

## Profile of the excellent professional

### Introduction

Students want to be challenged. They want influence over how they learn. They want to develop their talents. They want to stand out and are prepared to make an extra effort to achieve this. Universities of professional education give these motivated students the opportunity to take on this challenge through their excellence and honours programmes. These offer excellent students the opportunity to develop into excellent professionals.

### The excellent professional

Employers need professionals who are willing and able to break new ground and who can combine knowledge from different disciplines to tackle complex issues, possibly international in scope, and explore potential new solutions. Tomorrow's problems are not going to be any simpler. Feasible and practical solutions will be needed that address complexity and are based on an understanding of the underlying disciplines. Issues must be considered as a whole, which is a complex challenge in itself. Solving these types of issues within their social context requires a multidisciplinary and context-rich approach, effective communication and reliable execution.

The universities of applied science in the Sirius programme agree on the outlines of this profile of the excellent professional, but each university works out the details of this profile in its own distinctive way, based on specific competences and qualities.

### The excellent student

Students that fit this profile take a broader view of their studies and seek to develop their disciplinary and multidisciplinary skills. They see complexity as a challenge, take the initiative and explore multidisciplinary approaches to arrive at creative and innovative solutions. They are not troubled by disciplinary boundaries and international borders, study programmes, professions or cultural differences. They are motivated, independent, effective, knowledgeable and inquisitive in their specialist field, and respect the input of professionals from other disciplines. They learn to work on complex issues and make their own expertise available; they are resourceful, creative, ambitious, determined, critical and self-managing. With these attributes they can tackle complex issues in a multidisciplinary working environment.

### Challenging programmes

Universities of applied science offer challenging programmes that offer students a choice of activities and opportunities to develop their potential. These are special programmes with a good balance between structure and freedom of choice. It is important that the students themselves take the initiative, driven by their intrinsic motivation, consideration of their chosen topic, and their own performance and personal development: what is the importance of this issue, do I have the right tools to do something about it, do I know who else to bring in and will we be able to come up with a possible solution?

### Teacher and community

These excellent students need teachers who give them room to express themselves, who have an eye for their personal development, coach them and ask questions that help them to reflect and make progress, who are a source of inspiration and a role model, and are genuinely interested in working with ambitious and motivated students. This teamwork is supported by a stimulating community which gives students and teachers the opportunity to tackle this challenge together. Young talent is given room to develop in an environment in which it is recognised and acknowledged. The excellent student can develop into an excellent professional.

## **Manifesto**

### **Learning is a personal journey**

*Encourage students to find their personal drive and help them discover and channel their passions. Create space for curiosity and ambition, but also for chance, as this can lead to new, unexpected insights. Offer students a community in which they can work together and in which they can inspire one another.*

### **Play a role in society**

*Give students the opportunity to learn and at the same time make a contribution to society. Teach them to recognise social challenges, to investigate these and work towards solutions. In this way, excellence programmes contribute to the moulding of responsible citizens who feel involved in society and are able to contribute.*

### **Talent development starts with the lecturer/ teacher**

*Enable lecturers to discover talent and allow it to blossom and give the lecturer the professional scope needed to do so. The open, innovative nature of excellence programmes requires a didactics of excellence that stimulates students to discover their passions. The demands made of lecturers in this are great. Dare to pick a didactic method that promotes broad development. The development of talent among lecturers is also part of the development of excellence..*

### **Retaining excellence programmes as a hotbed of innovation**

*Use excellence programmes to experiment with new forms of education. Cherish this space and ensure that students and lecturers continue to retain this freedom of movement. Avoid ring-fenced teaching programmes. Ensure good links to the standard teaching programmes, so that the education can benefit from these experiments and this innovation as a whole.*

### **Talent in primary education becomes excellence in higher education**

*Retain and develop the learning networks that have arisen between higher education institutions within the Sirius Programme. Organise the cooperation within the educational chain (primary education, secondary education, intermediate professional education, higher professional education, university education), so that better connections can be made between educational sectors in relation to excellence, thereby creating an inspirational culture of education.*

### **Work with employers to offer challenging learning environments**

*Make it possible for students to learn in realistic contexts. To this end, involve the professional field intensively in excellence programmes and ensure that students can observe, take part and contribute in the working environment to solutions for issues that have an impact on employers and top sectors.*

### **Alumni are educational capital**

*Ensure that graduates of excellence programmes continue to feel affiliated to their programme. Based on their experiences, they will be able to relate what the added value of excellence has meant to their development as a professional and act as role models for new students. Honours alumni are the ambassadors of excellence.*

## Workshop Excellence in Dutch Education

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1. Who are we?
2. What is Excellence in education?
3. The Manifesto: Seven statements on Excellence in Dutch Higher Education
4. Work to do:
  - a. Choose one of the statements or use Excellence as a whole
  - b. How does this fit in your situation?
  - c. Use your own unique talent to answer this question: make a drawing, a story, a project, a song, an image
5. Share your experience with us all

Interesting sites

<http://www.siriusprogramma.nl/english>

<http://www.siriusprogramma.nl/publicaties/talent-development-in-european-higher-education#.VSOVivmsV1Y>

<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1243411429/ons-boekje-van-eigen-deeg>

[http://issuu.com/thinkglobalactlocal/docs/icsd\\_magazine2015](http://issuu.com/thinkglobalactlocal/docs/icsd_magazine2015)