



Hogeschool

VHL

University of Applied Sciences



VHL University of Applied Sciences

Summary of the Annual Report 2014

Sustainably on course

Foreword by the Executive Board

Sustainably on course

Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences (VHL) pushed many boundaries in 2014. New policy was drawn up on the basis of the Institutional Plan 2014-2017 and the implementation of this policy is in full swing. Necessary changes to the control and organisation of our university of applied sciences are being and will be made expeditiously. All with the aim of making optimal use of VHL's qualities and becoming the greenest university of applied sciences in the Netherlands. As the Executive Board, we welcome the results to date and the commitment of our staff. We are confident that the efforts of 2014 will pay off in the coming years.

VHL can look back on a number of pleasing results in 2014. Our domains and staff departments are being transformed into teams with accountability for their own results. This will be implemented further in 2015.

Study programmes, Applied Research Centres and staff teams are now part of a domain or staff directorate. This change visibly reinforces the cooperation within a domain due to the integral management of teaching and research. Integral management and responsibilities that are assigned at a low level within the organisation make us, as a university of applied sciences, decisive and externally-oriented. These organisational adjustments mean we are sustainably on course to an even better future. Everything is geared towards achieving the goals set out in the Institutional Plan 2014-2017 within the next three years. The positive results of the additional educational assessments and the positive opinion of the Review Committee regarding the midterm review of the Performance Commitments 2012-2015 are confirmation that we are on the right track.

As the Executive Board, we look back with satisfaction at 2014. Once again, our staff members have shown that they are motivated professionals, passionately working towards improving education, research and our external relationships. We are confident that the organisation as a whole is able to successfully face the challenges of 2015.

For the full Annual Report 2014 (in Dutch) and Annual Accounts 2014 (in Dutch), please refer to: <http://www.hogeschoolvhl.nl/Organisatie/Jaarverslag.aspx>.

Dr. P.C.A. van Dongen

Chair of the Executive Board

Dr. A.C. Keizer-Mastenbroek

Member of the Executive Board



Award-winning publication

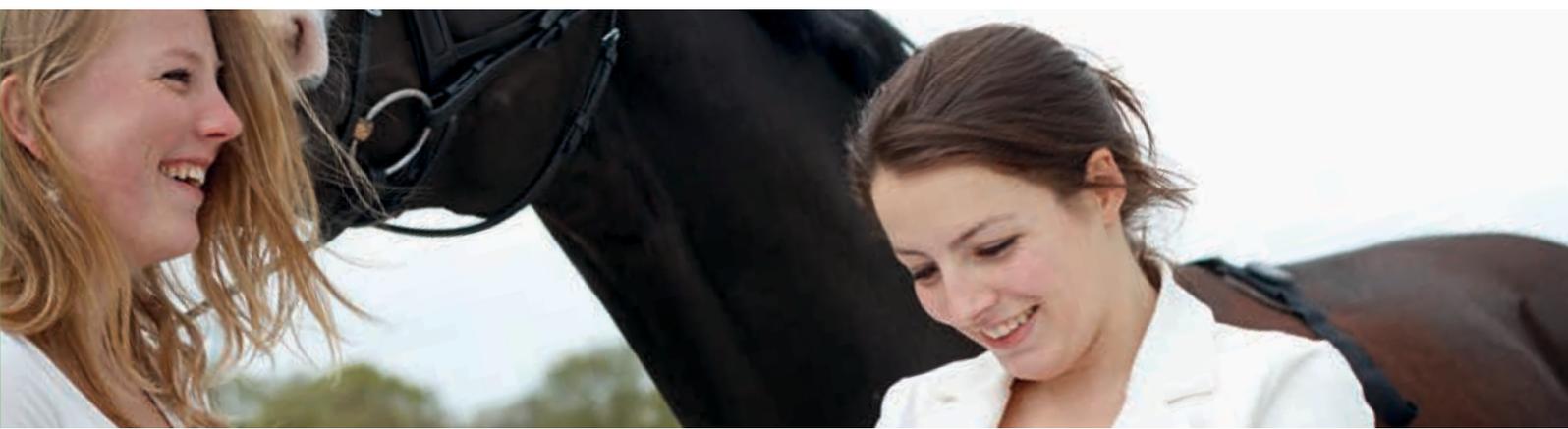
Marije Strikwold has won awards for a publication on an alternative method for determining the in vivo toxicity of substances. Marije is a PhD candidate in the Toxicology Department of Wageningen UR and a lecturer of toxicology in Life Sciences and Technology at VHL. During the annual meeting of the American Society of Toxicology (SOT) in Phoenix (USA), Marije Strikwold and her co-authors received an award for their publication 'Combining in vitro-embryotoxicity data with physiologically based kinetic (PBK) modelling to define in vivo dose-response curves for developmental toxicity of phenol in rat and human'.

Table of contents

Foreword by the Executive Board	2
Table of contents	3
Strategic priority areas	5
Key facts	6
Students	6
Staff	6
Financial	6
Quality	9
Accreditations	9
Dutch Guide to Higher Education 2015	9
National Student Survey (NSE)	9
External research evaluations	9
Performance indicator results	10
Professionalisation	12
Sustainability	15

Doctoral grant for Tanzania research

Koos Kingma, a lecturer in the Development Studies Team, obtained a grant for teaching staff from the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) in 2014. He earned the NWO grant on the basis of his research plan 'Pathways of Change - Interplay of rural livelihoods, gender and policies during the last 25 years in Tanzania'. The research builds on two previous studies and creates the opportunity to describe 25 years of development. VHL lecturer Kingma obtained the doctoral grant after three selection rounds. Of the 166 hopefuls, 37 applications were ultimately awarded a grant.





Sustainable direction for VHL creates focus

Enthusiasm for nature

The Larenstein Estate, the home base of VHL in Velp, is actively used for sharing and spreading knowledge. One particularly nice example of this is the 2014 hunt for pupils of De Kameleon primary school in Westervoort, organised by VHL students from the Forest and Nature Management study programme. The children were divided into groups of four and five and asked to temporarily take over the work of the forester on the Larenstein Estate. Together with our students, the pupils tracked down two 'new inhabitants' of the estate. VHL aims to make children enthusiastic about nature with the hunt.

Strategic priority areas

In our vision, as adopted in the Institutional Plan 2014-2017, VHL has opted for a clear profile. This sets us apart, qualitatively and substantively, from other universities of applied sciences.

The profile, as determined on the basis of an environmental analysis, has three interrelated priority areas, which are simultaneously the three domains within our university:

- Animals and Business
- Delta Areas and Resources
- Food and Dairy.

We aim to use these priority areas to contribute towards the development of a sustainable society, in which there is a balance among three aspects: people, the planet and profit. VHL firmly throws down the gauntlet to be the most sustainable university of applied sciences in the Netherlands.

Promoting biodiversity in one's own environment

The Citizens & Biodiversity Knowledge Centre (KBB) contributes towards education and research. The knowledge centre was established at VHL Leeuwarden with the aim of promoting civic participation in retaining and increasing biodiversity in one's own environment. Cooperation, knowledge-sharing and civic involvement are all key in this regard. Two examples:

The 'Bees in Leeuwarden' project is a long-term monitoring study initiated by the Citizens & Biodiversity Knowledge Centre (KBB). By means of this study, the commissioning authority, the municipality of Leeuwarden, wishes to identify the annual variation in the numbers and types of bees and determine the effect of bee-friendly measures. Bee biodiversity is monitored in different urban habitats with the help of logs and nest boxes as nesting opportunities for the bees. These urban habitats include botanical gardens, allotments, neighbourhood green areas, parks, fallow land and roadsides.

Three years ago the Animal Management course at VHL and KBB started research on a common tern colony that was breeding on roofs in Leeuwarden. The colony was monitored day and night with the help of a remote controlled camera. Live images were shown on the KBB website during the breeding season. The research is mostly directed at the breeding success of the common tern colony in relation to the total Dutch population. VHL students focus mainly in this research on what the common tern eats and where the food comes from.



Key facts

Students

The student population at VHL numbered 4,182 in 2014. The key indicators and results of various measurements reveal positive developments in a number of areas. The number of graduates has increased in relation to 2013. The intake of first-year students dropped slightly in 2014 compared to 2013, which was a record year. However, the underlying trend is still positive in relation to the intakes for 2012 and 2011.

	2014	2013	2012
Students (total on 1 October 2014, excluding Master's programmes)	4.182	4.162	4.013
Intake	1.290	1.393	1.155
Graduates	676	529	714
Foreign students	377	455	420

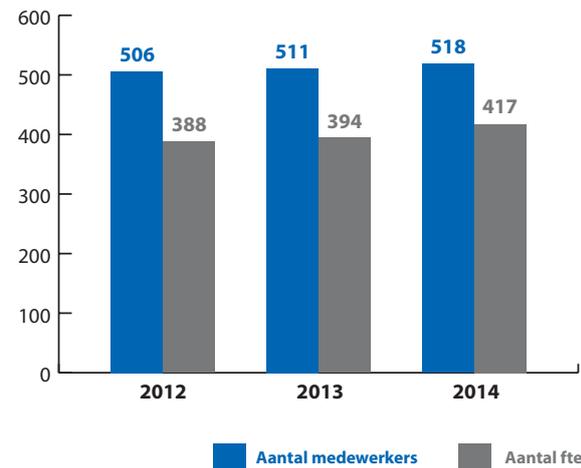
Financial

Over the last three years, there have been positive developments in relation to income and the net result, as well as solvency and liquidity ratios.

	2014	2013	2012
Total income (€ x 1.000)	53.690	51.222	50.107
Total expenditure (€ x 1.000)	49.302	48.787	48.670
Net result (€ x 1.000)	4.261	2.213	1.273
Solvency ratio	35,1%	26,6%	23,0%
Liquidity Current ratio	1,0	0,9	0,8

Staff

As a result of becoming independent and the rise in student numbers, the number of VHL employees has also increased.





Underlying trends are positive...

Start-up business: Van Eigen Bodem

A group of second-year Regional Development & Innovation (RDI) students of VHL in Wageningen organised the Kernhem Estate Open Day in Ede, together with other users, on Saturday, 21 June 2014. Their chosen theme was 'Savour the Estate'.

As part of their Social Entrepreneurship module, some students set up a business called Van Eigen Bodem (Home-Grown), aimed at promoting the sale of local products. Soups, salads, savoury and sweet tarts were prepared and sold on the day.

VHL students also arranged the children's programme and cultural activities. Kernhem Estate Open Day was visited by around 1,500 people. The excellent organisation and fine weather contributed towards the success of the day.



Interaction with professional practice is crucial for VHL...

FoodRoofs favelas

The rooftops of Rio de Janeiro's favelas (slums) are going to contribute towards resolving malnutrition. Rob Roggema, a lecturer in Urban agriculture as a municipal design challenge, has developed a system together with VHL students for what are known as 'FoodRoofs'. The aim of the FoodRoofs approach is to provide fruit and vegetables to the impoverished favela dwellers. Since favelas are typically stone houses built closely to each other and covered by a single flat roof, Roggema came up with the idea to make better use of these sunny square metres. The roofs are currently often used for hanging out washing or barbecue parties. In order to promote FoodRoofs, a lightweight system that can be placed on the roof of a house has been specially developed. Quality food can be provided to the favela dwellers through this system and approach. FoodRoofs also contributes towards social cohesion in a neighbourhood. This is an uplifting side effect of striving towards a sustainable future.

Quality

Accreditations

All thirteen VHL study programmes have received a positive overall score for their additional assessments from the panel that oversees these accreditations, the NVAO (Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders). Due to the suspension of the quality care institutional review, the additional assessment was necessary for the thirteen study programmes that had previously received accreditation for a limited number of modules.

Dutch Guide to Higher Education 2015

The Dutch Guide to Higher Education for Full-Time Degree Programmes at Universities of Applied Sciences (published in 2014) has awarded the 'Top Programme' quality seal to two of VHL study programmes: Rural Development at Leeuwarden and the part-time course Environmental Science. In the Earth & Environment category rankings for part-time courses, our study programmes occupy the first four places. The bachelor degree programmes Gardening and Landscaping and Land and Water Management are ranked first and second in the course category Environment & Nature.

The Dutch Guide to Higher Education for Masters Degrees 2014 was also published in 2014. The masters degrees of VHL in Wageningen are 'Top Programmes' according to this guide. With scores of 8.6 and 8.2 respectively, both VHL masters degrees in the area of agriculture and food have been awarded the designation 'Top Programme'. The guide describes the general level of these masters degrees as 'Excellent'.

National Student Survey (NSE)

VHL measures student satisfaction via the National Student Survey (NSE). An important indicator for student appraisal of our university of applied sciences is the response to the question 'How do you find your studies in general?' In 2014, 40.6% of students completed the NSE. The general opinion of the education at VHL has risen slightly from 3.75 in 2013 to 3.76 in 2014 (on a scale from 1-5).

Our university scores highly compared to other institutions in relation to accommodation, work placement experience, group size and scientific skills. VHL students are very satisfied about what they have learnt during their work placements, the work placement mentoring from the company or institution where the student is placed, the accessibility of the institution and the skill 'cooperating with others'.

In 2013, in response to the NSE, VHL selected the prompt publication of timetables as a central priority area. The study programmes and staff departments worked hard on this in 2014 and implemented the adopted measures. It is evident from NSE 2014 that satisfaction regarding the prompt publication of timetables and changes has increased. The results of NSE 2014, the required improvements and the improvement actions that have already been launched have been communicated to and discussed with VHL students.

External research evaluations

Two external research evaluations were performed in 2014. One at the Biobased Economy research group and one at the Coast and Sea research group. In what is referred to as the 'meta-evaluation of these research evaluations', the Netherlands Quality Agency (NQA) concludes that the internal and external cooperative relationships of both research groups were sufficiently relevant, extensive, intensive and sustainable.

NQA also finds, in line with earlier conclusions reached by Hobeon, that there is a large/more than adequate yield for professional practice. NQA also confirms that there is adequate appreciation among students, lecturers, commissioning authorities or clients and other stakeholders for the work and added value of research groups in the context of professional practice. Students and lecturers of the Biobased Economy research group, in particular, are very satisfied about how the research group provides access to their field of work. This coincides with Hobeon earlier conclusion that there is 'a large yield for professional practice'.

The NQA evaluation committees were further satisfied about the contributions of the two research groups Biobased Economy and Coast and Sea to education and training. The research groups and study programmes actually incorporate the knowledge from research projects into the process of educational innovation.

Knowledge development and transfer are specific priorities for all VHL research groups. Although some of the research groups are very closely involved in the development of new learning lines, majors, minors and study units, other VHL research groups must still take significant steps in the right direction. The fact that an ever increasing number of students are participating in the research projects of these groups is positive.

Performance indicator results

The quality of VHL's teaching staff improved again in 2014. The table below shows that the performance commitment made in this regard with the Ministry of Economic Affairs has been met. The indirect costs are mainly under control and the quality of the lecturers' performances show a steady upwards trend.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the indicators related to the criterion 'Study success'. Steps were already taken in 2014 to curb the downward trend in the student dropout rate, the number of students who switch courses and the overall success rate.

Subject	Indicator	VHL Benchmark	2012	2013	2014	VHL Objective for 2015
Success of studies	Loss	30.2%	25.3% <i>Cohort 2011</i>	26.1% <i>Cohort 2012</i>	28.1% <i>Cohort 2013</i>	27,5%
	Switch	2.1%	3.7% <i>Cohort 2011</i>	3.1% <i>Cohort 2012</i>	4.1% <i>Cohort 2013</i>	<5%
	Returns	68.9%	72.7% <i>Cohort 2007</i>	67.1% <i>Cohort 2008</i>	63.5% <i>Cohort 2009</i>	75%
Quality	NSE Quality	3.7	3.72	3.75	3.76	3.8
	Lecturer Quality	68% Ma or PhD	Nb	77.5%	78.6%	75%
Education intensity	Contact hours	19.8 hours per week 712 hours per year	>14 hours	For the greater part >14 hours	For the greater part >14 hours	>14 hours
		Didactic note		93%	95.7%	100%
Indirect Expenditure	Academic Staff/ Education Support Staff (Berenschot A-Indicator)	2.6	2.6	2,9	3,3	2.6
	Overhead per FTE (Berenschot B-Indicator)	€ 22.618	NB.	€ 23.589	€ 21.044	€ 23.975
	Overhead/turnover (Berenschot C-Indicator)	21.4%	NB.	23,5%	21,1%	21.4%

Food from shrimp residue

State Secretary Wilma Mansveld (Infrastructure & the Environment) received a briefcase with sustainable ideas two weeks before the State Opening of Parliament in 2014. The briefcase contained 220 ideas, of which nine had been nominated for awards. One of the nominated projects was 'Health with taste' from the Health, Food & Technology innovation workplace (IWP) in Leeuwarden. It was announced in September 2014 that this project by Feike van der Leij, Health & Food lecturer (and others) had won the Lidl Food Award. The IWP does research on extracting high-quality and healthy food from the residue of the shrimp industry. The Lidl Food Award is one of four awards made during Sustainable Tuesday each year. [In this video](#), Feike explains exactly what the Health, Food & Technology IWP does.



Quality of VHL's teaching staff is steadily growing...

Socially involved students

Six students from the Gardening and Landscaping study programme have produced designs for a watermill at Vosbergen Castle in Heerde (Gelderland) as part of their Modelling and Design (MAD) module. The initiative for this project came from the owners of Vosbergen Castle. They wanted to rebuild the watermill, which had been burnt down in 1872, on the estate.

Representatives from the Province of Gelderland and the Water Board attended the presentation of the designs. Radio Gelderland praised the VHL students' work in a report, not only because of their contribution towards the redevelopment of Vosbergen Castle, but also because of their social involvement.



Professionalisation

In 2014, VHL decided to structure its entire organisation on the basis of teams with accountability for their own results. This structural form assigns responsibility at a low level within the organisation. It moreover gives VHL staff members the opportunity to develop their professionalism to the maximum and really make a contribution towards the joint team results.

VHL staff members are given the opportunity to develop their own expertise further. Training and further education are fully encouraged and facilitated as part of VHL's professionalisation plan. Explicitly stated priorities are increasing the number of lecturers with a masters degree and ensuring that all lecturers have a teaching diploma. Further substance will be given to the professionalisation of VHL with the establishment of the VHL Academy in 2015.

Timber harvest chain app

Forest and Nature Management student Tim Lemmerlijn has won the Esri Young Scholars Award 2014 for the Netherlands. The jury judged his project, ArcGIS Online applications in timber harvesting in the Netherlands, to be the best submission. Tim developed a web application that enables better use of data in the timber harvest chain. By using Tim's app, a GPS feature and a smartphone or tablet, it is possible to trace individual trees anywhere in a forest. As the Dutch winner, Tim will present his project during the Esri International User Conference in San Diego, United States.





Professionalisation of VHL is a condition for future success...

Lecturers giving training in Vietnam

Hermine de Wolf and Michiel Hupkes, both lecturers on the Land and Water Management study programme, presented the course 'Assessment: motivator for efficient curriculum design and study efforts' to lecturers of Nong Liam University in Vietnam. In this customised course, Hermine and Michiel deal with all forms of assessment and look at aspects such as the pros and cons of formative and summative testing methods. These two completely different methods guarantee lively debate on the structure of education and means of assessment. Hermine and Michiel also serve on the VHL-wide working group Teaching Concept and gather information within this context that is useful for the training sessions in Vietnam. These experiences in Asia simultaneously help them to place educational debates in the Netherlands in a broader perspective.



Sustainability as the distinguishing characteristic of VHL...

Prize winner

On Thursday, 11 December 2014, Rob den Boer, an Environmental Sciences student at VHL, won second prize in a competition for students organised by the province of North Holland. Rob impressed the jury with his idea 'From cesspool to well', about rainwater harvesting among people with a cesspool or septic tanks. His idea is simple to implement in practice. The costs are not excessive and it is profitable from the perspective of water savings and the sustainable reuse of rainwater.

The average rainfall in the Netherlands is 800 millimetres a year. This works out to 64,000 litres of rainwater for each home. VHL student Rob den Boer devised a system to use that rainwater: "Many homes in the Netherlands still have a cesspool or septic tank, even though they have since been connected to the sewer system. A superfluous cesspool or tank like this can easily be adapted to collect rainwater. You can do a host of things with 64,000 litres of water, such as watering the garden, washing your car or flushing the toilet."

The long-term effects are clear, explains Rob: "Just think of the amount of water that households can save with this. And we are moreover alleviating the sewer system. The risk of sewer overflow from a large volume of water is reduced considerably. And that, in turn, is good for our water treatment plants as they are not so quickly disrupted. Benefits all round."

Sustainability

VHL's mission explicitly states that the educational institution wishes to train professionals who contribute towards a sustainable world. This position has significant effects on how this university of applied sciences structures its education and research, as well as its organisation. Baseline measurements were carried out in accordance with AISHE for most VHL study programmes in 2014. The aim is for all VHL study programmes to be awarded three AISHE stars by 2018.

Students and lecturers are very concerned with sustainability in their studies and work. For example, in 2014, two lecturers from different study programmes joined forces in the ECO logic module. The ECO logic module, arising from the working group Eco Society Studies, is a module on sustainability and ecosystem services that is taught across the whole of our university. In this module, students attend lessons on sustainability and ecosystem services in general, and on food and energy in particular.

VHL was also very successful in 2014 in the Monte Carlo Solar Cup, a prestigious international competition for solar-powered boats. Two VHL teams stood on the podium in Monaco. The Dutch Solar Boat Team (with VHL alumni) won the A Class category, while the VHL Nordwin solar boat team, a combined team of students from VHL and Nordwin College, finished third in the same category.



Cardboard and energy from roadside grass

In collaboration with other universities of applied sciences, VHL and the company NewFoss B.V. from Brabant are working on optimising innovative and sustainable technology. This amounts to producing cardboard, packaging, paper and energy from roadside grass,

NewFoss refines a woody fibre from roadside grass that can be used as biofuel or raw material in the fibre industry (paper, insulation material, chipboard, etc.). Life Sciences & Technology students work on optimising the refining process under the instructions of the Centre for Biobased Economy (CBBE). Measurements, laboratory tests and calculations are used to see whether even more energy and useful raw materials, such as for bioplastics, can be produced from roadside grass.



Leeuwarden

Agora 1
P.O. Box 1528
8901 BV Leeuwarden
The Netherlands
Telephone +31(0)58 284 61 00

Velp

Larensteinselaan 26a
P.O. Box 9001
6880 GB Velp
The Netherlands
Telephone +31 (0)26 369 56 95

info@vhluniversity.com

www.VHLuniversity.com