



International evaluation and accreditation

## EVALUATION REPORT

BBI Luxembourg

Bachelor Degree in International Hospitality &  
Tourism Management

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**REPORT TRANSMITTED  
TO THE MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND  
RESEARCH OF LUXEMBOURG ON 22 MAY 2018.**

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High Council for evaluation of research and higher education



**For the Hcéres<sup>1</sup> :**

Michel Cosnard, President

**On behalf of the experts committee<sup>2</sup> :**

Eric Godelier, President of the committee

In accordance with the decree n°2014-1365, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014,

<sup>1</sup> The president of Hcéres "contresigne les rapports d'évaluation établis par les comités d'experts et signés par leur président." (Article 8, alinéa 5) — "countersigns the assessment reports made by the experts' committees and signed by their president" (article 8, alinea 5).

<sup>2</sup> The evaluation reports "sont signés par le président du comité". (Article 11, alinéa 2) — "are signed by the president of the committee" (article 11, alinea 2).

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# I. PRESENTATION OF THE INSTITUTION

## 1. CONTEXT

BBI-LUXEMBOURG – « SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM BUSINESS » (BBI-Lux) is a private institute of higher education created on 24/06/2011. It is a non-profit organization, presented as a Business school within the frame of the Luxembourg law. BBI-LUXEMBOURG has two campuses, one located in Wiltz (Luxembourg), and one located in Brussels (Belgium). It has registered its status in Belgium in order to open its operation and carry out its higher education activities in Belgium.

These two campuses allow students to discover a different social experience at both locations. They have the choice to undertake one year either in Luxembourg or in Belgium and return to their home campus as the curriculum is strictly identical.

## 2. OBJECTIVES AND MISSIONS

The mission of BBI is to « enhance the success of its students so that they can actively participate in today's dynamic world by integrating their hospitality management training, the value of professional skills and the striving for an excellence-oriented career<sup>1</sup> ».

To achieve this goal « BBI-Lux is orienting its teachers, its services, its curricula but also its equipment in a way to provide students with the conceptual and practical tools they need to become fully integrated members of society and to successfully manage their career in a labour market offering a high growth potential »<sup>2</sup>. Since the 1990s the Tourism Labour market is growing by an average of 4% per year and is predicted by the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) in their study of world trends and their barometer of world tourism to continue to grow for the next 20 years.

To achieve its objective the institution's mission is, in particular, to provide full-time higher education programs taught in English in line with the European directives specified in the Bologna Process – ECTS Credits as well as with the requirements provided in the DUBLIN DESCRIPTORS regarding the necessary skills of level 6 of higher education.

At the end of the curriculum the awarded diploma documents the success of the studies but also the student's aptitude in the management of hospitality and tourism businesses.

# II. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAMME

The « Bachelor Degree in International Hospitality & Tourism Management » is a « professional Bachelor » delivered over 3 years of full-time study.

The program aims are: (for the) students to acquire knowledge, skills and professional attitude. To develop relevant skills to the sector, to learn the guiding principles of professional training and to support their personal development. Based on small class numbers and the use of a case study teaching methodology, the curriculum includes the in-depth study of strategic aspects of the profession, while consolidating skills relating to the various aspects of corporate management. The final objective is a preparation for professional challenges such as short-term profitability or market share as well as long-term planning issues that are crucial for success.

The program is divided into 12 modules per year. Each module focusses on general skills linked to the specific skills required by the profession. Students must follow the sequence in which the modules are taught. This sequence reflects a logical way of learning theory and skills. There is no optional module (Major).

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<sup>1</sup> BBI Self Evaluation report, p.11.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

Each year involves a total of 1 620 hours including internships. The ECTS criteria per year is based on number of hours. They reflect the amount of work each subject requires in relation with the total amount of work required to complete a full year of study, i.e. lectures, practical work, seminars, tutorials, field work (internships), personal work - at the library or at home - and tests or other assessment methods.

Each year covers 23 weeks of courses and 4 weeks of exams - written and oral (1 week in the first semester and 3 weeks in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester).

Each student must complete 12 weeks of internships (+/- 3 months) in a company. There are 3 projects assigned per academic year with a total of 200 hours of work for the projects.

## 1. METHODS AND RESULTS OF THE PREVIOUS ACCREDITATION(S)

The BBI Bachelor program was accredited in 2012 by the Ministry of Higher Education, Luxembourg.

## 2. HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES DEDICATED TO THE PROGRAM

BBI has recruited a set of teachers staff. It is composed by 13 full-time staff, 5 part-time (50%) and 9 part-time (less than 50%). Staff are generally qualified to a level at least equivalent to the level that they are teaching.

BBI is located at Wiltz (Luxembourg). BBI shares a premises at the Chateau de Wiltz with other Institutions (for instance, UBI, another business school and BSI).

The School has invested in 8 fully equipped classrooms, and if needed 5 supplementary classrooms. The Administrative Suite is composed of 5 offices and 2 meeting rooms. In addition there is a small Library, a computer lab, and several study and seminar rooms. BBI also has use of a 120-person meeting room and a joint cafeteria. There is a Wifi network in operation on the premises. The Computer lab is partly dedicated to the learning of OPERA (Opera Property Management System) software system. The Library is suitably equipped with 2200 books and numerous journals dedicated to Tourism.

BBI is also equipped with student residences, through a non-profit organization, named "Campus Wiltz Luxembourg". This NGO was created with other local Education institutions. Thanks to this, BBI is able to offer 100 rooms in two locations. In addition, BBI students benefit from a joint fully-equipped refectory (200m<sup>2</sup> surface) and a sitting room (200m<sup>2</sup> surface).

If the institution plans to grow its student numbers, then it may have to invest further in student accommodation, but for the moment, this is adequate. The institution is also investing in online academic resources.

## 3. STUDENT POPULATION: EVOLUTION AND TYPOLOGY OVER THE LAST 4 YEARS

The programme has seen consistent growth over recent years on its two campuses, receiving 49 students in 2013/14; 102 students in 2014/15; 128 students in 2015/16 and 145 students in 2016/17. In the academic year 2017/18, 90 Bachelor students were enrolled on the Wiltz campus and 29 on the Brussels campus, consistent with BBI's policy of transferring all its BA teaching to Luxembourg and closing this programme in Brussels.

The forecast growth rate over the next 4 years is projected at 85% (to have 250 students at the beginning of academic year 2012/22). These figures seem ambitious but credible and necessary for the survival of the institution. Students come from diverse international backgrounds including from Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Nepal, Cap Verde, Vietnam and

other countries throughout the world, thus confirming the internationalised nature of the programme and may represent a form of security for the future.

### III. ON-SITE VISIT DESCRIPTION

#### 1. COMPOSITION OF THE EXPERT PANEL

Eric Godelier, Professor of Management, Ecole Polytechnique (president)

Jean-Philippe Denis, Professor of Management, Université Paris Sud

Nathalie Mitev, Senior Visiting Research Fellow, School of Management, King's College (London)

Daniel Peyron, Consultant and Former director of La Rochelle Business School

Audrey Milton, PhD Student, Université de Poitiers

#### 2. ON-SITE VISIT PROGRAMME

The Evaluation Visit was undertaken from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> of March 2018.

During the visit, the expert panel was divided into small groups each consisting of 2 to 3 members. Each group focused on a specific point of the evaluation process. The panel met with a variety of BBI stakeholders, staff (Education and Administrative) and students.

During the visit, the expert panel was accompanied by Solange Piszcz, Head of projects at the EID of Hcéres and Pr Evelyne Lande, Scientific adviser SHS (Hcéres).

### IV. EVALUATION

#### 1. STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

- a) **The higher education institution bases its activity on the guidelines and strategic objectives that it makes public. It publishes clear, accurate and updated information on its activities, including its academic programmes, admission requirements, achieved learning outcomes and qualifications achieved at the end of these programmes.**

The impact of the implantation of BBI Luxembourg at Wiltz is clearly outlined and presented in a way which is well placed concerning the market which represents Hotel Management and Tourism in the region. However, the strategic plan which was provided is very broad and is not sufficiently detailed to strategic objectives such as optimising targets and ambitions into competitive strengths. It would be preferable to see clear and specific documentation relating to market differentiation linked to the financial and other plans and evidence of a business plan. As stated, the strategic objectives and the 5-year plan, are not clearly formalised. Other plans were however, well documented. These included the international and operational plans for example.

Despite the strategic objectives not being clearly targeted, they are nonetheless available and are made public and BBI's activities are based on these objectives. The information concerning its activities is up to date, includes information on academic programmes, admission requirements, learning outcomes and qualifications achieved at the end of the programme, and all are clearly articulated and publicly available.

**b) The origin of the financial resources available to the institution is transparent and organised in compliance with the rules of scientific neutrality.**

Evidence was provided in the form of financial statements including income statements and balance sheets which clearly outlined in a transparent manner the origin of financial resources (predominantly arising from student fees) and these were based on generally accepted accounting practices. The 2016 total income reached 1,178 m euros over the 2 campuses with the Luxembourg campus earning 711,000 euros of this. Student fees represent 95% of this amount. BBI does not have long term debt and the 2016 margin of 20,211 euros is reasonable however it would appear that the Brussels campus is subsidising the Luxembourg campus at the moment, with the Luxembourg campus running at a very small deficit (2,245 euros).

**c) The Institution provides regular academic programmes as defined under article 28bis, paragraph 3 of the law. Regarding double or joint diplomas, responsibilities of each institution engaged in the programme are clearly stated and organised with a formal and detailed partnership agreement.**

The institution provides regular academic programmes as defined under the law: a BA in "International Hospitality and Tourism Management" and a MA in International Hospitality Management. BBI offers double diplomas with its Erasmus partners in Finland, Spain and Belgium as outlined below. BBI has been engaged in Erasmus + activities after having achieved the charter in 2012. The Erasmus partnership agreements are clearly stated and organised and outlined within a formal and detailed partnership agreement.

**d) The recruitment of staff members follows clearly defined procedures.**

Staff are recruited based on their professional experience. Their classification is based on Erasmus + nomenclature. The recruitment is conducted primarily through the hotel management professional network via the professional platforms for the Hotel Industry (HOSCO) which can be considered similar to LinkedIn specialising in the Hotel Network. In addition, recruitment is undertaken via partner institutions (AEHT Network). Further to this, recruitment is undertaken via their alumni with more than 5 years of professional experience. Guest lecturers are also recruited via their international partnerships. The processes for recruiting staff members are clearly defined. Once being selected by the Selection Committee, the candidate is interviewed by 2 members of the Administration Council and then the candidate must present a lesson for 1h15 before the selection committee. All new teachers must attend an introductory seminar to become acquainted with the culture and practices of BBI-Lux.

**e) In the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the institution employs staff with the necessary scientific and professional qualifications to provide training within the frame of the academic programmes offered by the institutions under the provisions of the law (art. 28ter, paragraphs 1-2).**

Teaching staff are employed in line with the strategy of the institution which is to provide a professionalising education. In line with this, staff are selected based on their industry and professional experience and knowledge and have the necessary level of academic qualifications to provide such training under the terms of the law.

The staff qualifications are adapted to this requirement. There are 3 PhDs, 3 MBAs, 10 Masters degrees, and 8 Bachelors. Three staff members have a BTS qualification specialising in Food and Wine (Culinary Arts). The BBI Staff/student ratio currently 9:1. The Education Standard requested is 15. Therefore, BBI is clearly above the average in this regard.

- f) On the territory of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg the institution has adequate infrastructure for the various academic programmes and allowing students to complete the required work to achieve the educational objectives.**

In the Chateau of Wiltz, the institution has sufficient infrastructure for the academic programmes it offers. It has all the necessary facilities to allow students to complete the work required to achieve the objectives including a library and internet resources and applications necessary in the hotel industry, HOTS, for example which allows the simulation of hotel management in real time. Further discussion of the facilities has been provided in the overview of human and physical resources above.

- g) The institution regularly collaborates with other institutions on the national and international levels as well as with economic and social actors of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.**

There was clear evidence of working collaborations with partner institutions both nationally and internationally in terms of its Erasmus partnerships in Belgium, Finland and Spain. In addition, the institution has active engagement with the local community and private companies within its industries. Relationships are also being developed in Brazil and China. Students have access to all these sources and in addition, to the online platform of HOSCO which allows students to have access to contacts and to job offers emanating from the large international hotel chains. In addition, BBI students enjoy a 95% success rate in finding employment in their chosen industry shortly after graduation.

- h) The institution actively participates in international exchange programmes for students and academic staff.**

Opportunities for students and staff to participate in international exchange programmes are available and partnerships exist with higher education institutions in Finland, Spain and Belgium. For example, in 2015, 2 students participated in exchanges with Finland and 8 students were exchanged with their Spanish partner with a view to obtaining the double degree offered by these partnerships. For the teaching staff, opportunities also exist in Cap Verde, Vietnam, Laos and Nicaragua where partnerships exist for training staff in these locations.

## 2. AIMS AND GOALS OF THE TEACHING PROGRAMME

- a) The academic programme has a structured curriculum which reflects the objectives of the programme. It includes knowledge, specific skills and transversal skills.**

BBI offers a BA International Tourism and Hospitality Management at its campuses in Brussels and Wiltz, however the programme is being phased out on the Brussels campus and being centred in Wiltz. BBI hopes to develop a Bachelor degree with Honours for the future. It operates a niche course with no local competition. The programme is taught in English. The stated mission of BBI is to enhance the success of its students so that they can actively participate in the modern world by integrating their hospitality management training, the value of professional skills and the striving for an excellence-oriented career.

The programme is divided into 12 modules per year and these are well structured with different areas of focus in each year. There is evidence of progression in terms of levels between each year of study and students must follow a logical sequence of modules. There is an emphasis on practical training and in the gaining of knowledge, special and transversal skills relevant to the programme and these are clearly articulated. Module narratives emphasise these components and students attest to their achievement. In addition, an annual internship develops this range of knowledge and skills and BBI staff are developing research activity in order to enhance the programme.

**b) The academic programme is defined in line with the European standards and the Bologna process. It is defined in terms of ECTS credits and designed based on student centred learning and in particular in support of the student's success, active participation in the studies and the development of skills, knowledge and know-how.**

Clear evidence was provided to attest to these factors. BBI's official documentation describes the programme in terms of ECTS credits and the number of credits awarded is what would be expected for such a programme. The programme is heavily based around student centred learning, with evidence of students working together to organise and stage events, in terms of the teaching, learning and assessment methodologies employed by staff and the annual internship which provides the student with additional opportunity to apply their knowledge and implement their skills in a professional situation relevant to their studies and their future careers.

**c) The academic programme is divided into modules each of which is assigned a certain number of ECTS credits. The objectives and the learning outcomes of each module are clearly defined.**

The BA programme is clearly divided into modules and each module is assigned ECTS credits relevant to its level and duration and in terms of the knowledge and skills developed. Inspection of the module narratives revealed the clear articulation of objectives and learning outcomes, and these are clear and relevant and demonstrate a range of knowledge and skills being developed relevant to the programme.

**d) The workload is appropriate and distributed in a balanced way between the semesters.**

The workload for students is clearly laid out and communicated in the student handbook and in the accreditation application document. It appears to be balanced, including 630 lecture hours per year, 420 internship hours per year, 75 exam hours per year and 200 hours of research per year. This workload is balanced throughout the quadrimesters and the years of study with a different focus of relevance being taught each year. Towards the end of each semester students are required to undertake a work placement, which means that curriculum delivery is front ended on the programme.

**e) The relationship between theoretical and practical courses is in line with the programme objectives. Based on the objectives of the programme, internships are planned.**

The programme has a heavy practical focus with emphasis on industry practice and industry relevance. There is less emphasis placed on theoretical development, and teaching staff are selected for their industry experience. It would be desirable for a Bachelor programme to have slightly more of a link between how theory is related to practice and BBI is aware of this and is introducing a more academic focus with the introduction of a research development programme for its staff. The practical focus and practical element are in line with the current objectives of the programme.

Internships are planned, undertaken and evaluated and the criteria and processes for all of these steps are clearly articulated and evidenced by staff and students.

- f) Within the frame of the academic programme leading to the Bachelor's degree, with the exception of alternating courses, a compulsory training period with a university or a higher education institution abroad is included in the programme which is subject to the validation of studies followed outside the home institution.**

BBI obtained Erasmus+ accreditation in 2012. It has partnership agreements with higher education institutions in Finland (Savonia University of Applied Sciences in Kuopio), Spain (EUROAULA, Escuela Universitaria de Turismo in Barcelona (University of GIRONA)) and Belgium (ERASMUSHOGESCHOOL in Brussels) with which students have the possibility of attaining a double degree.

These partnerships are active, and a number of students have been exchanged in order to obtain further qualifications in addition to the qualification obtained at BBI or their home institution. These programmes are validated by the home institution and by the receiving institution, in line with Erasmus requirements. Students value these opportunities, but they are optional and not compulsory. It is not clear that compulsory training abroad is going to become a constituent part of the current programme.

### 3. ADMISSION, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION

- a) The admission requirements to the academic programme are clearly defined and published. The admission criteria provide validation of prior experience.**

The academic admission requirements correspond to existing standards and consist of a secondary high school qualification. English language requirements are also standard. Letters of reference from competent authorities, written motivation statements and proof of financial resources are requested and tests are also carried out. Credit transfer is offered with clear procedures and validated by the Education Board. These details are clearly explained in the documentation available to prospective students.

Validation of prior experience is taken into consideration in relation to the Bologna convention and criteria are clearly laid out. A referential standard qualification of occupational activity is used to secure a minimum of quality assurance. Additionally, a life-long learning professional training programme, based on an independent learning course and determining admission, participation and a specific programme is offered to people continuing their employment.

- b) The evaluation methods are based on educational objectives**

Educational objectives are clearly expressed in the handbook and on the website, relating them to continuing assessment, and based on sound pedagogical research (Bloom's taxonomy). A teaching methodology and associated evaluation methods are provided as an overall framework for the programme and modules, with explanations about the transition between lower learning levels and higher conceptual complexity. Of particular interest is the aim to transmit to students the highest standards of integrity, ethics and social awareness; as well as strong analytical skills in communication and team management; the ability to work in diversified cultural environments; the capacity to integrate and apply knowledge acquired in the core disciplines of management.

- c) The evaluation methods applied in the various modules are clearly communicated to the students**

Details on specific evaluation methods, within the overall programme pedagogical framework, are provided in the extensive module descriptions. They include appropriate information, linking module aims, learning outcomes and assessment methods. Details about the grading system, the evaluation criteria for oral and written work are also available in the student handbook.

**d) Diplomas and degrees issued by the higher education institution provide information on the acquired qualifications. They are accompanied by a diploma supplement describing the knowledge and skills acquired by the holder**

Much information is available in the student handbook on existing standards of degree classification and skills acquired, based on the Dublin descriptors. Skills, knowledge, abilities, attitudes acquired for each year and each module are fully explained.

A diploma supplement is issued to each student in which knowledge and skills acquired are tailored individually in accordance with the eight-part model developed by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO.

There is also information about the double degrees students can acquire due to well-established partnerships and student exchanges with Finnish and Spanish universities, for which there are documents describing admission criteria (including recognition of prior learning), application procedures, programmes, ECTS and degree awards.

#### 4. TEACHING PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

**a) The academic programme has sufficient resources in terms of academic staff, financial and material resources etc. to cover its specific needs and achieve its objectives. Such resources are available for the entire duration of the academic programme.**

Financial and material resources are sufficient to cover programme costs (adequate infrastructures, administrative and educational staff and training courses) and there is planning in place to enable sustainability and continuing development in the next few years.

The institution has made the decision to close down its Bachelor programme in Brussels incrementally over the next three years in order to regroup resources on the Wiltz campus, and give a unique identity to the BA delivered in English, which is a sensible strategic move as there appears to be demand in Luxembourg and there is more competition at Bachelor level in Belgium. The MA programme in Brussels will continue since there is little competition at that level. As a result, and to strengthen teaching staff, 6 new professors (2 Doctorates + 4 MBA) have been appointed at Wiltz to ensure quality and growth.

There are also established partnerships with universities in Finland and Spain providing similar courses and the possibility of student (and staff) exchanges constitutes a good offering in this well-defined niche market. Plans for further partnerships and for continuity of programmes (i.e. MA and DBA) are under consideration.

**b) Courses are provided by competent staff on the teaching and pedagogical level, capable of linking subject matters to professional practice in the relevant field and current research. Teaching is based on student centred learning, promoting active participation by the students.**

Qualifications and quality of staff are reasonable, and emphasis is put on teaching at the recruitment process. Selected candidates are interviewed by two members of the Board of directors and invited to review a chapter of a course and prepare a lesson of 1h15 which they teach in front of the selection committee; the assessment of their performance is decisive for recruitment.

BBI's teaching is carried out by professors certified hospitality educators, and qualified lecturers, who are recruited for their professional skills and teaching ability. There are 3 teaching staff with a PhD, 3 with an MBA, 10 with a Master's degree, and 8 with a Bachelor degree. The teaching staff has a lot of industry experience on which they draw for their teaching.

In terms of the control of teaching quality, there is an Education Board under the authority of the Board of Deans which reports annually on its activities and recommendations and defines the institute's education policies: continuous development of professional and pedagogical qualifications of the teaching staff; design of specific teaching in terms of quality assurance; development of new teaching material and promotion of synergy with other higher education institutions; study and comparative analysis of curricula and teaching methods used in different types of education institutions in Europe.

BBI has implemented quality procedures in its day-to-day operation based on self-assessment using the model of excellence of the EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) in order to identify areas of continuous improvement. Teaching staff is also periodically examined by the Accreditation Body to ensure skills and qualifications are up to date. The CHE (Certified Hospitality Educator Programme) qualification is renewed every five years.

Student satisfaction questionnaires, students' results, learning methodology, project planning, collaboration with administrators, and contacts with the professional world are taken into account for the annual evaluation of teachers during an interview with the director of education reviewing the technical and pedagogical performance.

BBI programmes balance theory and professional work experience acquired during a 3-month long internship every year. Individual capabilities developed make graduate students appreciated in the hospitality industry and there is a strong record of finding jobs: "95% of our students find a job immediately after completing their last internship; some students of the graduation year even receive job offers before actually graduating (+/- 5%)" at the end of the course<sup>3</sup>. Students also participate in forums and events which gives them the opportunity to participate actively in professional development and real-life learning".

At the end of each year, on the basis of a topic relating to hospitality management, students demonstrate their research, analytical and presentation skills within the frame of a personal project. These end-of-year final work projects are individual projects and require an analysis of the operations, management and strategy of a hotel; for instance, the year 3 final work paper must produce a marketing plan including strategy development and budget analyses. This is appropriate to demonstrating research and analytical skills in the context of the BA. This could be a good basis for BBI future development in Research.

The content of the Bachelor program is in line with national and international professional requirements of the hospitality and tourism industry in terms of general skills and specific skills.

A variety of teaching and learning methods are used and are based on an interactive learning methodology consistent with student-centred learning; for instance, by using the platform HOTS (Hospitality Organisation Tactics and Strategies) which provides a flexible, student-centred and academically rigorous program, seeking to develop students' competencies and encourage their intellectual skills in examining the provided and proposed operations of the hospitality industry through the HOTS interface. HOTS is a dynamic training and development experience for industry, based around a realistic computer exercise that stimulates the management of a service business. The teaching approach focuses on knowledge and skills reflected in the objectives of the programme through: integration of knowledge from the content of the curriculum (theory); acquisition of skills and attitudes through practice and professional experience (internships). The aims are to: get all students involved actively in learning; enable students to teach each other; increase student retention of course concepts; allow students to contribute to the learning process; provide feedback to students of their progress in learning.

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<sup>3</sup> Source: Request for the Renewal of the Accreditation and Assessment of Compliance with the Program Criteria, BA in International Hospitality and Tourism Management BBI, August 2017, p. 10

**c) The proportion between permanent academic staff and external speakers is adapted to the objectives of the academic programme.**

Even if the curriculum is strictly professional, the teaching staff is currently not well balanced between professionals and academics. BBI's management is aware of this. A procedure has been put in place to develop case studies and have them labelled. As a supplement to the regular teaching staff, highly regarded industry professionals and visiting lecturers deliver presentations or hold seminars for students. Currently 18 external speakers give one or two sessions during the year, but this list is not exhaustive and is evolving and updated every year based on development and trends in the international hospitality industry.

**d) Continuing education programmes are provided to academic staff.**

A Certified Hospitality Educator programme is on offer for staff to undertake and needs to be renewed every five years. A newly designed training programme is in place to increase competences in research methods and writing skills with the aim of producing and publishing teaching case studies. Offering some staff the possibility of studying for a DBA (to the extent of around 50% of teachers engaged in this process) was also suggested during the visit and is encouraged in order to complement current initiatives towards fostering a more research orientated culture at BBI.

International partnerships (with Finland and Spain) offer the opportunity for teacher exchanges. BBI is also a member of several international organizations in hospitality and tourism education and quality management.

**e) Adequate supervision and comprehensive information for students are provided. Students are offered tutoring or mentoring programmes.**

Information about support and tutoring is well laid out in the documentation available to students. The student handbook contains detailed information covering all aspects of the course organisation, module content and structure, the staff involved, and support mechanisms.

A permanent tutoring service is available to assist students in any situation, be it for study purposes, administrative procedures or personal issues. Special assistance is provided to non-EU students for visa procedures. There is a hotline for any issues that could occur outside school hours which offers efficient and valuable support to students.

Opportunities are available for both academic and peer mentoring. Documentation outlines the procedure for requesting a tutor – either an academic tutor (teacher) or peer tutor (student). It is noted that both of these services incur an extra charge per hour for the student.

In sum, BBI is planning to double its number of BA students in the next few years. This will incur planning in terms of teaching methods, infrastructures, support, internships, and staffing. BBI is regrouping all bachelor activities at Wiltz (moving from Brussels) and is already planning the merging of the 1<sup>st</sup> year Brussels and Wiltz teaching for the next academic year (and the 2<sup>nd</sup> year and 3<sup>rd</sup> year the following years). This will certainly help them learn from that experience for future growth.

Another area which BBI is planning to expand is the library and electronic resources, which should also include providing access to more research-oriented material.

BBI has had a clear mission, vision and values in hospitality and tourism education as established by founders in 1990 and has delivered programmes successfully for 28 years (it now has a large network of around 1000 alumni which is a great asset). The BBI team is aware that changes are apace and it is working towards adapting and ensuring its sustainability.

## 5. RESEARCH

- a) The higher education institution performs, in the relevant areas, basic oriented research activities or applied research activities as defined in article 1 of the law of 3 December 2014 on the organisation of public research centres. These research activities will lead to publications in the institution's name in international scientific and peer-reviewed journals.**

Research so far has consisted of publications essentially in specialized professional journals and attendance of conferences and seminars. The aim has been to keep up to date with latest trends and skills development to benefit from the results of fundamental research in education and about practices in the hospitality and tourism industry. The acquired knowledge is communicated via intranet to members and discussed during pedagogical and operational meetings.

There is evidence of recent applied research activities orientated towards writing case studies targeting for instance CCMP (Centrale de cas et de medias pédagogiques), which seems appropriate at this stage. There is a clear awareness of the need to think through a new sensible research strategy building on existing strengths, with the aim of gaining competences progressively.

There is a well-formulated training programme with a series of workshops and focus groups led by a new academic staff member specialized in research methodologies, researching and writing case studies. A team has been set up comprising lecturers with academic experience and lecturers with professional experience. This programme targets a number of teachers who are enthusiastic and are engaging with the process. The aim is to develop teacher research through existing case study modules and the development of new case studies. Seminars are also organized regularly and individualized follow-up is provided in order to ensure continuous motivation and follow-up of teachers' research activities. A further possibility could be to support staff members in enrolling on a DBA (Doctor of Business Administration) course to gain further research expertise.

A new structure, the Committee of Research and Innovation (CRI) was set up in September 2016 to orchestrate these activities in order to mark the transition and the added value of research and above all to ensure its sustainability. Its aim is to strengthen the development of applied research based on field experience. The programme is designed to support teachers in applied research, guide them in their work and ensure continuity and coherence. The CRI is supervised by qualified teachers with PhDs and MBAs to structure research activities and give them the importance they deserve in the institution and in its development. This structure is well thought out and integrated in the overall functioning of BBI with good resources and is already strengthening staff motivation for applied research.

There is also a new cooperation contract for joint research projects, teacher exchanges, the organization of joint conferences, symposia and seminars and the development of student mobility with a German University of Applied Labour Studies, as well as activities to gain research assistance from international education associations publishing case studies. There are plans to increase research resources (library sources, electronic access, etc.).

- b) The institution incorporates the results of its research in the education it is providing.**

Teachers display good pedagogical skills generally, and there is a current effort in instilling research skills both at the faculty level and at the level of efforts required from students, with a new focus on practical and applied research tasks assigned to students in the context of writing case studies and final projects. The case study technique and the final project represent the applied research tools of the programme and constitute an important part of their assessment in ECTS terms. Attention is paid to the choice of topics in line with the proposed investigation, the chosen methodology, the quantitative and qualitative techniques used and the general structure of the work. More is

planned in terms of the students' training research process, follow-up and guidance. A workshop was organized for the Bachelor students to explain the functioning of research. There is evidence of thinking through continuity of research skills training in relation to the Masters programme.

Collaborative agreements with the industry for research and development projects include internships, giving students opportunities to have contacts with the industry and gathering case study material. BBI has signed agreements with hotels and/or hotel groups to launch joint research and development projects as part of internships, giving students new opportunities to have direct contacts with the industry and increasing their employability (NH Group of hotels, RAMADA Group of Hotels, Hotel LE ROYAL etc.).

## 6. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

### **a) The higher education institution ensures to collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management and the continuous improvement of its academic programmes and research activities.**

BBI has chosen to base its quality structures and curriculum management on the European Model of Quality Management in which the institution involves itself and its programmes in a continuous process of quality improvement.

BBI has formalised and documented a system of quality assurance called Quality Care which, however, was not seen. The system followed is clearly articulated, but evidence of its operation in practice was limited. There are committees charged with implementing this process, such as the Reflection Committee which meets to implement course improvement.

The institution also undertakes benchmarking activities against its leading competitors and carries out financial statement analysis. However, other than the operation of the committees, it is not clear how this information is spread into improving the academic programmes as benchmarking is only one small aspect of quality management. As yet, research activities at BBI are in the early development stage, so it will be essential that clear mechanisms are operationalised to ensure continuous improvement in this area.

In terms of data, it is clear that BBI collects, analyses and uses relevant internally generated information for the effective management of programmes as evidenced in the minutes of meetings, but how this then improves quality is not clearly identified.

### **b) The higher education institution has an internal and external quality assurance system that it makes public and that forms an integral part of its strategic management. The internal and external measures for the quality assurance of the institution are in compliance with the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).**

The quality assurance plan operated by BBI is clearly articulated and defined. It is grounded on the development of strategic and operational plans relating to mission and vision, pedagogy and strategy. The Total Quality Approach then deals with identifying needs and opportunities, the definition of client's expectations, actions to achieve these and the planning for and implementation of these plans and to ensuring the necessary resources are available. These action plans are then deployed in terms of allocating duties and responsibilities and delegating authority.

Whilst this plan is clearly defined there was no evidence provided of the existence of any action plans and the system appears to be very theoretical with little emphasis on action over description of the processes. It would be preferable to see the action of the process and evidence of the

continuous control of quality rather than just the details of the structure of the system, which essentially seems to define areas of authority, rather than cover pedagogical improvement of teaching activities. There was limited evidence of a quality charter.

To its advantage, BBI has carried out impact studies and has produced statistics relating to student employment. In addition, they have conducted an impact analysis on the town and the BSCS is a plus for the system of quality assurance. BBI has carried out a benchmarking process and has knowledge of TQM techniques. The Certified Hospitality Educator programme is a plus for improving quality teaching.

**c) The academic programmes are regularly subject to an internal review to ensure they reflect the latest results of research and teaching in the relevant field, that they fulfil the targeted objectives and meet the continuously changing needs of students and society.**

Students, external organisations and teachers undertake regular evaluations and the results are fed through the committee structures and boards with a view to improving internal quality. BBI states its commitment to annual action plans and to monitoring industry developments in order to improve the training provided to allow students to meet industry standards. No evidence was presented to show that recent developments in research and teaching were being monitored and this is an area in which BBI could improve, by engaging more fully with current developments in pedagogy and with academic research. The main question lies in the fact that tourism and hospitality management is a field which is developing at a great rate for example, smart-tourism, and therefore how is information on these evolutions in these new areas developed and instilled in the programme? BBI does however require its teachers to attend a teaching programme – the Certified Hospitality Educators programme, so in this there is evidence of their commitment to quality teaching. In addition, an analysis was undertaken assessing the impact of a Virtual Academic Presence, but how this is incorporated into academic programmes is not clear.

**d) Responsibilities, competencies and the decision-making process within the higher education institution are clearly and transparently defined.**

There was clear evidence and articulation of the responsibilities, competencies and the decision-making processes employed by the institution as presented in the student handbook. These include the roles of the Board of Governors, the OPS (operational) meetings held between the Dean and teaching staff in which teachers and students participate and students also have the Student Representative Committee (SRC) which contributes to the OPS. The process of decision making is based on current and future needs and expectations. These were clearly and transparently defined and involved teaching staff, administrative staff, office holders and students. There is clarity in how each of these groups participate.

**e) Academic staff and students have sufficient means to make known their position and to participate in the decision-making process.**

A wide range of information was available to outline the processes whereby staff and students have the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. These include regular meetings with the Dean including a pedagogical meeting at the beginning of the year. During the year there are operational meetings. The Dean also meets regularly with the Chairman and members of the Board. In addition, students are in regular contact with teachers and Board Members and have structures by which they can participate. Whilst this primarily involves making their position known, there is little evidence of their participation in decision making.

**f) The defined institution has a person or a committee dealing with issues relating to equal opportunities policy.**

BBI places importance on pluralism and tolerance. An equal opportunities policy is in evidence and the Governance Board is responsible for ensuring that the policy is correctly applied and also in ensuring that all statutory requirements relating to current legislation are in force.

## V. CONCLUSION

BBI is a small business school focused on Tourism and Hospitality Management. From a strategic point of view, it fits quite well to the needs of the profession. Obviously, from a short to medium term perspective, there is a demand for educated students in Tourism (Luxembourg) and in Central or Northern Europe.

### 1. STRONG POINTS:

- Good reputation and expertise of BBI in the Tourism business and BBI strong identity (Dress Code, community rules and values)
- Full English courses and teaching in small groups **based on case studies plus a** well-balanced program (Education and practices/Internships), with also a good range of subjects within the programme (Hospitality, Food & Beverage, Housing & Rooming)
- Motivated and enthusiastic students as well as motivated teachers
- Logistic support to foreign students (Visa process, housing)
- A network of professionals and corporations and an emerging Alumni network
- Localisation in Wiltz (no nearby challengers, student concentration on their studies and personal work/development; possibility to attract and develop a partnership with other institutions (within the same business/field) and create a Campus) and also good support from the local authorities (City)
- Qualified, balanced and strong governance (Family, stakeholder representatives in various boards)
- Clear and controlled future strategy with a Strong Financial Basis and well managed financial resources
- Students fees quite reasonable by comparison with the Education Market. This means that they could be raised and stay competitive
- An engagement with research. Via the Research and Innovation Committee and in connection with the local ecosystem, action research could be a good intellectual frame to increase the research strategy.
- New programmes to be developed (For example, smart and heritage tourism, on line program on yield management, executive education, circular economy, etc.)

### 2. WEAK POINTS:

Despite its obvious strengths, BBI presents some weak points:

- BBI was created by experienced and charismatic persons. It has become a family organization. The expert panel wants to underline the importance of the transition toward a future governance structure.
- If the Wiltz Castle is a wonderful and potentially very interesting place, despite some local support, the important fixed costs could create a financial burden for BBI. If the managers are aware of this issue, it seems that they are rushing after a short-term solution (for example by seeking potential partners in the fields of Dentistry and Music) instead of trying to find long-term synergies with other Education institutions in Business, Management studies, etc.

- A need to optimize the coordination between the two BBI campuses.
- A lack of a targeted internal quality insurance system, particularly in relation to the academic programs.
- The limited offering of Master degrees after the Bachelor degree on the Wiltz campus. Developments could take the form of an MBA or a Master in the same specialities. Both could be focused on Tourism and target the development of new relations with MA programs.
- The need of an important and quick development of Management related research (teachers, students, seminars, events, library, resources, national and international links) and the need for some academic support to help BBI managers and teachers to develop BBI capabilities in Academic research.
- Importance of the Luxembourg State support and good coordination with the rest of regional and national education structures (local business schools, Wiltz city, Luxembourg university, Luxembourg State)

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE INSTITUTION

The expert panel recommends the accreditation. It suggests to the institution:

- To capitalize on the potential offered by the Wiltz Castle location (for example by involving new institutions related to Tourism and/or Business studies or applied management education or sciences, executive sessions, renting, etc.)
- The definitive closure of the Brussels Campus in relation to the Bachelor programme.
- A clarification of the relationship between BBI and UBI (nature and content)
- More full-time professors/administrative staff in order to accommodate an increasing number of students
- A possible increase of student fees
- A better mobilization of BBI Alumni
- The preparation of a future new governance between the founders, the family members and the rest of the stakeholders
- To continue the development of the research side of either an education or an academic program. This could be done by developing closer relations with a DBA program and/or another academic institution in Luxembourg State, such as the University of Luxembourg.
- The pursuit and development of international cooperation
- To eventually relaunch a new TEDQUAL accreditation process

## VI. COMMENTS OF THE INSTITUTION

The institution has “no comments to make with regard to the report and the suggestions mentioned in the conclusions will be taken into consideration and incorporated into the institute's development plan”.

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