Report on Development Dialogue

Programme details	
School	Tinbergen Institute
Programme name	Tinbergen Institute Master of Philosophy in Economics (research)
CROHO	60162

Accreditation details		
NVAO framework	2018	
Date site visit	22 June 2021	
Panel	*Chair*	Prof.dr. Frank Witlox
	Member	Prof.dr. Erik Stam
	Member	Prof.dr. Reinhilde Veugelers
	Student member	Xiaoyue Zhang, MSc
	Secretary	Dr. A. Venemans-Jellema (De Onderzoekerij)
Panel conclusion	*Standard 1*	Meets the standard
	Standard 2	Meets the standard
	Standard 3	Meets the standard
	Standard 4	Meets the standard
	Final conclusion	Positive
NVAO decision	6 april 2022	
The most recent results of the programme accreditation can be consulted at https://www.nvao.net/en/decisions/educations.		

Development dialogue details	
Date	3 November 2021
Participants	Assessment panel and programme representatives

Context development dialogue
In line with the NVAO assessment framework (2018), each study programme or cluster of study programmes conducts a 'development dialogue' (ontwikkelgesprek) with the assessment panel following the assessment visit. During this development dialogue, future developments and potential improvements are discussed from a development perspective. The agenda is drawn up by the study programme. Although the development dialogue is part of the programme review, the outcomes are not part of the accreditation assessment. Pursuant to the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act (WHW), Article 5.13, paragraph 6, we publish the report of these discussions with this document.
Representatives of the assessment panel and programme representatives met (online) to conduct the development dialogue, with the objective to discuss future developments of the programme. During this meeting the three topics were discussed.

Discussion points
1. Vision of the programme
2. Programme after the pandemic
3. Translation of theses into a broader debate

Discussion takeaways
1. Vision of the programme. One of the recommendations of the assessment was to be more explicit about the vision of the programme in that sense that it needs to be clear what the programme envisions to achieve, and in particular where the programme wants students to end up after completion of the programme. The vision should be regularly revisited to check its future-proofness. The panel explained that in their view the vision was very implicit. It was not clear what the programme envisions the students to achieve. Does the programme wants them for example to become 'publication machines' or 'change makers of the world'. It is important to make this more explicit and also use it as a dialogue between students and staff. In addition, the vision should be future proof. The question that should be asked is what kind of researchers the field needs in the coming years. As a response, the programme mentioned some examples of developments of the programme, such as a second research master, new topics in the courses, such as machine learning and big data, and more focus on soft skills. The programme considers Oxford as their benchmark when it comes to vision or curriculum. The panel applauds these developments, but notes that these are instruments that give content to a vision. What is needed first is a clear vision. On this basis, the programme can, if desired, adjust the curriculum. 2. Programme after the pandemic The programme and panel discussed what to keep and what to let go after the pandemic. Everyone agrees that the real interaction between staff and students and the training of soft skills can be best done offline. However, the participants also agree that the pandemic have brought a palette of possibilities. Examples are the easier contact with top scholars and the recording of lectures. Also, the first matching conversation between supervisor and students can be done easily online. Most panel members mention that they offer the possibility of streaming. The programme considers to start building a library of lectures of especially difficult topics. The panel applauds this idea. 3. Translation of theses into a broader debate The programme seeks the views of the panel on the impact of the scientific work of students. It mentions that during the thesis project it is hard to find time to translate the thesis results into the public debate. The programme already reflects on societal relevance during courses.

The panel is of the opinion that it is indeed important to pay attention to public connection, but it is not necessary to limit this to the research project; this can be any time during the programme. According to the panel, it goes back to the first topic with respect to the vision of the programme: 'What kind of strategy do you have and how do you want to translate it into the programme'. Depending on this vision, the programme can decide if and where societal relevance best fit.