



Business Innovation Graduation Project

Handbook 2024-2025



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1 Introduction

The BI programme is dedicated to the education and development of individuals who aspire to become (junior) *directors of innovation* in an international business environment. The programme prepares its students to graduate at Bachelor level, using the internationally accepted definition of this Bachelor level set by the Dublin Descriptors (which correspond with the Dutch Generic Key Qualifications for Professional Bachelor Programmes). The intended learning outcomes of the BI programme are represented by five Meta-Skills: DEFINE, DESIGN, EXECUTE, LEARN and LEAD, which are described in the *Professional Profile International Business Innovation Studies* (IBIS, 2013a).

DEFINE: *uncover the right problem to solve or opportunity to pursue and frame it in a way that invites creative solutions.*
DESIGN: *develop ethically sound solutions that can better meet the end users' needs and that generate value for end users.*
EXECUTE: *perform the tasks involved in the implementation of the designed concepts, products, services, experiences, business model, processes, strategy, business and/or department.*
LEARN: *monitor the appropriateness, efficiency and effectiveness of his (learning) actions, activities and results before, during and after performing them.*
LEAD: *manage people, action, information and yourself, whether in a managing position or not, from a profound understanding of what customers, vendors and suppliers want.*

Figure 1: the BI Meta-Skills

The Meta-Skills imply the mastery of a specific Body of Knowledge and Skills. For instance, to define the scope of a 'problem' - to gather contextual information, environmental information, historical information, and information regarding the end user (and business constraints) on an international scale - the student will need to have mastered methods and tools to do so.

In accordance with Inholland policy, using several internationally renowned taxonomies, the BI programme has defined three phase levels of competence students go through during their studies (IBIS, 2013b). The names of the BI Meta-Skills phase levels were inspired by the old guild model of development into a professional: Apprentice, Junior Practitioner and (junior) Professional Innovator. These phase levels define the type of activities and performance the student should be able to demonstrate regarding each meta-skill in each phase.

The achievement of the highest level of mastery of the meta-skills is determined in the final year of the programme through the graduation project. During the graduation project, which runs for a period of 5-6 months, students take on the role of a junior innovation professional and solve an authentic innovation issue for a commissioning client. The graduation project differs from the work placement (year 3) in several ways:

- 1) The graduation project revolves around the highest level of the BI meta-skills (whereas the work placement revolves around the junior practitioner level);
- 2) During the graduation project students take on the role of independent (internal or external) innovation consultant (whereas in the work placement they are employees and work as part of a team);

- 3) The graduation project fully focuses on a complex innovation assignment, which requires a substantial amount of primary and secondary research, developing an innovative solution, and ends with a (partial) implementation of that solution (whereas the work placement focuses on working as a junior innovation practitioner, within a company and a team, also contributing to other goals and tasks alongside working on investigating and generating a solution for an innovation issue);
- 4) The graduation project revolves around a topic that is explicitly linked to the graduation track the student chose to follow - micro or macro innovation (whereas the work placement could be about any topic related to innovation);
- 5) The graduation project can be executed for a foreign commissioning client, and travel abroad is possible, but the student should not spend the full length of the project abroad (whereas a work placement can be fully executed abroad, for a period of 5-6 months);
- 6) During the preparatory stage of the graduation project (Project Plan and Research), the graduation coordinator and the research lecturer will be available for consultations on a regular basis in *The Office* on location and online. And during the thesis stage of the graduation project (Solution, Implementation and Log & Reflection) students are coached by a BI graduation supervisor (whereas during the work placement, the students are coached by their BI work placement supervisor for the entire period);
- 7) The graduation project is the very last part of the BI programme - it is not possible to finish other study units after finalising the graduation project (whereas the work placement symbolises the end of the junior innovation practitioner phase, but study units from before the work placement can still be finalised);
- 8) Agreements are made between the student and the commissioning client only, Inholland takes no part in this agreement.

The graduation project is organised in two stages:

- 1) the preparatory stage, which mainly revolves around meta-skills DEFINE and LEAD. This stage includes two assessments that also serve as go/no-go decisions to continue with the project;
- 2) the thesis stage, which runs after the preparatory stage has been concluded with satisfactory results, mainly revolves around the Meta-Skills DESIGN, EXECUTE and LEARN. This stage ends in graduation if concluded with satisfactory results of all three assessments and evidence of the oral defence commencement is provided.

This Handbook describes the what, how and why of the BI Graduation Project. Section 2 focuses on the specifications of the graduation project. Section 3 presents the requirements regarding the graduation project (for students and for companies/organisations). Section 4 explains how the supervision & coaching is organised during the graduation project. Section 5 discusses the assessment of the graduation project in general terms (the detailed assessment criteria are published in separate assessment criteria documents at the beginning of the academic year). Section 6 deals with miscellaneous procedural items, like grants, insurances and Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDA).

2 Specifications of the graduation project

Considering the goals the BI programme aims at with the graduation project, the following general specifications for the graduation project apply:

- ✓ The graduation project revolves around an innovation issue where the student is required to conduct thorough investigation (research), create a solution and (partially) implement that solution. In other words: the student should go through (and lead) the entire innovation process/cycle. Students should not just contribute to parts of a process led by others;
- ✓ The assignment at the core of the graduation project is explicitly related to the student's graduation track. The choice for a specific topic is the student's, but the student needs to consult the corresponding graduation track aligner beforehand. The assignment must be described perspicuously in the first deliverable for assessment in the graduation project process;
- ✓ The graduation project is commissioned by a legitimate company/organisation (i.e. cannot be self-commissioned). The choice of company/organisation is the student's, taking into consideration the requirements regarding the graduation project;
- ✓ The BI meta-skills at the junior innovation professional level form the basis of the work performed during the graduation project and the results achieved through it. The BI meta-skills and descriptors for the junior innovation professional are listed in appendix 1;
- ✓ Finding a suitable graduation project assignment and getting hired by the commissioning client is very much part of the learning experience the graduation project strives for, therefore it is the responsibility of the student. BI provides guidance in finding and getting a graduation project assignment, and publishes any suitable assignments it might receive from companies/organisations, but does not arrange graduation projects for students;
- ✓ The graduation project is executed for the same commission client(s) for the entire duration. A severance, by switching clients along the way, is not possible. If something were to happen that leads to the student and the commissioning client decide to part ways (after having discussed the situation in-depth with the graduation coordinator and/or supervisor), the student will have to start over with a new graduation project assignment for a new commissioning client (leading to study delay). This emphasises the importance of an in-depth orientation into all aspects of the prospective commissioning client and the project to be performed prior to accepting a graduation project.

3 Requirements regarding the BI Graduation Project

To ensure a valuable and good learning experience, there are several requirements that should be met; in general, on the student's part, and on the commission client's part. These requirements are listed and explained (when applicable) below.

3.1 General requirements

- ✓ The BI graduation project is commissioned by a legitimate company/organisation (i.e. not self-commissioned or commissioned by a client who is not officially a company) which cannot be a company/organisation you (co-)founded yourself or that is owned or run by relatives;
- ✓ The work load involved in executing the graduation project plausibly amounts to 30 EC (approx. 800 hours of work). This does not include working for the commission client as an employee;

- ✓ During the graduation project the student is expected to work on the graduation project assignment, which includes substantial research, designing and developing a solution and implementing it. Working for the client company as a normal employee is not part of the graduation project;
- ✓ The assignment the student works on during the graduation project requires performance on the BI junior innovation professional level. The assignment focuses on either micro or macro innovation, depending on the student's graduation track;
- ✓ The first deliverable, the Graduation Project Plan, must be approved and graded with a sufficient before the student can continue onto further execution of the graduation project;
- ✓ Besides consulting the graduation track aligner for approval of the assignment, students can also consult other lectures. However, their advice is just that: advice.

3.2 Student requirements

In order to be admitted to the graduation project and final phase of the BI study programme, the BI student needs to:

- ✓ have obtained at least all credits of year 1, year 2 and year 3 core programme (140 EC);
- ✓ have successfully completed the year 3 work placement (30 EC);
- ✓ have their graduation assignment approved by the graduation track aligner before handing in the complete Graduation Project Plan. Evidence of grades & credits, and approval of the assignment need to be submitted.

In order to participate in the final assessment of the graduation project, the BI student needs to:

- ✓ have obtained all credits of year 1, year 2 and year 3 (180 EC);
- ✓ have obtained 42 credits in year 4 (all credits except the final 3 graduation project assessments).

Students can check and download evidence of their grades on: studentportal.inholland.nl.
Note: screen-prints from the Inholland app without provenance of the ECs will not be accepted.

Student responsibilities regarding the graduation project

In addition to finding and arranging their graduation project assignment themselves (with guidance from BI where necessary) and meeting the above mentioned requirements, students are also responsible for:

- ✓ informing the graduation project commissioning client about BI and the meta-skills (using materials provided by BI);
- ✓ informing the commission client about the BI graduation project requirements (including the fact that BI examiners need to have access to all required materials and information stated in the assessment criteria in order to grade the student's work);
- ✓ define a suitable graduation project assignment (including objectives and scope) in consultation with the commissioning client;
- ✓ keeping in touch with their BI graduation supervisor and for addressing possible issues with the (successful continuation of the) graduation project in a timely manner;
- ✓ participating in study unit assessments for which BI offers four possible dates throughout the year. Note that for each study unit there are only two chances to participate in the assessment in each academic year. Failure to participate in or pass after these two chances will automatically lead to a study delay, as the graduation project cannot be finalised before all other study units have been passed. Consequences of such a delay for the graduation project and informing the commissioning client, are the student's responsibility;
- ✓ making sure all work submitted as part of the graduation project is the student's own and sources are correctly referenced (prevent plagiarism);

- ✓ conducting themselves as (junior) professionals towards the commission client and all other parties involved in the graduation project.

3.3 Company requirements

In order to be eligible as a suitable commissioning client for a BI Graduation Project, a company /organisation and/or their representative needs to meet the following requirements:

- ✓ is registered with local authorities and/or the Chamber of Commerce;
- ✓ has a registered address;
- ✓ has an official company website and email address;
- ✓ is not owned or run by a family member;
- ✓ appoints a fixed company supervisor for the student, who is also the contact person for the BI graduation coordinator and the student's graduation supervisor (if necessary). To make sure the company supervisor can truly guide and coach the student (i.e. has more experience), they should:
 - work at least at HBO level;
 - have at least 2 years of working experience;
 - be in a position of some authority and responsibility in the company/department (i.e. team leader, supervisor, manager, director);
 - master the English language to such a degree that they can explain and provide feedback to the student in English that the student understands;
 - have time to conduct periodic progress meetings with the student;
 - be willing and able to assess the student's performance based on the criteria provided by BI.

N.B.: checking the company supervisor's credentials is the student's responsibility; BI does not require proof of this in order to approve the graduation project. This requirement has been formulated to help protect the student from accepting an assignment where they will not receive the necessary support and guidance. When in doubt about the competence of the company (supervisor), the student can ask the graduation coordinator for help and advice before accepting the graduation project assignment.

- ✓ guarantees that the student can finish executing the graduation project assignment within a year after starting with the assignment.

4 Supervision and coaching

During the graduation project students can count on several people to guide them along their journey.

1) Graduation coordinator

The BI graduation coordinator is the student's go-to person for any questions regarding the graduation project during the preparatory stage. They are also the person responsible for assigning a graduation supervisor for the thesis stage of the graduation project. In the event of issues with the graduation supervisor during the graduation project, the BI graduation coordinator is the first point-of-contact for the student.

2) Graduation track aligner

The graduation track aligner for the Micro or Macro graduation track is the first person for the student to contact in order to consult and get approval of their graduation assignment.

3) Graduation supervisor (aka second assessor)

The graduation supervisor is the person who monitors the student's progress during the thesis stage of graduation project and to whom the student can turn with questions regarding the content and process of their graduation project. The graduation supervisor is appointed after the student has handed in the Research Report of their graduation project. The role of the graduation supervisor is mainly a coaching one, however, they are also participating in the assessment of the student's graduation project. The student's graduation supervisor will be present during the oral defence of the graduation project and will provide input regarding the student's work (process) to the graduation examiner.

4) Graduation examiner (aka first assessor)

The graduation examiner is the person who assesses and grades the thesis stage of the student's graduation project which includes the deliverables of the final 3 assessments (see chapter 5) and the oral defence. The graduation project examiner is appointed after the student has handed in the deliverables of the final 3 assessments.

5) Company supervisor (aka sponsor)

The company supervisor is the person at the commissioning client's company who has been assigned to guide the student. This can be the commissioning client themselves or someone else at the company. This person is responsible for the student's introduction into the company, providing them with access to all necessary materials and people, and for providing input for the grading of the Graduation Project - Implementation assessment (but does not assess or grade the work).

6) Discipline experts

You can contact BI discipline experts with specific questions regarding your graduation project assignment that the appointed graduation supervisor cannot answer. The availability of the discipline experts is limited, so they should only be contacted when other methods to find answers have not led to satisfactory results.

Appendix 2 contains an overview of Business Innovation staff members and their role in the graduation project.

5 Assessment of the Graduation Project

The assessment of the graduation project is divided into 5 parts that are each worth 6 EC. Each part focusses on a different set of the BI Meta-skills (see appendix 1) and is assessed by a specific assessor or a team of assessors (appendix 2):

GP1 - Graduation Project Plan (mainly DEFINE, DESIGN)

GP2 - Graduation Project - Research Report (mainly DEFINE)

GP3 - Graduation Project - Solution (mainly DESIGN, LEARN)

GP4 - Graduation Project - Implementation (mainly EXECUTE, LEAD)

GP5 - Graduation Project - Log & Reflection (mainly EXECUTE, LEARN, LEAD)

5.1 Deliverables & Deadlines

As mentioned before, the Graduation Project Plan constitutes a go/no-go to continue with the Research Report (i.e. you need to receive a passing grade for the graduation project plan) and the Research Report constitutes a go/no-go to continue with the solution and implementation. Deliverables for the Solution, Implementation and Log & Reflect need to be handed in all at once.

There are several opportunities to submit throughout the year, which will be communicated at the beginning of the academic year. Before being able to submit deliverables, students need to register for the assessment (date) for which they want to submit. Registration for each submission date starts 2 weeks before the next deadline and needs to be done at least 24 hours before the deadline (see appendix 3 for instructions).

N.B. students will have 2 chances each academic year to submit deliverables for each Graduation Project assessment. Registering for an assessment will count as a chance whether (the correct) deliverables are submitted or not. Deregistering can be done up to 24 hours before the deadline.

It is possible to submit the deliverables in the 2-week period before a deadline, but assessment will only start after students has notified the graduation coordinator of an early submission. Only complete deliverables will be considered for assessment (i.e. you cannot submit unfinished work in order to receive feedback).

The submission dates mentioned below are based on nominal study progress. Later submission might lead to a study delay at least consistent with the delay in submitting the deliverables. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of these deadlines and any possible delay that is caused by not meeting these deadlines.

- ✓ The Graduation Project Plan (GP1) needs to be submitted by mid-December at the latest;
- ✓ The Graduation Project - Research Report (GP2) needs to be submitted by the end of February) at the latest;
- ✓ The Graduation Project - Solution (GP3), Implementation (GP4) and Log & Reflection (GP5) needs to be submitted by early June at the latest.

N.B.: these deliverables will only be considered for assessment when the student has met the requirements to participate in the final assessment of the graduation project (see 3.2 above).

The first two assessments (GP1 and GP2) consist only of a written part, the final assessment (GP3/4/5) consists of written and an oral part. The oral part will be scheduled provisionally within 4 weeks after the submission deadline, at the latest. At least 1 week before the scheduled oral defence the student will be notified whether the written part shows enough potential for the assessment (written & oral) to be a sufficient and, subsequently, for the oral defence to proceed.

*N.B.: being allowed into the oral assessment is **NOT** a guarantee that you will pass the assessment! It just means the examiner sees enough potential for a passing grade in the written documents.*

After the oral defence - and receiving passing grades for all 5 parts of the graduation project - the student needs to submit proof of the oral defence in order to officially finalise the project. The Graduation Project - Oral Defence deliverables need to be submitted as soon as possible in order for the graduation supervisor to check their compliance and then start the official degree certification process.

5.2 Assessment Criteria

The detailed assessment criteria (rubrics) will be published online at the start of the academic year. Overall the Graduation Project will be assessed based on the following deliverables and assessment categories:

1) Graduation Project Plan

Assessment format Individual assessment in which you describe your graduation assignment and client, and the research and project design. The project plan will be assessed by relevant experts on grad tracks, research and project management.	Assessment criteria 1) <i>The assignment</i> a. Formulates an innovative consultancy assignment that fits his own chosen graduation track to showcase his readiness for the profession 2) <i>Research design</i> a. Develops an appropriate research plan for the task at hand 3) <i>Project design</i> a. Constructs a relevant project plan that is feasible within the available time frame and with the available resources
Assessment deliverables A) A Graduation Project Plan outlining and explaining your assignment and commissioning client, the research necessary to develop a solution and necessary activities, planning and parties involved; B) Evidence of approval Assignment (by graduation track aligner); C) Evidence of all credits and grades received (see appendix 4 for progression rules).	

2) Graduation Project - Research Report

Assessment format Individual assessment in which you present the research you conducted for your graduation project. The assessment consists of a written report which will be assessed by the research expert.	Assessment criteria 1) <i>Data collection</i> a. Collects data in an uncontrolled setting 2) <i>Data analysis</i> a. Analyses the data collected in order to find answers to his questions 3) <i>Conclusions and recommendations</i> a. Defines specs and criteria for the solution(s) to be developed based in the data analysis 4) <i>Presentation of the research</i> a. Presents his research in an appropriate manner for knowledgeable people and lay-men
Assessment deliverables A) A Research Report presenting the research conducted and the results following an accepted standard for presenting applied research.	

3) Graduation Project - Solution

Assessment format Individual assessment in which you present the innovative solution you developed during your graduation project.	Assessment criteria <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Tangible / conceptual solution</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develops a tangible/conceptual solution for the problem identified 2) <i>Approach</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conducts an appropriate process that leads to the development of the solution 3) <i>Business case</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develops a business case for the selected solution, assessing the industry and market attractiveness and the financial feasibility
Assessment deliverables <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A) A Business Case for the innovative solution, based on which the decision makers at the client company can decide to implement the solution (or not); B) A Working Prototype of the innovative solution which allows your target audience to fully experience the solution; C) A Log of the development of the innovative solution (created for the Graduation Project - Log & Reflection) that makes your innovative solution development process insightful; D) An Oral Defence Session of 45 mins with your examiner and your graduation supervisor (and whoever you decide to invite to the session) during which you present the highlights of your solution, your implementation process and your reflection (max 25 minutes in total), and your examiner can ask questions (approx. 20 mins). * this is the same defence session as described in the Graduation Project - Implementation and Graduation Project - Log & Reflection assessment. 	

4) Graduation Project - Implementation

Assessment format Individual assessment to determine your ability to (partially) implement an innovative solution of your own design without the commissioning client organisation.	Assessment criteria <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Implementation activities</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Executes an innovation implementation process that leads to complete and valid results 2) <i>Getting buy-in from stakeholders</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Organises buy-in/commitment from the organisation and stakeholders
Assessment deliverables <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A) A Job Appraisal by the commissioning client of your graduation project,. B) A Log of the implementation of the innovative solution (created for the Graduation Project - Log & Reflection) that makes your implementation process insightful. C) An Implementation Plan. In case you are not able to fully implement your innovative solution this additional deliverable is required. D) An Oral Defence Session of 45 mins with your examiner and your graduation supervisor (and whoever you decide to invite to the session) during which you present the highlights of your solution, your implementation process and your reflection (max 25 minutes in total), and your examiner can ask questions (approx. 20 mins). * this is the same defence session as described in the Graduation Project - Solution and Graduation Project - Log & Reflection assessment. 	

5) Graduation Project - Log & Reflection

Assessment format Individual assessment in which you make your innovative solution development and implementation process insightful. We should be able to see your iterations, different types of prototypes, train of thoughts and decisions along the way (with justifications). We urge you to build this log while you work rather than constructing it in hindsight.	Assessment criteria 1) <i>Monitoring process and progress</i> a. Monitors, validates and reflects on his actions, reasoning, and results during the execution of his graduation project 2) <i>Projection for the future</i> a. Paints a credible picture of what his future (in terms of career) looks like and sells himself as a junior professional innovator
Assessment deliverables A) A Log of the development and implementation of the innovative solution that makes your process insightful. We should be able to see the steps you took and decisions you made along the way, for what reason and with which result, with justifications; B) An Oral Defence Session of 45 mins with your examiner and your graduation supervisor (and whoever you decide to invite to the session) during which you present the highlights of your solution, your implementation process and your reflection (max 25 minutes in total), and your examiner can ask questions (approx. 20 mins). Prepare to (convincingly) present your personal value proposition during this defence session and argue your readiness to graduate. * this is the same defence session as described in the Graduation Project - Solution and Graduation Project - Implementation assessment; C) Evidence of all credits and grades received (see appendix 4 for progression rules).	

6) Graduation Project - Oral Defence

Assessment format Pass/Fail for submitting requested deliverables.	Assessment criteria Format and content of the deliverables are as described.
Assessment deliverables A) A Poster (max. A3 size) that announces the oral defence session of your Graduation Project. The information on the poster should including the title of your project, your name, student number and Inholland email address, and the date, time and the location of the oral defence; B) The Presentation (slides) that was used during the oral defence; C) A Video of the presentation (approx. 45 min.) covering the presentation and the Q&A with assessors.	

KNOCK OUT CRITERION for GP1, GP2, GP3, GP4 and GP5: all written deliverables should include the mandatory *GP cover page* clearly stating the details of the student, the details of the document and for which graduation assessment.

5.3 Resit information

Officially, BI offers two chances for assessment of each study unit within an academic year. If a study unit is not passed after the second chance, the student can apply for an extra (third) change by contacting the Graduation Coordinator.

As the graduation project is the final part of the programme, however, waiting for the next academic year means the student has no study activities in the meantime and the student incurs an unnecessary long study delay. Hence, for the components of the Graduation Project the BI Exam Board can grant a student more than three chances within the academic year, depending

on the situation and the severity of the (reasons for the) insufficient score. It is the student's responsibility to apply for extra resit possibilities through the Exam Board.

*N.B.: this deviation from the normal assessment regulation **ONLY** applies to the Graduation Project. It does not apply to any study unit not passed prior to the graduation project which is part of the threshold to be allowed to participate in the graduation project.*

For missing ECs of other study units the student can request the Exam Board for an early resit based on the final course regulation (article 101, 102 TER) but only if they have already obtained at least 200 ECs (excluding ECs obtained for Graduation Project assessments). In order to be able to appeal to this final examination regulation, students must have participated in all examination possibilities offered in the current academic year and the examination must not be offered in the next regular examination period. A student may request the Exam Board to take the test in question in the next regular exam period. Students are not entitled to this test opportunity if they did not, or insufficiently, make use of previously offered test opportunities, and this is due, to a decisive degree, to the student themselves.

6 Miscellaneous procedural items

Please check with the Inholland Amsterdam International Office for any work permit regulations, subsidies, grants, insurance and social security issues that might be applicable to your graduation project.

Be advised that being paid for your graduation project work by your commissioning client officially turns the project into work, for which you may need a work permit.

In general, it is the student's own responsibility to make agreements with the commissioning client. If the commissioning client company requires assurance that any person at BI who sees the student's graduation project work in their professional capacity will not disclose any of the information about the company acquired through this work, the student should tick the box "embargo allowed" when uploading deliverables to GradeWork. BI will not sign any NDA's or non-disclosure agreements. Students should be careful signing any NDA or non-disclosure agreement; these may contain restrictions regarding the student's intellectual property and could impede on the assessment of the student's graduation project.

Appendix 1: BI Meta-skills and descriptor level Junior Innovation Professional

1) DEFINE

The BI graduate defines – uncovers – the right problem to solve or opportunity to pursue and frames it in a way that invites creative solutions. Their starting point can be an issue that's already been identified such as a decrease in sales, poorly performing employees, disruptors entering the market, rise in customer complaints, technological developments, gap in own knowledge or skills etc.. It can also be the discovery of a development, issue or opportunity through alertness and scrutiny of the environment (macro and micro) or just a 'hunch'. The Business Innovator collects problem-related knowledge to define the scope of the 'problem': contextual information, environmental information, historical information, information regarding the end user and (business constraints), on an international scale. They apply multiple perspectives and empathic skills to their observations, questionings and investigations, continuously suspending judgment. They watch how people or end users behave and interact with their environment, with others, with products and services. They also observe physical spaces and places in order to identify contextual and environmental factors that shape user experience. They engage with and listen carefully to people in order to determine the end users' (hidden) needs, underlying motivations, beliefs, values, preferences and aversions.

Key activities

- ✓ Generate ideas / possible solutions / thoughts (intuitively);
- ✓ Finding data (follow hunches, intuition, chance encounters, serendipity);
- ✓ Collecting data (desk research, observing, scrutinising, questioning, interviewing (experimental) investigation, associating, data mining, crowd sourcing);
- ✓ Processing data in useful formats (categorising, filtering, validating and tagging with metadata);
- ✓ Making sense of data (prioritising, synthesising, mapping, analysing, evaluating, making connections, iterating);
- ✓ Distilling insights from data (hypothesising, testing insights against existing knowledge, iterating);
- ✓ Translating insights into actionables that are easily accessible for stakeholders and immediately useful for the design stage (extrapolating initial design concepts / solution paths to work on / key performance indicators / success factors).

Descriptors Junior Innovation Professional level

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predicts possible future issues, challenges and opportunities for various contexts at micro, meso and macro level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infers future trends and developments on his own
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively seeks new knowledge and information in a wide scope / area around their own field of expertise / study Generates original ideas and vision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigates their own ideas / hunches / intuitions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designs own multifaceted (big) data collection, processing and analysis methods Collects / assemble data in an uncontrolled setting Finds source material for ideas and data in a wide variety of media, people and events within and (far) outside the field of study
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produces and evaluates a number of (original / unconventional) approaches, considering the immediate, the short, the medium and the long term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constructs actionables for dealing with the future issues, challenges and opportunities that are immediately useful for the design stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defines better approaches to the way things are currently being done (generating change)

• Actively looks for other applications of ideas / solutions that didn't fit the bill
• Constantly curates information / ideas actively, using a sophisticated system that allows them to file and share
• Transfers and rearranges knowledge

2) DESIGN

The International Business Innovator develops ethically sound solutions that can better meet the end users' needs and that generate value for the end users. These solutions can take the form of concepts, products, services, strategies, business model, processes, a whole business (department) or their own learning process, depending on the problem that is in need of a solution. Based on a meaningful and actionable problem statement, the BI graduate generates a vast variety of ideas on possible solution paths in collaboration with others (multidisciplinary). They have a large number of creative techniques at their disposal which they can use flexibly. In a constantly iterative process, the Business Innovator combines, expands and refines ideas, eventually bringing the most useful ones to a more detailed level, visualising and objectifying them. They are comfortable with experimentation and trial-and-error ways of working. The BI graduate is capable of developing a schedule, HR-planning, budget / funding approaches and work methods that fit the (unpredictable innovation) process.

Key activities

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| ✓ Brainstorming; | ✓ Experimenting; |
| ✓ Imaging; | ✓ Modelling; |
| ✓ Analogising; | ✓ Planning; |
| ✓ Pivoting; | ✓ Writing, visualising; |
| ✓ Scenario building; | ✓ Iterating; |
| ✓ Prototyping; | ✓ Convincing, enthusing. |

Descriptors Junior Innovation Professional level

• Constantly organises and reorganises ideas into different, original and unconventional, categories and combinations and then evaluates whether the results are interesting, new or helpful
• Makes good decisions based on a large number of unknowns
• Generates a vast amount of original ideas / solutions in many iterations (considers many options / alternatives)
• Pushes for the widest possible range of ideas
• Uncovers unexpected areas of exploration
• Develops appropriate brainstorming techniques for themselves and large or small teams
• Generates ways to make ideas / solutions ethically sound
• Develops specs and criteria for the assessment of ideas and solutions
• Develops a business (implementation) plan for selected ideas / solutions
• Harnesses the collective perspectives and strengths of the team
• Focuses on the immediate short, medium and long term simultaneously
• Creates a large number of various simple and sophisticated prototypes / representations of ideas / solutions that allow stakeholders to experience them fully
• Designs his own graduation project
• Develops tangible and conceptual solutions (product, service, strategy, process, concepts, business model, business/department)

3) EXECUTE

The BI graduate executes a variety of (specialist) activities as part of the running business. For instance, activities can include sales / customer relationship activities, purchasing, preparing (job) advertisements, conducting job interviews, preparing financial reports, producing a corporate brochure / website, conducting training sessions, dealing with suppliers and manufacturers (also abroad), performing tasks in a (international) project, doing financial calculations, dealing with the press etc. They implement and execute the designed concepts,

products, services, experiences, business model, processes, strategy, business and/or department, as well as their own learning process. This implementation goes beyond writing implementation plans. They actually perform the tasks involved in the implementation, by themselves or in a team, but always in-context; as part of the bigger whole of the organisation or department and with attention to detail and legal aspects. They are capable (and willing) to work in accordance with plans, budgets and methods, but also knows when deviating from them is called for and has the courage to come up with new methods 'on the fly' if necessary. Networking, collaborating, negotiating and communicating, across departmental, organisational and national boundaries and cultures, are a crucial part of their daily activities. They are aware of the importance and relevance of their activities for the larger whole of the organisation (mission, strategy, goals, operations) and can navigate this interdependency. Their clear understanding of what customers, vendors and suppliers want is apparent in all his actions. They have a very strong and keen sense of timing and most favourable execution methods in any given situation; they are a master at aligning market developments, technological developments and products.

Key activities

- ✓ Generating all aspects of the business case;
- ✓ Executing / implementing the business case / plans / ideas;
- ✓ Set up and work according to a budget;
- ✓ Performing tasks and activities derived from the business case / plans (marketing, sales, HR, purchasing, finance, etc.);
- ✓ Acquiring (financial) support;
- ✓ Dealing with stakeholders (meetings) / stakeholder management;
- ✓ Deploy key performance indicators;
- ✓ Facilitating meetings / learning / solution generation.

Descriptors Junior Innovation Professional level

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performs necessary changeable specialist tasks in conjunction with other people's tasks successfully, using the full scope of his knowledge base (which is deeper and broader than at the previous level)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performs his tasks rapidly with fully practiced, internalised and integrated skill, unsupported by aids
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deals with a large number of simultaneous cues to attend to in the performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employs case-based, abductive reasoning in his approach / decision regarding the task and his performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performs his tasks from analytical, quasi-rational and intuitive thinking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions effectively in small, medium sized and large physical and virtual interdisciplinary / cross-disciplinary teams, also when loosely connected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-creates new (adapted) knowledge and methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performs 'on the go' (without action plans or lists)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a variety of formal and informal decision making strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopts whatever aids are needed to assist decision making
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates directly, purposefully, clear and well-organised about relevant topics with specialists and lay-man
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is fully aware of the significance of their tasks and performance within the whole of the organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrates the execution of their learning plan with their tasks and daily activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works effectively and efficiently under stress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibits a strong (legitimate) self-confidence when performing tasks

4) LEARN

The Business Innovator continuously monitors their (learning) actions, activities and results. They don't wait until a process, task or activity is finished to evaluate it, but reflects on the

appropriateness, efficiency and effectiveness before, during and after performing them. In their evaluation they take the bigger picture into consideration; actions and results that are good at the micro-level might not be for the organisation as a whole. They are able to assess actions and results in the here and now as well as their 'fit' with the future that was envisioned. They are very familiar with iteration; they know that the 'right' or 'best' answer hardly ever presents itself the first time around, but that they arrive at an answer by continuously analysing, evaluating, testing and reflecting and by sparring with others. They are aware of the fact that sometimes one needs to adjust to the context and sometimes one needs to adjust the context itself. The BI graduate uses analysis as well as his common sense and the 'wisdom of the crowd' to evaluate and assess ideas, concepts, products, actions, services, processes, strategies. They are willing to fail and learn important lessons from his failures.

Key activities

- ✓ Collecting evaluative data
(questioning, observing, tracking, associating, monitoring, testing, measuring);
- ✓ Analysing;
- ✓ Assessing;
- ✓ Critiquing;
- ✓ Reflecting (pre-action, in action and post-action).

Descriptors Junior Innovation Professional level

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects on the value of (his) ideas / hunches / intuitions for multiple stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shapes his working environment in such a way that they can maximise his strengths, intrinsic motivations (drivers), preferred styles, knacks, and most fitting innovation styles • Identifies what contributions they can bring to the team table and participates accordingly • Does not hesitate to manifest themselves / take the lead when appropriate, but also accepts a more subdued follower role when appropriate (adjusts) • Takes on different roles when needed • Deconstructs their own thinking and acting in order to identify possible blind spots and biases • Switches perspectives in their reasoning • Actively constructs situations / environments in which their brain works best, they come up with ideas, they can think best (creates 'island of self')
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predicts the quality of products / services/ processes / ideas/ solutions based on specs and their own (justified) sense of value added and quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrates a vast array of subjects and disciplines and judges their value for the issue at hand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects on the value of the (creative) work of others appreciatively • Recognises (partially) good ideas when they encounter them
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks for / creates evidence to validate and invalidate proposals • Questions in different kinds of ways
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises the importance of a deep knowledge base and continually looks to learn new things
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employs abductive reasoning (transferring knowledge from other domains) when not sure how to proceed and uses debugging strategies when things go wrong
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects on the process and effects of their own activities, pre- and in-action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides their own scaffolding when needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates learning opportunities for themselves • Views mistakes as learning opportunities • Organises their own motivation • Believes it is unacceptable not to learn • Organises continuous feedback loops with all kinds of people

5) LEAD

The BI graduate has profound knowledge of how business works. In general terms like business, management & organisation theory, as well as specific terms like the business the organisation is in. The BI graduate also understands what customers, vendors and suppliers want. They manage people, action, information and themselves, whether in a managing position or not. They

motivate the people in their multicultural and multidisciplinary team to do the best job they are capable of doing. They are an effective teacher / coach to their team members and knows how to push the right buttons on everyone to make them want to perform at their best and achieve goals. They lead and perform by example. They are capable of taking on different roles in a team; leading in some instances and being lead in others, actively taking part in different stages of the innovation process. The Business Innovator is an effective communicator: selecting what information to share in which way, explaining what they and the organisation want in ways that make sense to employees. They also really listens to their team members. They are not afraid of asking for or even demanding input, commitment and effort from their people and manages conflicts in an appropriate and respectful way. They recognise the difference between where the team is and where it is going and make decisions accordingly: planning, prioritising and facilitating the execution of necessary actions by their team. The BI graduate understands their own needs and characteristics, the needs of the organisation / team and the needs and characteristics of each employee / team member. They represents their team and their needs with higher management and manages expectations both ways. They are capable of dealing with the integration of huge amounts of information and performing 'on the run'. They have the stamina and resilience to deal with failure, resistance, delays and postponements. They stay fit and adopts stress-reduction strategies to cope with the pressures of their job.

Key activities

- ✓ Motivating / Inspiring;
- ✓ Coaching / Mentoring;
- ✓ Conflict handling;
- ✓ Communicating & Listening;
- ✓ Meta-planning, strategic planning;
- ✓ Organising buy-in / commitment from all levels of the organisation;
- ✓ Monitoring performance;
- ✓ Curating.

Descriptors Junior Innovation Professional level

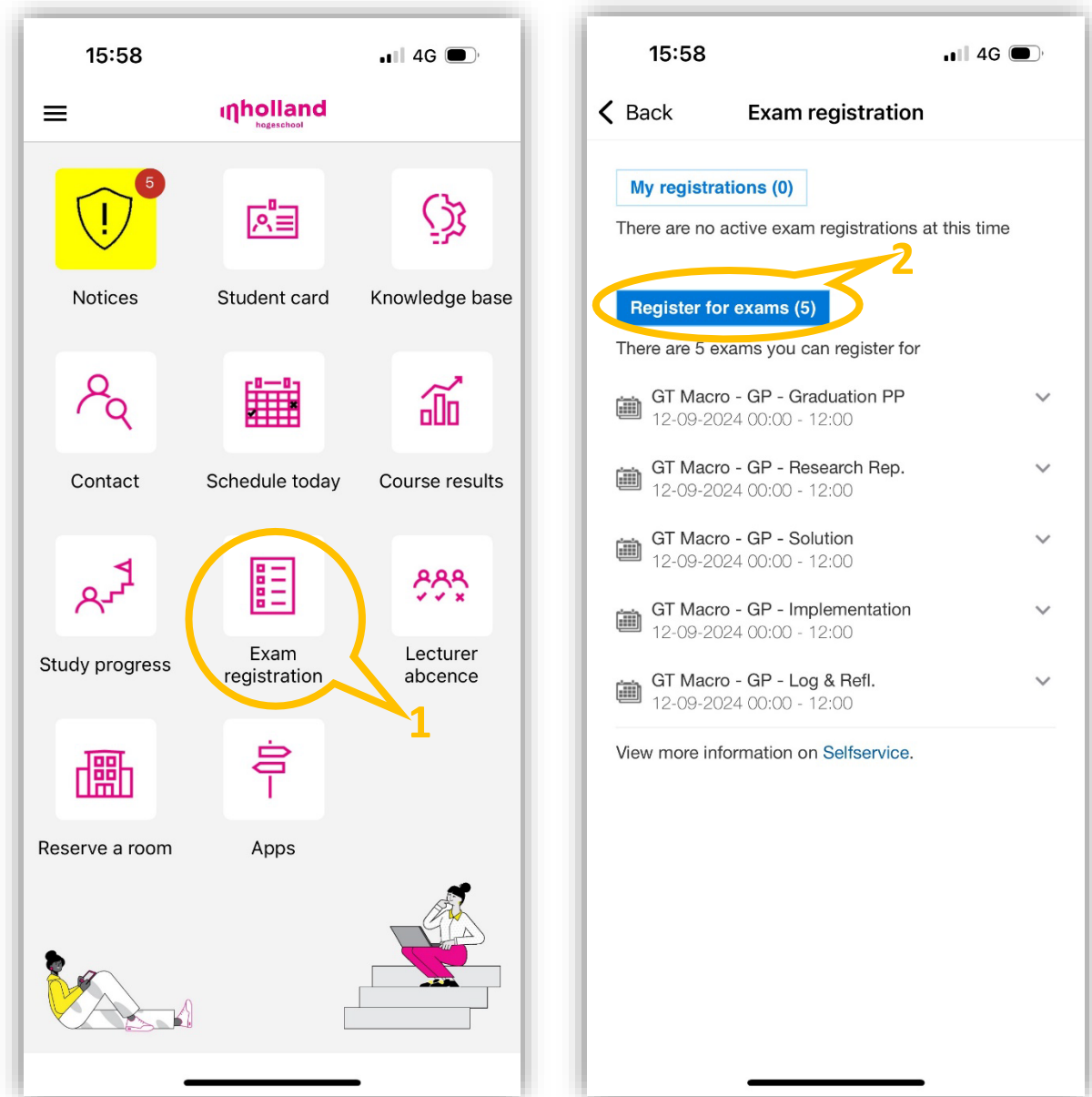
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embraces misunderstandings within the team and adds constraints to the process / solution to create a team capacity for developing better approaches for challenging the way things are currently being done Harnesses individual and collective knowledge, perspectives and strengths within the team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaches and mentors peers and less experienced students and accepts coaching and mentoring from others Manages people, actions, information and themselves Balances their own needs with those of the team / organisation effectively
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surrounds their team with inspiring related materials (curation) Has a broad and deep personal database of own knowledge, organised around core concepts or 'big ideas' that guide his thinking about his domain Continuously constructs new knowledge by adding to that database and making new connections (micro, meso, macro)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organises buy-in / commitment from all levels of the organisation and all stakeholder groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes good decisions based on a limited number of known facts / information utilising their vast database of knowledge and understanding and professional intuition / improvisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes a climate that allows for effective (team) developments and generation of work products and ideas with shared accountability for the goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages (engages) others to express themselves, verbally or non-verbally to them
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates with real voice, clearly and concisely, creating focus, energy and passion, 'commanding' respect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considers and incorporates the interests of the team, the organisation, stakeholders and society in their decisions and actions (strategic thinking)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Navigates 'politics' smoothly and consciously (anticipates and acts)

Appendix 2: BI staff involved in Graduation Projects.

Graduation coordinator	Rob Mulder
Graduation track aligners	Macro: Jojanneke Hendriks Micro: Rob Mulder
Assessors GP1 - Graduation Project Plan	Assignment: Rob Mulder Jojanneke Hendriks John Clancy Research design: Dan Diojdescu John Clancy Aline Alonso Project design: Rob Mulder Elena Messiou
Assessors GP2 - Graduation Project - Research Report	Dan Diojdescu John Clancy Aline Alonso
Graduation supervisors and examiners GP3 - Graduation Project - Solution GP4 - Graduation Project - Implementation GP5 - Graduation Project - Log & Reflection	John Clancy Dan Diojdescu Marette Ebert Tom Parry Edwin van der Sleen Koen Klokgieters Elles van Asseldonk
GradeWork coordinator	Rose Underwood Wickings

Appendix 3: Register for Graduation Project assessments

Registering need to be done through the ned Inholland IRIS app.



Appendix 4: Progression rules 2022-2023

In order to hand in the Graduation Project Plan (GP1) students need to have obtained:

- all credits of year 1;
- all credits of year 2;
- all 20 credits of the year 3 core programme;
- all 30 credits of the work placement.

In order to start with the Graduation Project Research (GP2) students need to have passed GP1.

In order to start with the Graduation Project Solution (GP3) students need to have passed GP2.

In order to hand in the final assessments of the Graduation Project (GP3/4/5) students need to have obtained:

- all credits of year 1;
- all credits of year 2;
- all credits of year 3;
- 42 credits of year 4.



**"If you can imagine it, you can achieve it;
if you can dream it, you can become it."**

–William Arthur Ward