.
- The focus on personal development and growth, and a vision aimed at autonomy and a practice-oriented curriculum. The programme targets authentic and autonomous students, and offers opportunities for these students to take leadership in their curriculum.

Building Blocks and Themes per Year

- Clear vision, clearly articulated.
- Solid structure of first full-scope orientation at the start and after that dedicated focus areas for specialization and growing professional and personal skills.
- Well built-up, from a more operational angle towards a more strategic approach.
- Themes are systematically progressive and reflect a relevant journey towards professionalism.
- The descriptors, specifically and generally of the blocks & themes demonstrate that students are aware of the scope of the potential of their studies and not simply the very sport specific aspects such as the delivery of coaching often associated with similar programmes. It emphasises that the nature of this programme prepares a student even for a world outside of sport because of the experiences and skills acquired.

- Great to see that feedback from third parties is being used to make changes for the better such as allowing SM&O students to also go on foreign internships more often and giving the 2nd and 3rd year internships a full-time possibility.
- It is positive that physical education is part of the programme, as it also creates a lot of fun during the programme.
- Having physical education in this curriculum means that students also learn how different sports are organised in the Netherlands and how individual disciplines can be offered to a broader public and can be marketed.
- It is good that the programme also pays attention to coaching in sports and to leadership, which are elements most graduates will be confronted with (shortly) after graduation.
- Several components seem to get more attention than a decade ago, which is good: leadership, lean start-up to test new business ideas, research.
- It is good Personal and Professional Development is still central to the programme.

Critical issues to be addressed on site

- Playing for Keeps looks too good to be true: what happens in reality?
- What are the priorities of the programme for the next two years?
- To what extent is there cooperation / competition with other programmes, both on campus but also across the Netherlands?
- Do students recognise the unique selling proposition of Sport Studies in Amsterdam?
- What about the integration between SM&O & ISMB?
- How are the core values lived? Does anyone ‘agrees to disagree’?
- What does their vision on teaching means in reality, and also in the context of Corona?
- What did the programme do to mitigate the impact of Corona?
- What are the plans for adjusting the learning environment in order to meet the ambitions of a world-class programme?
- How do they address students with less motivation what with lower-level students?
- What about diversity in attracting students and recruiting staff?
- How are new (societal) developments incorporated in the curriculum and the mindset of teachers and students: sports to build resilience, agility, etc.?
- Where is the health and social component in the curriculum in addition to economics?
- To what extent is their attention in the curriculum to change management?
- How are students / were alumni prepared to step into business?
- Is there room for gamification and competition-based assignments?
- Given the focus on practice and on applications, what about theory, know-how and understanding? Applied sciences seem a lot on applying and little on science.
- The thesis feedback was at times poor: how come there was so much difference in the size and quality of the individual comments on the feedback forms?
- Do Sport Studies graduates move on to master programmes and to what extent does the programme facilitate this career path?
- What are alumni doing now and what parts did they miss in the curriculum?
- What about the alumni network?

SITE VISIT

The site visit took place on 1 and 2 December 2021. In this chapter, the panel presents its main findings from the sessions and on some of the key elements of the programme. In line with the internally agreed division of tasks, the findings are organised per group or topic. The different sections contain the edited texts which the individual panel members presented at the plenary feedback session; the section on assessment also includes notes on the panel review of the graduation project evaluation and the discussion with the exam committee.

Students

First of all you have amazing studies and are doing a great job. The internship opportunities you provide to the students are of very high quality. The students are able to build a great network, work at quality companies or build/get started with their own companies and get international working experience.

Another thing that really stands out for your studies are the development of soft skills. Here we are talking about skills like leadership, presenting, working autonomously and group work. Especially leadership and presenting is something of great value that you add to the students skillset.

PPD is such a great and important building block of the studies, the personal contact that goes beyond study issues and speaks to the human behind the student is amazing.

Happy! There is only one word to describe the emotion students have with this study and that is happiness. They like the studies for many, many reasons, reasons such as it being a safe and supportive environment, they are happy with the PPD, with the teachers and facilities.

What can you do to improve in the future?

- Currently there is a lack of diversity, get more female students to join the program!
- The current proficiency of English among the students and teachers is good, but can it be made great?
- Somehow include the topics of digitalization, sustainability and change management into the curriculum, all these topics are very relevant to the sports world and provide great value.

Overall you have two great Sport Studies tracks and can be very proud, congratulations!

Alumni

The group the panel spoke to was very positive. They feel a connection with the programme, like to come back to the Sport Campus, and seem to almost miss the great time they had at

AUAS. The bonding activities and the personal attention were mentioned as very rewarding and important.

Alumni felt they had learned more at SM&O and ISMB than many of their peers had at other programmes. This became clear when they were on a master's programme and had to make a presentation and work in groups. They all felt at ease with this and had lots of self-confidence thanks to the Sport Studies programme.

The alumni consciously chose for this programme in Amsterdam. One international alumnus indicated there were no similar programmes in the UK with lots of sports, actions and buzzing. A local alumnus had compared the programmes at three schools and chose for Amsterdam because the graduates seem to end up in nicer positions.

It was difficult for alumni to point to courses or topics they had missed in their Sport Studies programme. There were only a few vague suggestions, such as something with the digital world, or topics that had a direct bearing on what they do now, such as budgeting or working with not-for-profit organisations.

Finally, alumni mentioned that during their time as students there were also less motivated students. They advise the teaching staff to stay interested also in these students, to try and understand their attitude, to invest in the relationship but also to confront them with their attitude where necessary. And above all: keep inspiring students with interesting (guest) lectures.

Professional field

The Sport Studies programme helps students to develop a very strong skillset and great personalities, which many companies are looking for. Achieving the ten competencies, gaining practical experience during several internships, and acquiring this mindset and knowledge result from a high-quality curriculum, teaching and coaching. SM&O and ISMB graduates therefore may be preferred candidates to invite for application interviews. Based on its positive experiences, the professional field asks the programme to share more pro-actively the talents / recent graduates with the industry.

Learning doesn't stop once graduated. Organizations in the sports industry also want to keep learning, especially on things they may not know, e.g. sustainability, diversity, the 'dark' side (e.g. harassment, racism) of the sports industry. Through research SM&O/ISMB can contribute to the learning and development of sports organizations too. The professional field asks the programme to share more pro-actively the research insights with the industry, not only academic publications. Where possible, the programme could balance the selection of research topics between requests coming from the professional field with own topics to bring transparency to the unknown/non-desirable as well.

The professional field has following recommendations:

- to create a platform or info hub where companies, alumni, staff and students can exchange information and Q&A;
- to better use the alumni network as a tool to build a stronger connection between the programme and the professional field;
- to be more vocal about talent, research results and explore the potential to build a strategy and structure for sustainably connecting the program to the working field through the alumni network.

Management

Both teaching and the curriculum depend upon the management. The panel found the management staff to be responsive and forward looking.

Their vision of the world's best is a clear target for them. They are motivated to achieve this objective.

Their selection of teaching staff from a relevant background reflects their ambition.

Their implementation of the “new curriculum” in year two is project based and designed to drive the application of theory in an experiential way.

The Dean of the institution is relatively new, but has clear relevant targets. Senior management recognise the problems but have a clear vision of what needs to be done.

The Sport Campus hosts three degree programmes: Physical Education, Nutrition and Dietetics, and Sport Studies. Further to its discussions with both faculty and programme management, the panel sees room for more alignment and cooperation among these four programmes: pooling some of the individual resources and expertise for a more collaborative and holistic strategy would bring about collective benefits for all programmes.

Staff performance

The teaching that was seen was well structured, vocationally orientated, inclusive and engaging. It was experiential in nature and included the integration of theory and practice.

All teachers that were interviewed demonstrated a student centred approach and recognised some of the problems of engaging all students.

Every teacher that was interviewed demonstrated a heart for teaching. They all brought a wealth of industry experience to the classroom.

Teaching also depends upon the curriculum being relevant to the context of the specialism both now and in the future. Staff work hard at making the curriculum broad, balanced and relevant. The expertise of many of the staff is current. The curriculum is taught using active methodology.

The staff subscribe to the values of the institution and are probably the most important aspect of the beating heart of the programme.

The student experience is dependent upon the teaching and care they receive. It works.

Curriculum

Well thought out curriculum, great combination of theory and practice.

As a result of the pandemic we see a global shift; we need to build a healthy, resilient and truly sustainable society. We are living in transformational times. The shift towards sustainability is going to be much more disruptive than the digital transformation we have seen and true system change is needed. This cannot be addressed in an incremental way. To be able to see the potential of this new green and just world, we need to broaden our focus from a limited financial worldview only to include social and environmental indicators (well-being).

Inclusiveness and sustainability are two of the core values, and the panel thinks they should be included everywhere in the programme. These can not be done on the side, but have to be an integral part of the curriculum. In that way, it offers enormous opportunities for students - this is where the new jobs are.

Sports has such an important role to play in the change towards a sustainable society. The UN identified the world of sports as an enabler of the Sustainable Development Goals, because sports is non-political and athletes are true role models. Sports is also an important means to bring people together, to let people meet other people from different backgrounds. And of course it keeps society healthy and resilient.

To bring sustainability and diversity to life, a cultural change is needed. Students need to get it, need to adopt the right values to want it. With the focus on personal development, you are in the right position to help students embrace this new sustainable culture.

We are very happy to notice you invest so much in personal coaching: students are really seen as a person.

Also you invest in psychological safety, and that is a stepping stone for this cultural change.

The curriculum may benefit from input / involvement from the physical education department on campus, e.g. on sociology. In the world of sport it is critical to understand how to identify

the characteristics and context of individuals/communities to ensure that the proposed activity is fit for purpose because it meets a need and is not designed on assumptions based on stereotypes.

Following its review of a sample of graduation projects, the panel noticed in a few cases a lack of balance between practice and research in the projects. A research unit has been established but appears to be under-utilised because of its location. A more student centred visible location in the heart of the programme may result in a better use of this resource by the students and a better balance in their project outcomes.

We think you have laid out the foundations and we encourage you not to hold back on these topics.

Finally, we have two points for attention:

- We are happy to see you embrace entrepreneurship. However, if this is only understood as stimulating students to start their own company, it can be a limited focus. Entrepreneurial skills can also be of great use in (large) organisations.
- Both curriculum and teaching are fine. Make sure you keep an eye on the balance between theory and practice because at university level, an imbalance between the two could lose the important aspect of understanding the theory that underpins all applied sciences.

Assessment

The panel reviewed graduation projects of 20 SM&O and IMSB students. The panel found the quality of all projects to be good, ranging from more than sufficient to excellent. In most cases the panel agreed to the final score the projects had received; only in a handful of cases the panel found the score to be overrated and in one case underrated. More information on the thesis quality can be found in the advisory report to NVAO.

Assessment protocols are relevant and address the key competencies. The graduation project has a relevant systematic process of development in order to be completed and assessed at an appropriate level. The panel found that the graduation project is assessed carefully, involving the graduation project coordinator, the project supervisor, a second reviewer from the programme and the mentor at the company. In case of doubt, an additional lecturer is appointed as third reader.

Every year a number of graduation projects are assessed again in rigorous calibration sessions. This is mostly done internally, but from time to time there are also external calibration sessions involving graduation project supervisors from other Sport Studies programmes. The panel thinks this is very good practice.

Looking at the way in which the graduation project evaluation forms have been completed, the panel found that in two thirds of the cases the feedback had been insightful. Overall,

however, the written feedback on the graduation project is inconsistent. Some lecturers write more extensive reports, others write two lines, and still other assessors write more but are not focused. And even when they are focused, they are focused upon different things. In several cases the panel noticed that the written feedback was not extremely well substantiated, lacking an explanation with arguments of why that grade was given and not a higher or a lower grade.

While there always is some small explanation and boxes are ticked from bad to very good, this does not always add up to an insightful feedback, certainly not given the amount of time and effort that were put into the graduation project and in view of the number of study credits involved. In view of this finding, and because of the nature of the project, the value to the student and the institution and the university, it might be worth considering a more focused approach to the final feedback.

The panel was informed that all students get a lot of oral feedback during the graduation project trajectory and after project submission. Some supervisors keep a written trail of this oral feedback. According to the panel, it would be sensible for all teachers to be able to provide evidence of the process. The panel recommends that this formative process for each student be recorded by each mentor either formally or informally. This should be done in order that a record be kept of the individual process as evidence of the rigour of the process in case the process should be questioned at any time.

Moreover, it is recommended that the graduation project team seeks to identify a framework that all staff can adapt to suit the feedback that all students deserve. For example, this summative statement may be focused upon the competencies or the core values or both. This could then allow every student to see more clearly where they have lost or gained the grade they are awarded. Additionally, it could provide a more consistent approach to feedback by all staff.

Following the review of the graduation projects and the discussions with the exam board, one of the panel members suggested the programme could ask students to not only make a (Powerpoint) presentation but also a short video on the project they do in the field. This is a common practice at one of the other Sport Studies programmes and allows external reviewers to get a good view of what the programme and the graduation projects are about.

Finally, the panel gathered from the session with the exam committee that SM&O and ISMB students have achieved all intended learning outcomes by the time they start the graduation project. In this way, students get a lot of freedom in choosing a project topic, a product and a company. They also have the opportunity to emphasise certain competencies more than others, knowing that they have anyway already achieved the full set of competencies. If this is indeed the case, then the exam committee may want to formally establish at some point that each individual student has indeed achieved all competencies prior to graduating. This is a formal task of the exam committee and is all the more important given that the exam committee chair signs off the diplomas.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, the panel summarises its key findings and issues a few recommendations that should support the Sport Studies programme in Amsterdam on its ambitious journey towards world-class quality.

Conclusions

The panel welcomes the Playing for Keeps document as a comprehensive account not only of the way the SM&O/ISMB programme is undertaken but also as a review of the rationale behind the development of the programme over its life cycle. Through this document, the programme has intentionally opened itself to the wider world of academics and practitioners to verify its relevance in the modern world and take on board the necessary recommendations for change coming out of those engagements.

In terms of vision and values, the panel acknowledges the history of the programme and its two tracks and welcomes the growing integration of both learning trajectories. In this regard, the panel considers that the formulation of the educational vision and the core values constitute an added value that will help the programme advance in its ambitions.

The Sport Studies programme in Amsterdam is built on very strong foundations: rooted in nationally agreed educational and vocational profiles, it carved out its own distinctive features. In this way, the programme-specific learning outcomes, properly stipulated in 10 competencies and 40 mastery criteria, allow students to not only graduate in Sport Studies but also to become sport managers AUAS-style, i.e. as ‘somebody’ with a heart for sport and a head for business.

Looking at the programme from a student perspective, students know what they sign up for and their expectations are met in reality. Students are happy with each other, the programme, the teaching staff, the mentors, the Personal and Professional Development component, the facilities and the many opportunities to engage with the real professional world. When they graduate they are well prepared to enter the working field.

The Sport Studies alumni are successful in their career and those alumni the panel spoke to (still) felt very much attached to the SM&O and ISMB community. A good number of graduates move on to a master programme, possibly after having followed a pre-master programme as part of their Sport Studies minor; others start their own company or use the programme as a lever for their entrepreneurial ambitions; most graduates enter the labour market where they invariably find a job that is commensurate with the level and orientation of their study. It is a particularly strong feature according to the panel that many graduates find relevant employment outside the world of sport.

The professional field plays an important role in the day-to-day life of the Sport Studies programme. Programme management and teaching staff are well networked in the world of

sport. Students appreciate the guest lecturers, as well as the education and training they receive from (contracted or freelance) staff which also operate in the professional world. The panel gathered from the discussions that organizations in the sports industry also want to keep learning, especially on ‘new topics’ such as sustainability, diversity, and the dark side of the sports industry. By researching these topics the Sport Studies programme can contribute to the learning and development of sports organizations too.

The panel found the faculty and programme management to be responsive and forward looking. They set relevant targets, recognise problems and have a clear vision of what needs to be done. According to the panel, there is room for more alignment and cooperation with other programmes on campus. The quality of the Sport Studies team is good, leadership is essential and the teamwork among the management and with the teachings staff seems to be effective. Looking at the quality of the current programme and the way recommendations of the mid-term review have been addressed, the team should be congratulated for their work.

The programme can rely on good quality teachers with current expertise, who show a heart for teaching, demonstrate a student centred approach and often bring a wealth of industry experience to the classroom. They subscribe to the values of the institution and work hard to make the curriculum broad, balanced and relevant.

The curriculum looks solid: it is well thought out and offers a great combination of theory and practice. The structure builds up from orientation at the start, then dedicated focus areas for specialization and growing attention to professional and personal skills. Themes are systematically progressive and reflect the journey towards professionalism. The role of PPD and the way student mentors/coaches assume their tasks are particular assets of the programme.

We are living in transformational times and as a result of the pandemic we see a shift towards building a healthy, resilient and truly sustainable society. Sport has an important role to play in the change towards a sustainable society, and wellbeing, diversity and inclusivity are part of the programme’s core values. The panel welcomes the attention to these topics and encourages the programme to include topics like sustainability more comprehensively throughout the entire curriculum.

In terms of achieved learning outcomes, the panel considers that the SM&O and ISMB students who graduate from the Sport Studies programme have the necessary competencies to move on in their career. The panel is highly positive about the quality of the graduation projects: all twenty projects it reviewed were of more than sufficient quality with not a single doubt on the quality of even the lowest scored projects, and with some of the higher graded projects being excellent.

Already in its mid-term review, the panel found student assessment to be up-to-standard. The current panel has not looked systematically at the system of assessment, nor has it studied the assessment methods for each and every course component. It did, however, extensively

review the evaluation of graduation projects. This exercise revealed that the graduation projects are assessed properly and involve a broad range of assessors. The provisions for internal and external calibration are robust and can be considered a very good practice. The panel did notice though that the written feedback provided in the evaluation forms was not always insightful and often inconsistent. It may very well be that students get more extensive and relevant oral feedback, but from an external accountability perspective there is certainly room for improvement.

Recommendations

The panel considers that the Sport Studies programme in Amsterdam is of very good quality. Nonetheless, there is room for further improvement. The following recommendations do not play down the overall quality of the programme nor are they meant as criticism, on the contrary: the panel hopes its suggestions will help the programme on its ambitious journey.

The panel advises the Sport Studies programme to:

- Look for ways how to attract more female students in the programme;
- Actively recruit more staff and students as representative of the community in which we live and work – persons with impairments, cultural and ethnically diverse, gender and sexual orientation, etc..;
- Have systems in place that are sensitive to the mental health of students and staff;
- Capture all the historic and future learnings of the pandemic period on the institution – teaching and learning, technology, space, logistics, etc...;
- Monitor and where necessary improve the English proficiency of the teaching staff;
- Stay interested in less motivated students yet confront them with their attitude where necessary by a greater use of the PPD process by developing respect systems to help support those less motivated students who become a distraction to their peers;
- Include topics such as digitalization, change management, sustainability, the ‘dark side’ of sport in the curriculum;
- Ensure that in the curriculum entrepreneurship also covers entrepreneurial skills, which are relevant for all students, not only those aiming to start their own company;
- Ensure that communication is better managed across the programme and the campus site, generally and on those occasions where it critically impacts on a student’s future;
- Keep an eye on the balance between theory and practice in the curriculum living up to the expectation that applied science covers both application and science;
- Give more visibility to the research unit in order for students to make more and better use of this resource;
- Be more vocal about student and graduate talent, as well as staff research results and create a platform where companies, alumni, staff and students can exchange information;
- Identify an assessment framework for the graduation project that allows all staff to provide recorded and consistent formative and summative feedback;
- Revive the professional board and develop the alumni board, and involve them more systematically in programme / curriculum revisions;

- Be careful not to use the same ‘safe, friendly alumni’ all the time – but those who challenge themselves, the programme and the work situation.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Panel

Tony Sainsbury, chair

Tony is director of Unitman Sports Consulting and involved with the Paralympics Movement in the UK. He has extensive experience in Olympic Athletes Villages. Tony has performed audits of sports federations and chaired the Sport Studies mid-term review panel.

Anneke van Zanen-Nieberg, member

Anneke is currently president of NOC*NSF and has extensive experience as sport manager both locally and internationally and as an auditor in the public and private sector. Anneke has been involved in several accreditation panels, also on Sport Studies.

Keith Jones, member

Keith has extensive experience as manager of similar Sport Studies programmes in the UK and the US, and in designing degree programmes covering several teaching concepts. Keith was member of the Sport Studies mid-term review panel.

Marianne van Leeuwen, member

Marianne is an entrepreneur and advisor on sustainability issues in both the Netherlands and abroad. She occupies management positions in the world of cycling, where she oversees digital transformation, innovation and sustainability with the KNWU and UCI.

Bas de Wit, member

Bas is an alumnus (2008) of the SM&O programme. He is manager Sport en Bewegen at Stichting Sportsupport Kennemerland. Bas participated in the Sport Studies mid-term review panel and in the accreditation panel of the Sport Studies programme at InHolland.

Maritza Helfferich, member

Maritza is Senior manager Brand Communications Operations at Adidas Group. In this function she regularly supervises students of this and other Sport Studies programmes during their placements and traineeships.

Daniel Jansen, member

Daniel is alumnus (2007) of the SM&O programme and has a master in Bedrijfskunde. He is education manager at ROC Amsterdam and responsible for the examination of the programme Sport & Bewegen. Daniel was member of the Sport Studies mid-term review panel.

Ivy Bekkers (NL), student-member

Ivy is third-year bachelor student International Sport Management at The Hague University of Applied Sciences.

The panel was assisted by **Mark Delmartino**, MDM Consultancy bv, Antwerpen – Belgium. As freelance secretary, Mark has worked with NVAO panels since 2006. He is certified by NVAO and belongs to the AUAS pool of certified external secretaries.

Annex 2 – Programme of the site visit

Wednesday 1 December 2021

11.00h	Open consultation hour (online)
12.00h	Internal panel lunch
12.30h	Internal panel meeting
14.30h	Meeting with students (three parallel sessions)
15.30h	Internal panel meeting
16.15h	Meeting with alumni and professional field (two parallel sessions)
17.15h	Internal panel meeting
18.00h	End of day 1

Thursday 2 December 2021

09.00h	Internal panel meeting
09.30h	Meeting with Faculty Dean and Director of Operations
10.00h	Meeting with Management Team Sport Studies programme
11.00h	Internal panel meeting
11.30	Meeting with teaching staff (three parallel sessions)
12.30h	Lunch and internal meeting
13.30h	Meeting with Exam Committee, Graduation Coordinator and Graduation Project Supervisors
14.30h	Meeting with Management Team
15.30h	Internal panel meeting
16.30h	Plenary feedback
17.30h	End of site visit

Annex 3 – Materials reviewed

Prior to the site visit, the Peer Review Team received following documents:

- Playing for Keeps, Self-Assessment Report Bachelor Sport Studies, October 2021.
- Mid-term review report Bachelor Sport Studies, AUAS February 2020.

Moreover, the panel had access to other university-wide, faculty-wide and programme-specific materials on site, such as:

- Study manuals SM&O and ISMB
- Curriculum overview
- Graduation manuals (EN & NL)
- Assessment matrix SM&O and ISMB
- Research group Sport Management
- Intermediate assessments
- Landelijk opleidingsprofiel Sportkunde
- Beroepsprofiel Sport Manager
- Keuzegids hoger onderwijs 20-21/21-22
- Executive Programme: Sports Leadership Programme
- Master Sport Management and Leadership
- Minor Future of Esports (co-creation AUAS two faculties).

The panel reviewed a representative sample of 20 graduation projects from SM&O and ISMB students who graduated between September 2019 and August 2021.