Fontys Hogeschool ICT

Bachelor HBO-ICT

Associate Degree ICT Service Management

Beperkte opleidingsbeoordeling

Summary

On 31 October and 1 November 2017, an NQA audit panel visited the HBO-ICT bachelor study programme and AD ICT Service Management. The bachelor study programme is one of eleven ICT study programmes in the Netherlands and also the largest with approximately 3.350 students. Fontys Hogeschool ICT (FHICT) in Eindhoven offers a fulltime and a part-time variant, an English Stream (fulltime) and an Associate Degree (part-time) (approx. 3000 students). In Tilburg FHICT offers a fulltime study programme (approx. 350 students). In all variants education is based on similar points of departure and content is the same. The AD is aimed at attaining NLQF level 5 (instead of level 6). The assessments therefore apply to the bachelor and the AD; the different variants and locations. The audit panel judges the study programme to be **excellent**. The way in which the 'student-near education' and the 'student-near testing' have been conceived sets an international example, the results of which lead to unique profiling.

Standard 1: Intended learning results
For standard 1, 'intended learning results', the study programme is evaluated as **good**

FHICT bases its bachelor degree and the AD on the nationally given competencies for the ICT domain (HBO-i, 2014). This assures the quality of the orientation and standard of the learning results. The way in which the national competencies have been drawn up serves as a framework for learning routes and profiling.
FHICT has included the description of required competencies in its database to allow students to compile a unique profile. The bachelor study programme offers a variety of 12 graduation profiles (learning paths; 2017-2018). Each year these learning paths are coordinated and established with the help of work field advisory committees (through Partners in Education: PiE). This annual validation and testing of departure points assures that learning paths are in sync with topical developments. In addition, FHICT offers students a thirteenth 'open profile' which they can use to compose an entirely personal learning path (ICT & Open Innovation). When composing an own programme, certain criteria apply regarding content and quality standards. FHICT also emphasizes learning to learn. Certain aspects are systematically and strictly safeguarded through clear agreements with PiE, which as an association is not made up of random parties but comprises a selection from a wide range of organizations linked to FHICT. As such PiE represents the broad ICT domain which by nature is internationally oriented. They are the 'preferred suppliers' for the study programme. Aided by the work field, FHICT has the ambition to develop further and become a knowledge institute. The panel supports the FHICT in its aspirations, noting that this will help FHICT keep up to date on changing demands from the work field. The AD is comprised of the learning path ICT Service Management. The panel is impressed by the way the competency database, entitled CurriculumDataBase, safeguards the suitable content of education offered while at the same time allowing room for differentiation and flexibility. FHICT can thus respond effectively to the diversity of the student population and the different talents and ambitions they bring with them. The panel considers the manner in which the database and the work field ensure that the study programme is kept up-to-date and the possibilities the database offers to students for topical and unique learning paths to be of above average quality. This also applies to the AD.

Standard 2: Educational learning environment
For standard 2, 'educational learning environment', the study programme is evaluated as **excellent**.

The panel greatly appreciates the way the 'student-near' education has been designed but especially the way it is practiced, which from an international perspective makes it unique and thereby excellent. The concept, which prioritizes student's questions, stimulates continued attention for learning and innovation. A secure learning environment exists which allows students to learn new things, experiment and make mistakes. The quality of the study material and the competence of the teachers have been convincingly demonstrated. The panel is especially impressed by the focus on personal guidance and the study programme's efforts to uncover, utilize and develop the learning wishes and talent of students and offer extra support to those who need it. This is relevant for an ICT study programme that needs to stay in tune with a constantly changing environment but also to connect effectively with a target group that generally has a more than average knowledge of policy issues (for example, counseling within the autistic spectrum). Concurrently there are also guidance programmes for excellent students. Teams are formed that offer certain support services, conscientiously putting into practice the 'student-near' education that the FHICT stands for. Teachers devote time and attention to students, working towards developing their individual talents and bringing out the best in all of them. The panel agrees that this way of teaching is beneficial to both students and staff. From a global perspective and on the basis of scientific studies the panel judges the practiced method of education to be unique and of international significance. The panel rates this standard as excellent.

Standard 3: Testing
For standard 3, 'testing', the study programme is evaluated as **excellent.**

The system of testing is linked directly to the education concept. Of central importance is the development of a student. This is continually assessed via frequent, direct and very interactive formative testing. The panel values the monitoring of a student's development and considers it unique, in part because there is consistent feedback from experts (teachers), clients (work field) and colleagues - students. Another strong point is that this kind of testing stimulates active learning. Each semester summative tests of learning results are made via assessment of students' portfolios. The exam and testing committees monitor the quality, validity and reliability of the testing. To that end, the study programme trains assessors and ensures that examiners possess the necessary expertise and experience. It also applies the four-eyes principle to develop and help implement testing (formative and summative). It is remarkable that students often think or develop further than they are required to demonstrate in tests. Due to frequent feedback and the permanent nature of the summative tests, a student's learning process suffers little disruption. A student's willingness to learn comes through intrinsic motivation not blind fixation on tests. According to the panel the stimulus given by this kind of testing is internationally unique. It therefore judges this standard to be excellent.

Standard 4: Realized learning results

For standard 4, 'realized learning results', the study programme is evaluated as **excellent.**

The panel is satisfied that the study programme has shown convincingly that the intended learning results have been realized and was pleased to note several outstanding study marks. Above all, the FHICT has demonstrated its capacity for catering to the needs of a very diverse range of students and helping them attain an ICT bachelor degree. The graduation rate is above the national average and there are positive reactions from the work field as observed by the audit panel during their two-day visit to the study programme. The panel was impressed by the competence for learning to learn which it considers strong and unique. Students possess a formidable ability to develop themselves and their talent. That capability and competence is intrinsic to the study programme which is supported by a proficient staff (educational learning environment) and a reliable system of testing. Graduates of the study programme can confidently face the future as ICT professionals, well-prepared for 'life-long learning'. From an international level, the panel recognizes the value of this unique achievement for an ICT study programme. It therefore evaluates this standard as excellent.

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Panelvoorzitter   Lead-auditor

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