

ROC Mondriaan Poised for the Future

Increasingly, employers are recognising that the importance of ensuring employee performance lies not only in theoretical knowledge, but also in competency-based, practical training.

Vocational schools which have traditionally provided job-specific skills are also moving with the times and since the 1990s have been broadening the scope and content of the programmes they offer.

The trades or industries for which they prepare students are also evolving, and with them the skills required. At ROC Mondriaan in The Hague a foundation in competency-based teaching allows the institute to be a prime supplier of young executives of the future, and a stepping stone to further education for those interested in pursuing a higher degree.

More Than Meets the Eye

As with the art work of Piet Mondriaan, the ROC Mondriaan in The Hague offers much more than meets the eye. It is one of the largest providers of vocational training in the Netherlands, and in The Hague offers a series of English-language International Stream programmes for students 16-17+ years of age. What is striking about the programmes is that graduates of Mondriaan are often able to attain a university Bachelors' degree within 1 -3 years after completing their studies. Prerequisites vary from university to university, and from country to country, but Marian Crone, Tutor in HRM and responsible for International Placement, proudly states that it is one of the options and that an average of 65% of their students take advantage of this. Students can continue their studies in the Netherlands at Universities of Professional Education in English or abroad from the UK to Australia. Some students go on to obtain a Masters' degree. For those students for whom further study is not in the cards, following their studies at Mondriaan allows them fulfil junior management positions straight away. According to Olaf Weissman, Department Manager of the Mondriaan International Hotel Management School "...we see young students leave, and

welcome them back as young professionals, transformed... almost a metamorphosis."

It is not the possibilities alone of Mondriaan that surprise; its role in forging international relations with institutions overseas and what this offers the students, in terms of internships and learning experiences, as well as what it offers Mondriaan itself, in terms of institutional recognition, is also remarkable. In its advisory role to the City of Istanbul, Mondriaan shares its expertise and experience in developing 'work-based learning' programmes and policies for equivalent schools in Turkey. In Beijing, students who were studying Mandarin at Mondriaan were able to follow a programme allowing them to exchange knowledge, culture and industry skills with counterparts in China. For a select few, ten to be exact, this meant a three-month internship at the Holland Pavilion in Shanghai during the World Trade Expo in 2010. Here students will be involved in a variety of functions from VIP care to serving, cooking and being ambassadors for the Netherlands - applying the skills they have learnt at Mondriaan.

Multiple International Streams

From its inception, in 1995, the International Stream at ROC Mondriaan has been demand-driven; the then growing international community of The Hague was looking for more options when it came to non university-level English-language higher education. Due to the combination of an increasing international community, as well as the growing 'internationalisation' of the Dutch educational system, the programmes available have since expanded and increased in number - at Mondriaan and elsewhere.

The first of the courses offered by Mondriaan in the International Stream were those of the International Hotel & Management School (IHMS). These courses focus on the Hospitality industry, an industry which currently employs approximately 215 million worldwide! The four-year programme equips graduates to enter a broad variety of positions within the hospitality industry from Front Office, Food and Beverage departments to Sales & Marketing, Finance and HR. While students have to learn how to cook and serve as part of their study in International Hotel & Management, their end focus is on the business management - purchasing and ordering; health and hygiene, law, creating a Business Plan, etc. As well as, of course,



modern languages, which are essential for this industry. For students with a flair and love for cooking and a desire to pursue such a career professionally, the IHMS is introducing a new two-year Chef's Course in the fall of 2010. Besides the intensive and practical experience students gather in all these areas during their overseas placements from Europe to the US, the Caribbean and Australia, they are also able to display their skills in Mondriaan's own Restaurants and Hotel (Front Desk as well as the five rooms) and Conference areas.

Graduates of the Mondriaan International Business School (MIBS), which also offers a four-year programme specialised in marketing and communication, are ready for a future in both the public and private sectors, or as young entrepreneurs themselves. According to Jarijn Nijkamp, Manager of MIBS, the programme is growing exponentially and many graduates continue their studies at a university level or apply their entrepreneur skills immediately. A more recent addition to the International Stream at Mondriaan is the International Tourism and Leisure Management (ITLM) programme in which students spend half a year in the classroom, and half a year on a placement. Graduates have the added advantage of receiving two diplomas upon completion of their studies: a Dutch Diploma as well as the International BTEC (Business & Technology Education Council) Diploma which is equivalent to A Levels (UK).

A Future for Everyone

The line differentiating vocational training from education, in the sense of the liberal arts, is slowly becoming less clear. As times change so do the skills required for a future career or profession - as do the forms of preparing for these. Not everyone is suited to pure academic study, just as not everyone is suited to pure vocational pursuits. ROC Mondriaan provides a stepping stone from which careers can be launched or the spark for further study ignited. Either way, what it offers has something to reveal and something to be discovered. What it offers are opportunities for the future of each and every one of its graduates. Whichever way you look at it, the International Stream is a good start for an international career in Business, Hospitality, and the Tourism and Leisure industries - each a growth industry in its own right.

For more information about any of ROC Mondriaan's International Stream programmes visit their website www.rocmondriaan.nl or call the relevant departments:

Mondriaan International Hotel & Management School (IHMS)
088 - 666 44 44 (including new Chef's Course)

Mondriaan International Business School (MIBS) 088 - 666 54 17
Mondriaan International Tourism & Leisure Management (ITLM)
088 - 666 33 50