

# **Education for Professional Excellence**

***Synopsis (in English)***  
***of the Book Hoogvliegers,***  
**naar professionele excellentie.**

**Highflyers**  
**Development towards Professional Excellence**

**Edited by**

Remco Coppoolse  
Pierre van Eijl  
Albert Pilot

**With contributions by:**

Janina Banis-den Hartog  
Hanne ten Berge  
Ellen van den Berg  
Remco Coppoolse  
Trijntje van Dijk  
Simone van der Donk  
Hanna Drenth  
Pierre van Eijl  
Melina Ghasseminejad  
Stan van Ginkel  
Mark Gellevij  
Annemiek Grootendorst  
Renske Heemskerk  
Lea Hermsen  
Djoerd Hiemstra  
Nelleke de Jong  
Martine Kamp  
Margriet Kat  
Tineke Kingma  
Geert Kinkhorst  
Eric Koetshuis  
Yolanda Konincks  
Leny Leferink  
Jolise 't Mannetje  
Wolter Paans  
Albert Pilot  
Renske Schamhart  
Marco Snoek  
Sanne Spil  
Sandra Storm-Spuijbroek  
Tjaart Theron  
Lammert Tiesinga  
Karin Truijen  
Dammis Vroegindewey  
Ron Weerheijm  
Inge Wijkamp  
Raymond ter Woord  
Marca Wolfensberger

## **Colophon**

1<sup>st</sup> Impression, 2013

© Remco Coppoolse, Pierre van Eijl & Albert Pilot |Rotterdam University Press

Publisher: Josephine Lappia

This synopsis of the book *Hoogvliegers* is a publication of Rotterdam University Press of the Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences  
Research & Innovation Back Office  
P.O. Box 25035  
3001 HA Rotterdam

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a computerised database and/or published by print, photoprint, microfilm or in any way whatsoever, without the prior written permission of the authors and the publisher.

This synopsis of the book *Hoogvliegers* may not be reproduced by print, photoprint, microfilm or any other means, without the permission of the authors and the publisher

# 1 Highflyers are necessary!

## ***Why publish a book on education which focuses on professional excellence?***

In higher education in the Netherlands, many educational programmes have been developed in recent years for 'highflyers', students who wish to achieve more and are able to achieve more than regular programmes offer them. At the beginning of the 1990s, the universities of Utrecht and Leiden started so-called honours programmes and many other institutions for higher education followed suit with similar programmes.

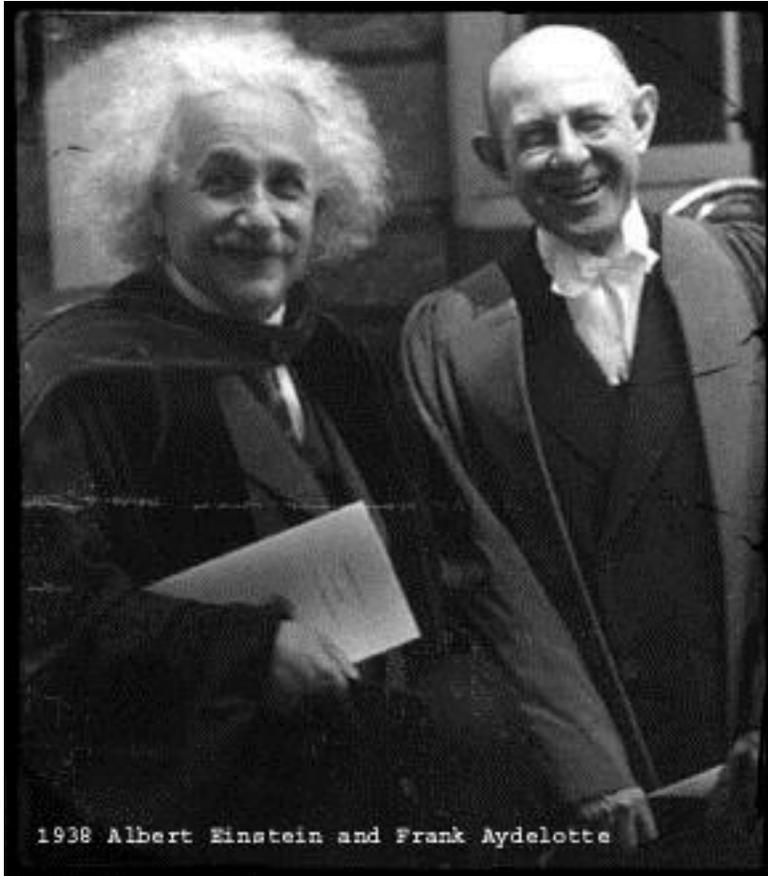
In the last decade, numerous honours programmes have emerged, each with its own character. Some programmes focus on the characteristics of excellent professionals within a professional domain. Since the latter are relatively new, their contents, structure and pedagogical approach are undergoing a rapid development. To stimulate this development, the experience of a number of universities of applied sciences and research universities with honours programmes with a specific focus on professional excellence have been combined in this book.

By providing background information and the results of scientific research, we have tried to add more depth to thinking about honours education and to make the experience acquired accessible to a larger group of interested parties. A large group of teachers in honours education have been willing to make a contribution to this book as authors. This has resulted in diverse examples with a wide variety of aspects of honours programmes which focus on the development of professional excellence.

## ***Where it all began***

In 1922 Frank Aydelotte (see Figure 1.1), the then president of Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, US, took the initiative to set up a special, small-scale and very demanding study programme (which he referred to as the 'honors programme') for motivated students who were able to take on more than the regular programme required. Two years later, the students appeared to perform exceptionally well. This was the start of the honours programmes, which were emulated by many universities and colleges in the US. Aydelotte's book *Breaking the Academic Lockstep*, in particular, which was published at the end of the Second World War, contributed to spreading the idea of honours programmes. At present certainly half of all American higher education institutions have an honours programme. There is also an association, the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC), to which most of the honours programmes are affiliated. This Association organises annual congresses, publishes books in this area and trains 'site visitors' for honours programmes.

For many universities and colleges, the honours programmes they offer are important because small-scale and high-quality honours education makes them more attractive to talented students and teachers.



**Figure 1.1** Albert Einstein visiting Frank Aydelotte at Swarthmore College in 1938

### ***New views with regard to excellence***

Honours education in higher education, which focuses on professional excellence, may stimulate students to develop further in a discipline, to increase their awareness of interdisciplinary approaches to problems and to initiate and bring about innovation. On the one hand, this involves giving students who wish to and are able to achieve more, the opportunity to develop their talents optimally. On the other hand, it involves meeting society's need for excellent professionals who are able to deal with complex social problems on the basis of sound professional knowledge, with a broad, multidisciplinary approach, with competences in the area of communication and entrepreneurship, and with a creative and tenacious attitude. Graduates of this type of education must be in a position to operate in international

teams and to feel themselves to be global citizens who, in time, can contribute to innovation and sustainability.

Honours education may meet the desire to stimulate more innovation in the economy and society, where it is often necessary to solve complex problems. Research by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shows that high levels of education and excellence result in economic benefits.

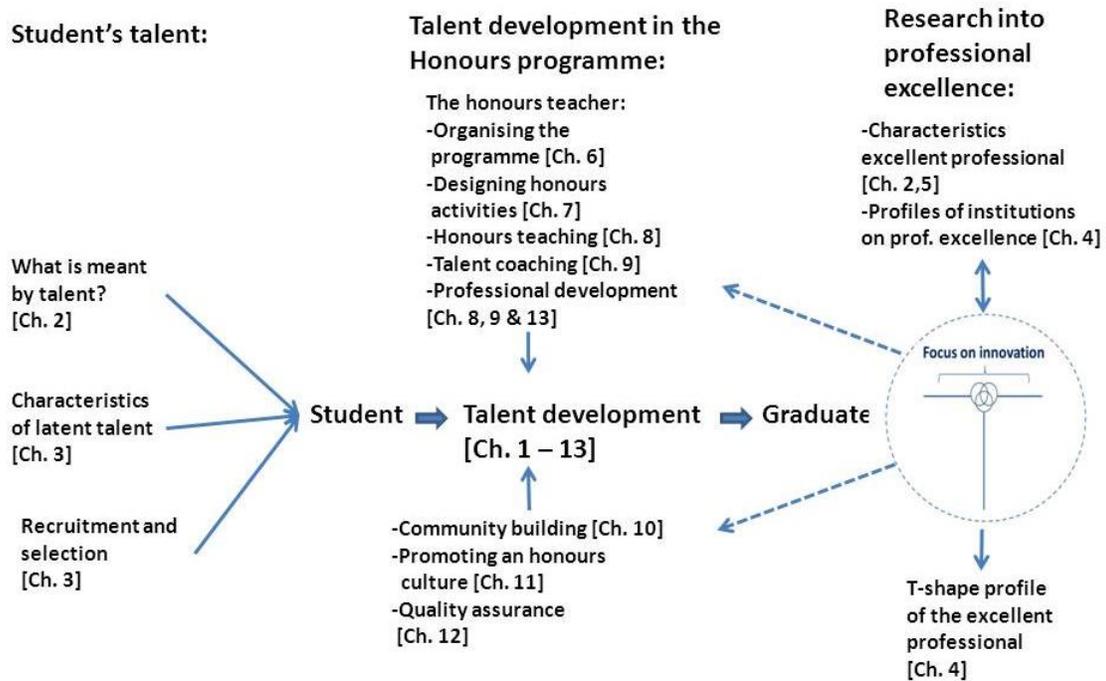
### ***Design principles of honours programmes for professional excellence***

In designing honours programmes, in particular programmes which focus on the development of professional excellence, a question which is often raised is to what extent the development of talent and the ability to excel can be learned. There is uncertainty in this regard amongst many teachers, students, managers and outsiders. Wolfensberger's model (2011) provides an interesting basis for designing honours programmes which focus on professional excellence. This model describes how a student can achieve exceptional performance as a result of the interaction between the student's characteristics, teaching strategies, a learning environment, opportunities and socio-economic conditions.

In addition to the student's characteristics, three perspectives ('trunks') are described, which stimulate the student to excel within a learning environment, namely:

- 1 the pedagogy of honours programmes, whereby through interaction the teacher challenges students to leave their comfort zone;
- 2 inspired communities, of which the students and teachers are a part;
- 3 a form of constrained freedom in the education offered, so that students have considerable freedom to make their own choices, but in which there is also clarity about the framework of the honours programme in which they participate.

All these aspects of this model are discussed in this book. Figure 1.2 contains a diagram of the topics dealt with in the various chapters. The numbers of the chapters are stated in the diagram.



**Figure 1.2** Topics of the various chapters in relation to each other

Characteristics such as motivation and reasonable to good study results are associated with students who are educated from the perspective of professional excellence (upper left in Figure 1.2). It is not always clear whether a student has the potential to develop towards an honours programme as the student may have latent talent.

The continuous thread of talent development is central to the honours programme (middle). The profile and characteristics of an excellent professional (right) serve as a guideline for the content and structure of the honours programme.

The honours teacher (centre) is the person who gives form to the challenge of the honours programme, coaches students, stimulates community building, promotes an honours culture and contributes to quality assurance. Providing education to honours students may also be a powerful stimulus to the honours teacher's own professional development.

'Highlights' of the various chapters are provided below.

## 2 Talent and excellence

In admitting students to honours programmes, educational institutions mainly consider their motivation, in other words, whether they are actually interested in the honours programme. In addition, study progress and marks played an important role. Enrolling with an honours programme is more obvious a choice for someone who is 'keeping abreast' of his study than for someone who is lagging behind. The student's marks will have to be above average, so that additional capacity may be expected from the student. Sometimes during selection interviews the institution considers whether the student has had to 'walk on his toes' to achieve higher marks and has reached the peak of his ability, or whether he has time for other things. In the latter case, enrolling with an honours programme is the more obvious choice.

The American education researcher Jenkins-Friedman (1986) argues that average marks and test scores for cognitive skills in American education are just a few of the factors and only give an indication of the student's suitability to develop into an excellent professional. Other factors and skills which the student has are also important. Creativity, for instance, is an important factor. Good performance at school is not a predictor of professional excellence. A better understanding of what professional excellence is, is necessary in designing honours programmes which focus on this.

From research by the American psychologist Renzulli (1978) into professionals recognised by fellow professionals for their unique achievements and creative contributions, it appears that these professionals possess three clusters of characteristics. Renzulli has presented this visually in a model comprising three rings (see Figure 2.1). The three clusters of characteristics are:

- 1 above-average abilities;
- 2 above-average task commitment;
- 3 above-average creativity.

This is represented in Renzulli's three-rings model (see Figure 2.1).



**Figure 2.1** Renzulli's three-rings model (1978)

The characteristic of 'creativity', according to research by Amabile (2012), is the most important source of innovation in organisations and is essential for sustainable success. Creativity is important for the development of 'adaptive expertise', which is necessary in learning to solve new problems, according to research by Schwartz *et al.* (2005). In addition, in accordance with Gardner's (2005) theory of "five minds for the future", attention to respect and ethics is also important.

### **3 Discovering and involving latent talent in honours education**

Many students are not at all clear about whether they wish to do an honours programme. They may well have the capacity to do so, but do not immediately see the benefit of an honours programme, they may have other activities, they may wish to 'wait-and-see' or they may have to overcome a reluctance to opt for education which requires more personal initiative.

Verbiest *et al.* (2010) make a distinction, in addition to talent, between three types of latent talent (see Figure 3.1).

- 1 talents of which the person is aware, but which his environment has never observed;
- 2 talents which someone's environment attributes to him, but which he has not (yet) discovered;
- 3 talents which someone and his environment have not (yet) discovered.

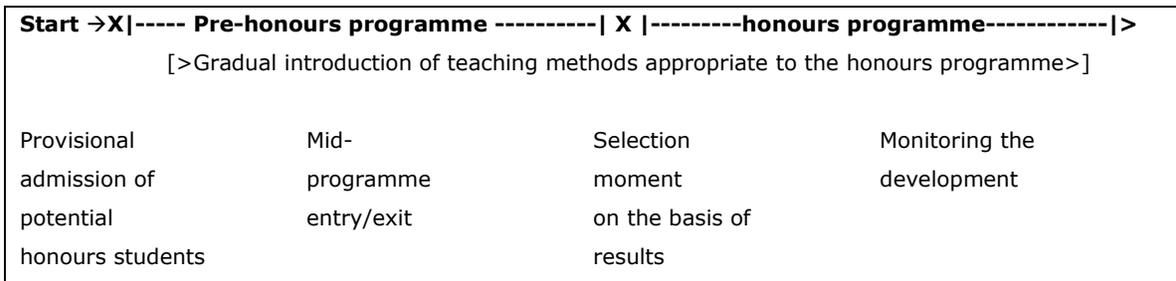
**Figure 3.1** Talent and latent talent (Verbiest & Dijk, 2010)

	<b>For the individual aware</b>	<b>For the individual unaware</b>
<i>Visible to the environment</i>	Talent	Latent talent
<i>Not visible to the environment</i>	Latent talent	Latent talent

As a result recruiting these students is not always that easy in practice because often they are already active in various ways in their studies, in student life or beyond. As a result of good recruitment with direct, 'warm' contact between the teacher and the student (or honours students and potential honours students) and an attractive honours programme, more students can be reached, including students with 'latent talent'. A pre-honours programme may also offer a solution for hesitant students, which would enable them to acclimatise to the method of teaching of the honours programme. The opportunity to enter the honours programme at a later point may be useful for 'late-bloomers'.

A pre-honours programme (see Figure 3.2) at the start of the bachelor's programme has the following characteristics:

- Students can try out a different approach appropriate to an honours programme.
- There is room for community building *and* more contact with the teacher.
- Working within a pre-honours programme may also encourage greater self-confidence, but may also result in self-selection if a student notices that the approach taken or the culture within an honours programme does not suit him or her.
- At the end of the pre-honours programme, on the basis of the results which the student has achieved (combined, for instance, in a portfolio), he or she can show the teachers that he or she is able to meet the challenges of an honours programme.
- A pre-honours programme may last for six months to a year.

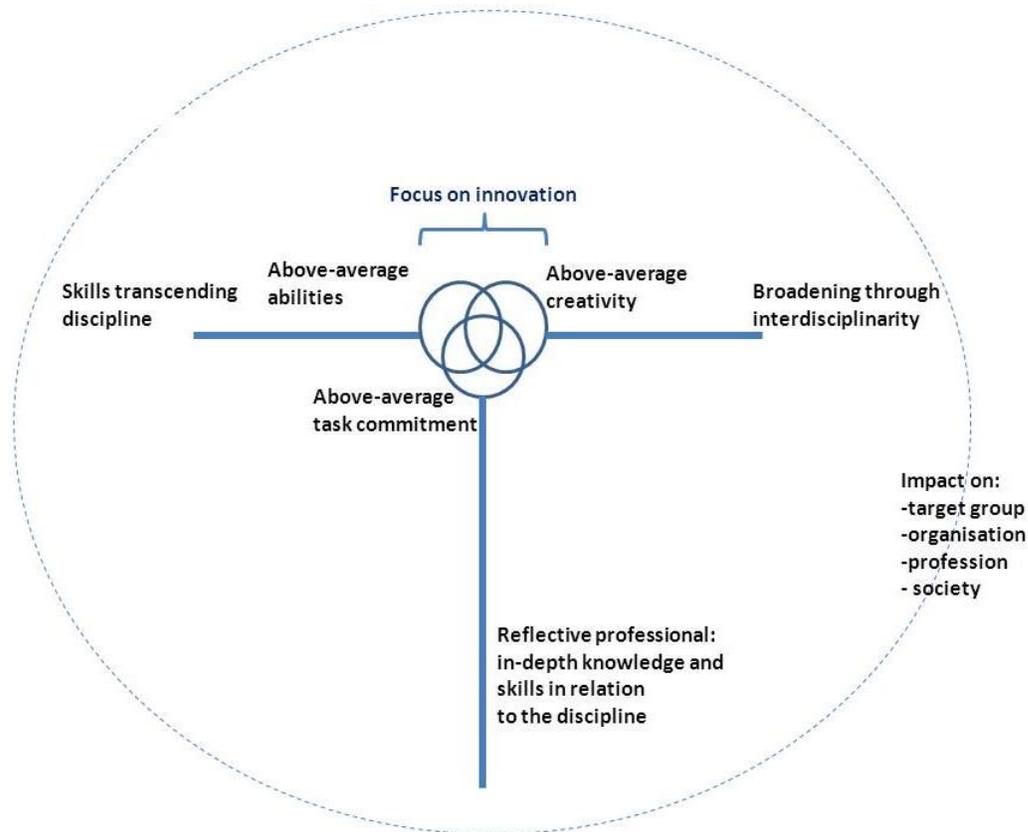


**Figure 3.2** Structure of a pre-honours programme

Fortunately a change of culture is occurring now in the Dutch society, as a result of which more students wish to develop themselves towards excellence. By doing so, they do not wish to put themselves in the forefront, but rather to develop themselves as well as possible, to differentiate themselves on the employment market, to do more with the time available to them, and to ensure that their study is better suited to themselves, or for more than one of these reasons at the same time.

#### **4 Excellence profiles at universities of applied sciences**

Universities of applied sciences have compiled profiles of excellent professionals, which for the large part include the above-mentioned characteristics. On the basis of research and an analysis of these profiles, a T-shape profile of an excellent professional has been devised which provides a visualisation of the general core of the institutions' profiles.



**Figure 4.1** T-shape profile of the excellent professional

The vertical bar of the T (the trunk, see Figure 4.1) represents professionalism and its depth. The excellent professional is only excellent if he is a sound professional who has mastered his profession and, in some respects, presents a distinct profile and/or achieves above-average performance. The horizontal bar (the branching) represents broadening through the inclusion of other disciplines in the student's professional competencies and the utilisation of skills which transcend his or her own profession. This makes it easier for the professional to view a problem from different perspectives. At the intersection of the horizontal and the vertical bars are the three rings of the Renzulli model, the core of the excellent professional. This is the fascinating point where 'it' happens, where the excellent professional establishes the linkages between his profession and the broadening of it, or alternatively, at which he links what he has obtained from other dimensions of his profession and his professional activities. Above-average qualities, commitment to the task and creativity are necessary to become innovative.

The excellent professional often has a social orientation and the necessary intellectual skills, and is very motivated. Leadership, entrepreneurship, an

international orientation and being 'professionally inspiring' are linked to each other through this.

The environment of the professional is indicated in the figure by means of a circle with a broken line. The conduct of the excellent professional has an impact on the environment: the target group, the organisation, the profession and/or society.

## **5 Excellence from the perspective of professionals**

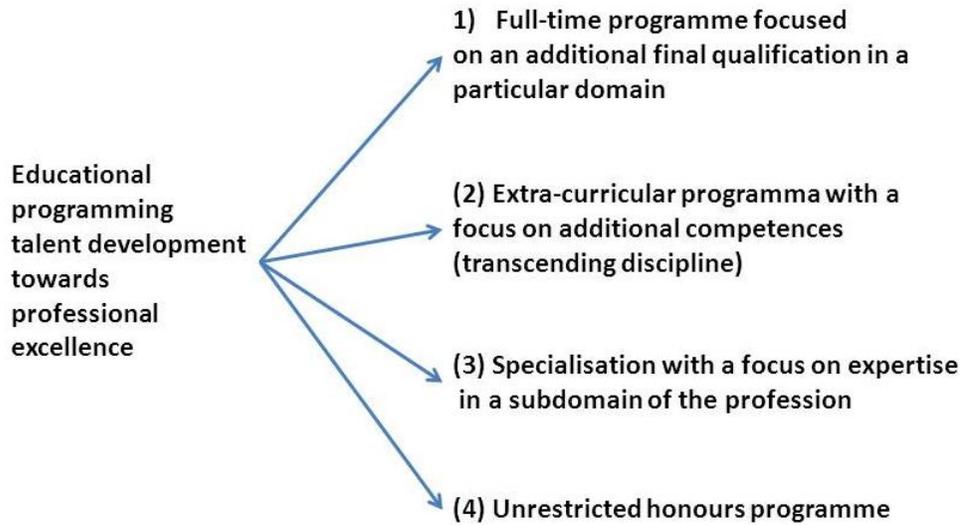
The domain specific profiles from recent research are an up-to-date reflection of the views of professionals in the various professions with regard to excellence within their discipline. This information is of considerable importance and provides a basis for critical examination of the curricula of the honours programmes which lead to professional excellence in these disciplines. This information also offers committed students and the coaches who supervise them with the room needed to make focused choices and to introduce a focus within the scope and freedom which honours education offers.

For instance, an excellent professional has not only an above-average mastery of his discipline, but excellent professionals also consider the complexity of the context in which professional practice occurs. Efficient and effective action in complex situations and (logical) reasoning in the context of a complex patient or a complex customer play an important role in assigning the label of 'excellent'. Multidisciplinary, a broad perspective and overseeing the entire production chain are elements which contribute to this.

This combination of characteristics is not the same for all professions. In addition to more generic domains, such as communication, self-reflection and sharing knowledge, the content given to professional excellence is discipline specific. Some characteristics are demanded by developments in society.

## **6 Programming for talent development**

Participating in challenging honours activities is for students an important part of the process of talent development. In-depth talent development, however, also requires a long development trajectory. Some honours programmes run alongside as part of the regular programme (as a replacement for parts of it) for several years, so that students with talent receive an additional stimulus to develop their talents over a longer period (see Figure 6.1).



**Figure 6.1** A variety of honours programmes with a focus on professional excellence

Within a trajectory of talent development, there is a variety of educational approaches. Coaching these students is a constant factor, the effects of which are reinforced if use is made of portfolios or other means of making the talent development visible and open for discussion.

The final result of an honours programme varies from an additional final qualification, additional competences within a specialisation, or additional competences which transcend a discipline. These additional competences, for instance, lie in the area of applied research, entrepreneurship, communication and consultancy. With regard to their content, honours programmes accentuate various aspects, such as professional practice, personal development or academic thinking. Sometimes at the start the emphasis lies on the personal development of the student, but later shifts to the practice of the excellent professional.

The programme must have a certain size to provide a student with sufficient opportunities to work on the development of his or her talents. Extracurricular honours programmes are of an order of magnitude of 30 ECs (EC = European Credit). In the case of a full-time honours programme, regular and honours activities are interwoven within the 240 ECs for a programme offered by a university of applied sciences and 180 ECs for a bachelor's programme offered by a research university. In the US, 20% to 25% is the usual requirement for the extent of the honours part of the bachelor's programme of an honours student.

## 7 Designing the challenge

As soon as students are admitted to an honours programme it is up to the honours teachers to challenge them. An important way of doing this is through the design of the honours activities within the honours programme. The examples, collected in this book, show that there is considerable creativity in this area. Some teachers opt to offer authentic assignments drawn from practice and assignments which are not 'schoolish'. A number of design features are referred to in Figure 7.1 (Berge *et al.* 2006).

**Figure 7.1** Six design characteristics in relation to studying authentic tasks

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | Elements of an authentic working atmosphere;  |
| 2 | The student in the role of the problem solver, similar to a situation in actual practice;                   |
| 3 | The types of problems and activities, as experienced by the profession, if necessary adapted for education; |
| 4 | The role of the teacher, as in a 'community of practice' in the profession;                                 |
| 5 | Availability of the facilities and infrastructure required to carry out the task;                           |
| 6 | Assessment which resembles the situation in professional practice.  |

Others teachers give students the opportunity to make their own design and to determine their own method of work. Research at one university of applied sciences (Gellevij *et al.*, 2012) shows that many honours students prefer a fixed honours programme which offers the students some scope to select their own content and method.

In a number of honours activities, it is striking that students work towards concrete (semi)products which they present to the ultimate target group in ways which are often very creative. By means of this 'exposure', students learn not only to give presentations, but they also receive feedback and enter into discussion about their work. In this way, other non-honours students and teachers are also informed about the work of honours students.

Multidisciplinary teamwork also takes place, in which students have to work jointly on an integrated final product. This type of teamwork is not self-evident for the students and it is therefore a considerable challenge for them to look further than the boundaries of their own discipline *and* to work together. Broadening students' horizons is also an aspect of honours activities in an international context.

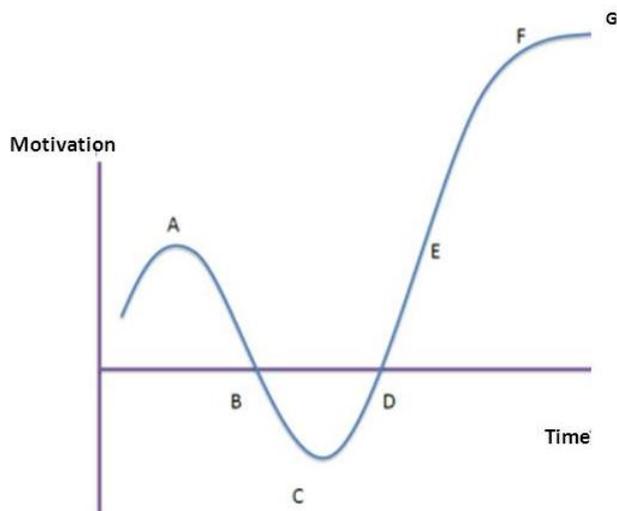
Studying abroad may be a valuable part of an honours programme and it may take also the form of working for an international organisation and online cooperation with students from a foreign institution for higher education.

It is not uncommon for students to organise part of their honours activities themselves, such as 'events', projects, international activities, training sessions and conferences.

## **8 Honours teaching**

Wolfensberger's (2012) research shows that teachers prefer to use different strategies in honours education than in regular education. Teachers in honours education consider 'challenging students', 'giving room' and 'being open to experiments' to be important strategies. In regular education, they regard 'giving a thorough explanation', 'thorough knowledge of the content' and 'clarity about the expectations which students have' as the most important strategies. This is consistent with a large-scale review study by Hattie (2002) of excellent teachers, from which it appears that they can be distinguished from regular teachers by the extent to which they challenge their students. Research by Gellevij *et al.* (2012) shows clearly how important honours students find the 'room given to their own ideas'.

During a long-term honours activity, such as a project, the motivation of honours students often develops according to a specific pattern (see Figure 8.1): in the beginning (A) they experience a recognition of their (potential) talents and are highly motivated to participate; after this (B) doubt sets in, a dip occurs and even (C) a crisis if the project appears to be different and/or more demanding than they expected. Once a student has rediscovered his orientation (D), his motivation once again increases and (E) there is a good flow which is translated into an excellent conclusion (F). Finally (G) a review of the entire activity follows and the students possibly take steps towards a new activity.



**Figure 8.1** Motivation pattern in honours students over time

With knowledge of this development of the process, a teacher can adjust his method of supervision accordingly.

A good assessment is difficult for a teacher because existing assessment rules are often only intended for regular programmes. In the case of an honours programme, what is primarily important is excellence and unique performance, which can have a different content for each student.

The so-called 'level meter' offers a system by means of which the teacher can better assess the unique performance of an honours student. A general system for final assessments has also been developed by Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences. Teachers are trained in the use of this system.

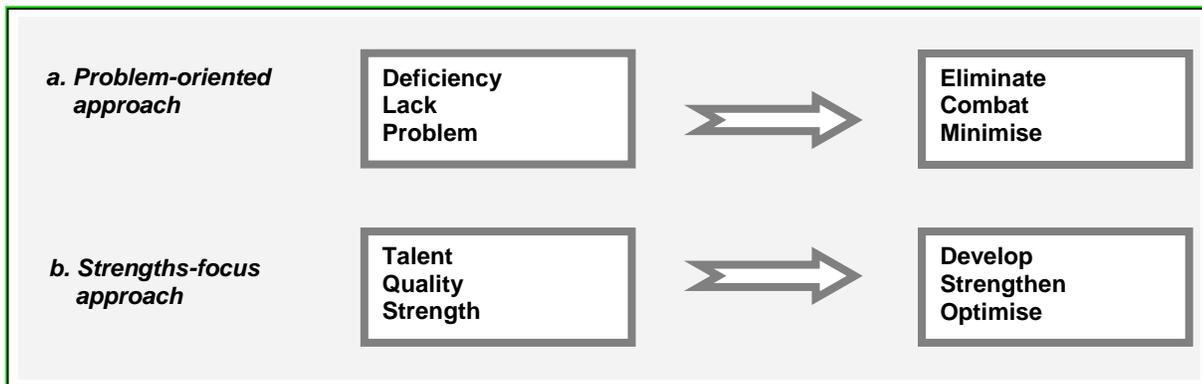
The tasks and roles of an honours teacher are so different to those of regular education that some institutions set up professional development programmes for honours teachers to ensure that the quality of honours education is sustainable.

## 9 Coaching talents

In a number of honours programmes, a coach (usually an honours teacher or a study coach) supervises students in the development of their talents, by helping them to make these talents visible and open for discussion. This is an important step for a student towards paying more attention to his talents in his further study and in the further development of these talents. Analysing talents also promotes a positive relationship between the teacher and student.

In the supervision of projects and other honours activities, the coacg often focuses on finding solutions, in other words ensuring that solutions have pride of place and not problems. This method of work ensures that ownership of the honours activity remains with the student.

In the method used by the *Talentwijzer* (Talent Indicator; Hiemstra, 2011) students are encouraged to analyse their strengths and consciously to use these and develop them further (see Figure 9.1).



**Figure 9.1** Problem-oriented approach compared to a strengths-focus approach

On basis of their analysis, the honours students make a “personal excellence plan”.

If the student has some experience with coaching, he can direct his own talent development through self-coaching. This Talent Indicator can also be used for self-coaching with partners whom the student chooses to discuss his or her work with. If these partners are fellow students, this is referred to as 'peer coaching'.

By building a coaching thread into the honours programme, coaching becomes more than simply an incidental activity and supports the continuous thread of talent development.

## **10 Encouraging the building of an honours community**

The building of an honours community promotes the development, learning and social functioning of students. Honours communities are networks of honours students within which a culture of excellence can develop. Teachers function as promoters and catalysts in the building and development of an honours community, but students must feel that they are the owners of the community. Teacher and students apply different strategies to build a flourishing honours community.

In Figure 10.1, the strategies have been summarised briefly (Ginkel *et al.*, 2012).

1	Matching students on the basis of their willingness to cooperate;
2	Programming challenging teamwork activities with a considerable degree of self-direction;
3	Facilitating students' initiatives, without taking the initiative away from them;
4	Ensuring that there is an intensive contact period to deepen contact between students;
5	Organising a series of interactive activities throughout the honours programme (a 'community thread' in the programme);
6	Teachers acting as role models for talent development and as coaches for community building;
7	Including community activities in the feedback, coaching, assessment and evaluation.

**Figure 10.1** Seven strategies for stimulating the development of an honours community

Although it is important that students themselves give form to their community, the honours teachers remain crucial to the way in which this community functions.

## **11 Students and teachers in an honours culture**

Honours students are in various respects different from regular students and establish their own group culture, which they often experience as very different to that prevalent in regular education. Not everyone grows up in an environment in which daring to be different or better than others is valued. Excellence has everything to do with culture. Culture may serve as a stimulus, but may also have a restraining effect if one has the feeling that one has to be like everyone else. A strong honours culture, with a focus on excellence, is a basis for exerting a positive influence on regular study culture. Figure 11.1 provides an overview of the elements which may be distinguished in an honours culture (Tiesinga, 2013).



6

**Figure 11.1** Elements of the honours culture

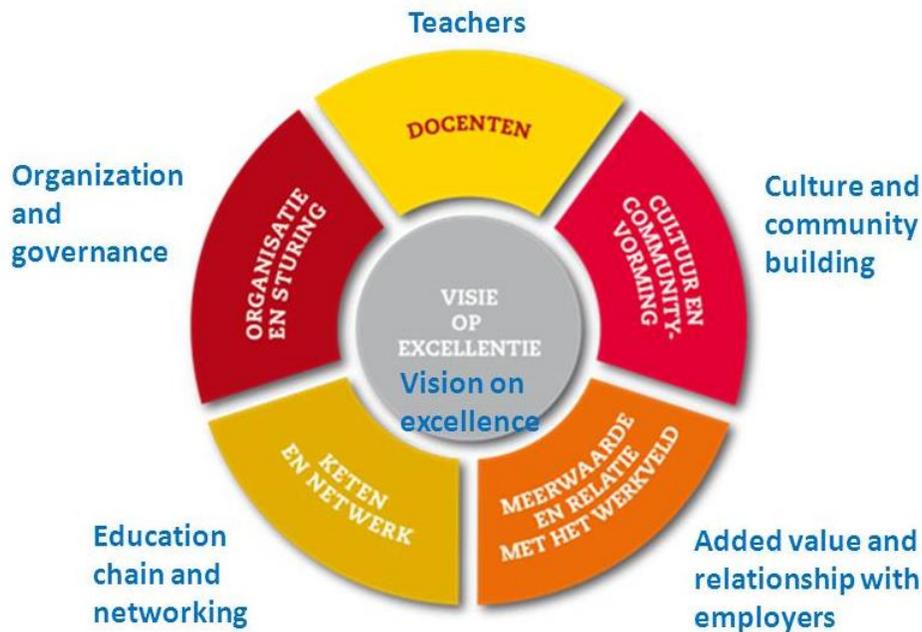
From interviews with students, a clear profile has emerged of the type of teacher who stimulates the development of an honours culture. In this profile, the teacher is primarily a source of inspiration and someone who thinks along with the student; the teacher stimulates the students' own development by asking questions, which stimulate the student to reflect and think critically. The relationship between the teacher and the student in the honours culture is more a relationship between equals than in the culture of regular education. Furthermore it is important that teachers share important principles, such as the mission of the honours programme, adopt the same approach to students in supervising them and convey similar expectations.

## **12 Quality assurance for honours programmes**

The honours programmes in Dutch higher education are still very much in the throes of development and, parallel to this, so are the evaluation and quality assurance of honours programmes. Certainly in the pioneering phase, informal forms of

evaluation, such as focus group discussions with students, are important, but ultimately adhering to a certain quality assurance system is valuable in the further development of the programmes. Students are often actively involved in evaluation. An example of a system, such as that developed within the framework of the Sirius programme (2012), is provided in Figure 12.1.

## “Sirius Compass”



**Figure 12.1** Elements which are decisive in determining the direction of policy in relation to excellence

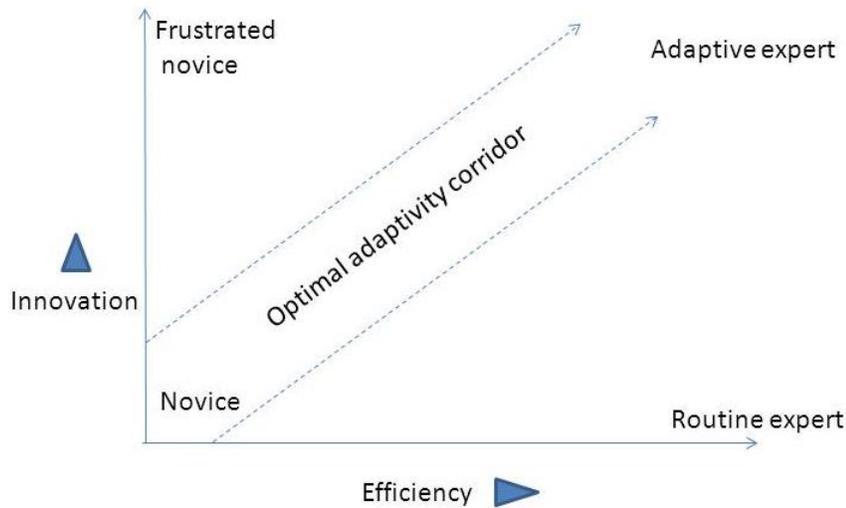
Within a number of institutions, the coordination of quality assurance and working towards internal certification of honours programmes is an area which is receiving attention. External certification of honours programmes is a major area of discussion because the regulations required for this may be at odds with the innovative character of these programmes.

### 13 Impact of professional excellence on honours programmes

The teachers on honours programmes are faced with the challenge of translating the characteristics of an excellent professional into educational practice. This is given expression in the examples in this book in a variety of ways.

In honours programmes, creativity may be promoted by drawing on the intrinsic motivation of students and by fostering this. In this respect, the teacher is a source of inspiration. To foster the student's intrinsic motivation and to stimulate the development of creativity, the programmes give students freedom by enabling them to make their own contribution and their own choices. The right working atmosphere or culture in education, but also in the respective professional organisations, is essential in promoting the development of new ideas.

In various studies, Schwartz *et al.* (2005) have shown that the development of adaptive expertise is more successful if students first learn to innovate and only after this to work at improving efficiency, rather than adhering to the inverse order. Figure 13.1 shows the development of adaptive expertise, as this emerged from experiments carried out by Schwartz *et al.*



**Figure 13.1** Development of adaptive expertise (Schwartz *et al.*, 2005)

Initial steps towards promoting the development of the 'respectful mind' and the 'ethical mind' (Gardner, 2005) can be found in some honours and regular programmes, for instance in the development of 'global citizenship'.

A progression towards the characteristics of professional excellence can be found in the design of honours activities. One of the most striking content-related aspects of these honours activities is the considerable degree of genuineness or authenticity of the assignments. Large and complex assignments originate mainly from organisations outside the institution, with the additional advantage that students can also approach these organisations for information, advice and feedback. Professorships [“lectoraten”] play a key role in relation to many assignments, since a professor and the professor's research centre supervise projects and ensure that the projects are of an adequate level.

The project may involve a design assignment or a research assignment, but may also be an assignment to draw up a plan of action, produce a product or plan a performance. In carrying out these assignments, students must have room for self-direction and for their own creative approach. This room is created by allowing honours students to make their own choices with regard to the (sub)problem on which they wish to work, allowing them to choose an approach which seems promising to them and allowing them to decide on the direction they wish to take. This also promotes the students' feeling that they are the owners of the projects. Large assignments usually involve teamwork in multidisciplinary groups.

### ***Development of one's own action framework***

After some time, every honours teacher or every honours team of teachers and coaches develops its own collection of principles for providing honours education. This is perhaps a collection of principles which is less elaborate than the pointers for an action framework provided above, but is certainly effective because it is a personal framework. The pointers in this book offer a spectrum of instruments available to the honours teacher, with which the teacher can make choices with regard to his own action framework. This may be a very brief action framework, such as:

*“I never teach my pupils, I only provide the conditions in which they can learn”*

*(Albert Einstein)*

The action framework may also be more elaborate and focus more on honours education.

### ***Examples of individual action frameworks for honours education***

*Drawing on emergent talent and designing challenges:*

- Be creative in designing programmes, in the approach and in relation to students' questions; take the students' ideas as the point of departure, listen and think along with the student in working out solutions.
- Use the pedagogical principles in designing the honours programme and the activities comprising it.

*Organisation of the honours programme:*

- Work from within a clear framework, in which 'freedom within constraints' is clearly embedded in the educational policy.
- Communicate with the management.
- Help the student to build a bridge between his own frameworks and the formal educational frameworks (criteria, justification).

*Honours teaching:*

- The basis of honours education is the student's maximum self-development; so provide scope for the students' learning process, accept uncertainty with regard to the result and do not force the student into tried-and-tested frameworks, but stimulate self-development.
- Enjoy drawing the best out of a student and celebrate successes.
- Develop yourself continuously with regard to the opportunities which honours education offers.

*Coaching talent:*

- All students are different, so approach them differently.
- You cannot always be the content expert (accept that) and you also have a coaching role.
- Be more a coach than a teacher, and focus both roles on the student's learning process.

*Community building:*

- Honours students have a need for mutual recognition of their 'being different'; make this possible (whether or not physically).
- Honours students, but also honours teachers, need a community; in this regard, do not limit yourself to your own programmes, but go in search of a broader community within and outside your own organisation.

*Honours culture:*

- Within the honours programmes, together with your team develop a vision of what you wish to achieve and work towards agreement on the attainment levels to be achieved and the intended contents of these.

### *Quality assurance*

- Involve students in the evaluation of honours activities and discuss the results of these with them. This may generate new ideas which can be realised partly by honours students.

### *Profiles and characteristics of the excellent professional:*

- Compare the honours programme to profiles of excellent professionals and discuss areas in which they correspond.

### *Impact of professional excellence on honours programmes*

- Create opportunities for students by making use of your network as a teacher.
- Invite employers to provide assignments for honours students. Often company supervisors can advise students and provide feedback.

### ***Nature of honours activities***

Not only the students of an honours programme have talent. Many students may become very interested in certain topics during their studies and have the desire to deepen their knowledge in these areas. It is important for an institution which includes talent development in its mission to respond to this and to ensure that these students can also develop their talents further, even further than the regular programme intends.

Experience with the design and pedagogy of honours programmes may help an institution give form to this in an appropriate manner. This is important not only for the student and the institution, but also for society, which will receive graduates who wish to continue developing and whose achievements have value to society as a whole. The models, examples and principles in this book are intended to provide support to those involved in this. In this way, honours activities may take on a character with ramifications far beyond the honours programme itself.

### **Bibliography**

Amabile, T. M. (2012). *Componential theory of creativity*. Working paper 12–096, april 26, 2012. Boston: Harvard Business School.

<http://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/12-096.pdf>

Berge, J.H. ten, Nab, J., Pilot, A., & Ramaekers, S. (2006) Authentic Tasks in Higher Education: studies in design principles for higher order learning. Abstract. In: G. Nickmans, M. Bosmans & L. Brants, Improving quality in teaching and learning:

developmental work and implementation challenges. *First European Conference for Practice-based and practitioner Research*. Leuven: University of Leuven. P.13-15.

Gardner, H. (2006) *Five minds for the future*. Boston MA: Harvard Business Press.

Gellevij, M., Banis-Den Hertog, J., Van der Donk, S., 't Mannetje, J. & Truijen, K. (2012). *Excellentie, vergelijking Saxion Honoursprogramma's-Studenten*. Werkdocument Onderzoeksgroep Sirius. Enschede: Saxionhogeschool,.

Ginkel, S. van, Eijl, P. van, Pilot, A. & Zubizarreta, J., (2012). Building a vibrant Honors community among commuter students. *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council* 13, 2, 197-218.

Hattie, J. (2002). *What are the attributes of excellent teachers?* Paper presented at the NZARE Conference. <http://edcursecmaths2008.wikispaces.com/file/view/Hattie++attributes+of+excellent+teachers.pdf>

Hiemstra, D. (2011). *Talenterwijzer*. Boom/Lemma. [www.talenterwijzer.com](http://www.talenterwijzer.com)

Jenkins-Friedman, R. C. (1986). Identifying Honors Students. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 25, 99-108.

NCHC (2010). *Basic Characteristics for a fully developed honors program*. <http://nchchonors.org/faculty-directors/basic-characteristics-of-a-fully-developed-honors-program/>

Renzulli, J. S. (1978). What makes giftedness? Reexamining a definition. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 60, 180-184, 261.

Schwartz, D. L., Bransford, J. D. & Sears, D. (2005). Efficiency and innovation in transfer. Transfer of Learning from a modern multidisciplinary perspective. In J. Mestre (Ed.), *Transfer of learning: Research and Perspectives*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Sirius Programma (2012). *Koersbepalende elementen*. Den Haag, Platform Bèta Techniek. <http://www.orionprogramma.nl/docs/Sirius/sirius-kompas.pdf>

Tiesinga, L. (2013). *Cultuur van honourscommunities. Rapportage onderzoek excellentie, communities en cultuur*. Groningen: Hanzehogeschool Groningen. <http://www.hanze.nl/home/Schools/hanze-honours-college/lectoraat/onderzoek/publicaties/>

Verbiest, C. & Dijk, M. (2010). *Oog voor talent*. Amersfoort: CPS.

Wolfensberger, M.V.C. (2012). *Teaching for excellence, Honors Pedagogies revealed*. Academisch proefschrift. Münster: Waxmann

Wolfensberger, M.V.C., Eijl, P.J. van, Vaart, R.J.F.M. van der & Pilot, A. (2004). *Studenten in Honours Programmes: Hun kenmerken en concepties van universitair onderwijs. Een pilotstudie*. Paper gepresenteerd op de Onderwijs Research Dagen juni 2004. Utrecht: Universiteit Utrecht.

Wolfensberger, M.V.C. (2011). Excelleren in Hoger Onderwijs en Samenleving: een integratief model rondom uitmuntende prestaties. *Onderzoek van Onderwijs*, 40(3), 44-51.