

Executive summary

Report Institutional Accreditation

Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre (EAMT) (Tallinn, Estonia)

Site-visit: 30 October – 2 November, 2023

Introduction

The Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre (EAMT), one of the six Estonian public universities, was established in 1919 as the Tallinn Higher Music School. In 1923, it was renamed the Tallinn Conservatoire. In addition to music education, theatre studies began in 1938. Since its establishment in 1919, the institution has operated without interruption, with the exception of its theatre studies. These were paused during World War II and reinstated in 1957. The institution has been operating under the current name of the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre since 2005¹.

Whereas programmes in music are offered by three higher education institutions in Estonia, EAMT offers them in the widest range of fields at all three levels of higher education². In terms of the theatre studies, the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre is one of the three national universities offering programmes in the field³. Most EAMT teaching staff are

¹ Self-evaluation report (SER), p.9.

² SER, p.10.

³ SER, p.11.



respected artists and researchers. The academy has attracted numerous Estonian musicians and theatre professionals, contributing to its role as a vital part of Estonia's cultural scene⁴.

Programmes in the field of music and theatre are offered in over thirty main studies at three-year bachelor (BA) and at master (MA) level within four academic departments – Department of Classical Music Performance; of Composition and Improvisational Music; Department of Musicology, Music Pedagogy and Cultural Management; and Theatre Department. PhD studies in music and theatre are available in the EAMT Centre for Doctoral Studies⁵. The three-year BA and two-year MA programmes are organised according to the 180+120 ECTS structure, whereas the Drama programme is organised as a 4 years Bachelor (240 ECTS) and the doctoral studies (PhD) last four years (240 ECTS). In 2022, the EAMT had close to 600 students in total in all its study programmes⁶. In addition to the tertiary education, EAMT also provides lifelong learning courses, primarily designed for music educators and musicians in Estonia.

Context of the review

The institutional review of the EAMT was carried out by MusiQuE as an external review procedure in order for the institution to gain institutional accreditation. It is set based on the tripartite agreement between Estonian Quality Agency for Education (HAKA), MusiQuE and EAMT signed in January 2023. The [MusiQuE Standards for Institutional Review](#) are used to conduct this external review procedure. The MusiQuE Standards were mapped against HAKA's [Guidelines for institutional accreditation](#) and, following the agreement between both agencies, the mapped set of standards are used as an overall framework of assessment. As such, standards 1.2. Academic ethics, and 1.3. Research, development and / or other creative activity from HAKA's Guidelines were added to MusiQuE Standards' first domain that covers the institutional mission, vision and context.

In order for the institution to gain institutional accreditation fully compliant with national legislation, the MusiQuE external institutional review of EAMT includes sampling-based evaluation of study programmes, as stipulated in the HAKA's Guidelines for institutional accreditation⁷. The four study programmes to be evaluated were therefore chosen by the institution and approved by MusiQuE⁸, and include: Classical Music Performance (MA level), Drama (BA), Contemporary Physical Performance Making (MA) and Music and Theatre (Doctoral level).

The review procedure

The review followed a three-stage process:

1. EAMT wrote a self-evaluation report (SER) based on, and structured according to, the aforementioned mapped set of MusiQuE Standards for Institutional Review and HAKA's Guidelines for institutional accreditation, with self-evaluation of chosen study programmes (MA Classical music performance, BA Drama, MA Contemporary Physical Performance Making and PhD Music and Theatre). The SER was put together by working groups led by members of the Rector's office, with the active

⁴ SER, p.7.

⁵ SER, pp.8-9.

⁶ SER, p.7.

⁷ [HAKA's Guidelines for institutional accreditation](#), section II.7.

⁸ SER, p.6.



input brought by members of the faculty, staff, Council and the Student Council. Upon receiving and analysing the SER with annexes, the review team met online in order to share insights and identify lines of enquiry of the review.

2. An international review team conducted a site-visit at EAMT from 30 October to 2 November 2023. It comprised meetings with members of the Rector's office, EAMT administrative staff, faculty, coordinators of the chosen study programmes, students, members of the institutional Council, alumni and representatives of the profession⁹. Additional site-visit activities included a tour of the facilities – both those of the music and theatre department, as well as observational visits to classes and learning activities. Furthermore, a series of private review team meetings was incorporated into the schedule of the site-visit in order to facilitate reflection and planning. The site-visit was concluded with a final feedback session to the institution, at which the review team presented a summary of its findings.
3. The review team produced the following report, structured in accordance with the mapped MusiQuE and HAKA standards, as explained in the Context of the review section.

⁹ Full site-visit schedule is available as the Annex 1 of this review report.

Summary of the compliance with the Standards and recommendations

The review team concludes that Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre complies with the *MusiQuE Standards for Institutional Review* as follows:

1. Institutional mission, vision and context	
Standard 1.1: The institutional mission and vision are clearly stated.	Fully compliant
Standard 1.2. Academic ethics	
	Fully compliant
Suggestions for enhancement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider making the role of Equal Treatment Officer clearer and widely communicated across the student community. ○ The review team suggests to the institution to continue its work on future regulation of the use of artificial intelligence, in relation to the existing national debate. 	
Standard 1.3. Research, development and/or other creative activity (RDC)	Substantially compliant
Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recognising the ambition in the third strategic objective, the review team recommends developing the research culture and further engage in the latest development of the contemporary artistic research. ○ The review team recommends consideration of investment in international research cooperations on the institutional level. ○ The review team recommends the institution to continue efforts in securing a stable long-term research funding system. 	
2. Educational processes	
Standard 2.1. The goals of the institution are achieved through the content and structure of the study programmes and their methods of delivery	Substantially compliant
Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure teachers are consistently aligning modular level learning outcomes to programme level ones. ○ Ensure teachers are clearly communicating learning outcomes to students. ○ Apply consistent allocation of workload hours to ECTS credits. ○ Look into enhancement of the coordination and communication across systems of different universities, to improve efficiency of studies. 	
Standard 2.2. The institution offers a range of opportunities for students to gain an international perspective.	Fully compliant

Standard 2.3. The assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes.	Substantially compliant
Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Encourage teachers to share best practice in assessment methods to achieve systematic consistency across the institution. ○ Recognising strong culture of informal feedback, work on its formalisation. 	
3. Student profiles	
Standard 3.1. Clear admission criteria exist, which establish artistic/academic suitability of students.	Fully compliant
Standard 3.2. The institution has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students.	
Substantially compliant	
Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recognising initiatives regarding data collection are underway; consider enhancement of formal monitoring and statistical analysis of alumni. ○ Develop a better understanding of reasons behind students' drop-out to inform future enhancements. ○ Consider implementing more systematic knowledge about the labour market to gain deeper insight to how well-prepared and adaptable candidates are towards the market. 	
4. Teaching staff	
Standard 4.1. Members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/pedagogues/ researchers.	Fully compliant
Suggestions for enhancement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider ways of making appointments and academic progression pathways more explicit to all staff. 	
Standard 4.2. There are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programmes.	Fully compliant
Suggestions for enhancement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure visiting teachers are well acquainted with the institutional ethics and learning & teaching policies. 	
5. Facilities, resources and support	
Standard 5.1. The institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programmes.	Substantially compliant
Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focus on estate improvements for the Theatre Department. ○ Consider the ways in which digital tools such as LoLa could be better utilised to enhance the student experience. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The review team encourages the institution to continue efforts in digitisation of cultural heritage in Library's collections and offering it to the public. ○ Continue work on development and implementation of a new, more efficient system for booking of the practice rooms. 	
Standard 5.2. The institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the study programmes.	Fully compliant
Suggestions for enhancement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The review team encourages the adoption of financial scenario planning to further realise robust resource allocation. 	
Standard 5.3. The institution has sufficient qualified support staff.	Fully compliant
6. Communication, organisation and decision-making	
Standard 6.1. Effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the institution.	Fully compliant
Suggestions for enhancement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The review team advises, in a spirit of enhancement, that the institution further explore how to equally ensure easily accessible tools and clear internal communication protocols between different departments, as well as between the institution and external collaborators and part-time (hourly-paid) teachers. 	
Standard 6.2. The institution has an appropriate organisational structure and clear decision-making processes.	Fully compliant
7. Internal quality culture	
Standard 7.1. The institution has a strong internal quality culture, supported by clear and effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures.	Substantially compliant
Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The review team recommends securing ownership of the quality systems to ensure the development of the quality culture, embedded in teaching and learning 	
8. Public interaction	
Standard 8.1. The institution engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts.	Fully compliant
Standard 8.2. The institution actively promotes links with various sectors of the music and other artistic professions.	Fully compliant
Standard 8.3. Information provided to the public about the institution is clear, consistent and accurate.	Fully compliant

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Conclusion

The Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre has a long tradition and plays a prominent role in the contemporary Estonian culture and society. It has a well-developed and comprehensive institutional mission, vision and core values that are shared and understood across the institutional community. Another highly distinguished quality of the institution lies in an open, respectful and inclusive working and learning environment.

The Self-evaluation report and the accompanying documents have been written in an exceptionally frank, open and thorough manner, painting a convincing picture of a current state of the affairs and plans for the future.

The review team has found many highly commendable strong points of the EAMT, that are listed below, whereas recommendations and areas for further advancement can be found in the conclusions of the analysis of each of the standards, as well as in the summary of the Summary of the compliance with the standards.

The review team hopes that the insights provided in this report will prove beneficial in the further exciting development plans for the institution, wishing it every success in its future endeavours.

Summary of the strengths identified during the final feedback meeting between the review team and the EAMT:

- Clear understanding of the institutional purpose, well-articulated through the mission & vision and understood across the institutional community
- Open, transparent and inclusive working and learning environment
- Internationalisation
- Clearly articulated strategic objectives and the Development Plan underpinned under the core values
- The Institution pursues its objectives and the needs of the cultural sector and takes into account national strategies and the expectations of society
- Establishment of and investment in resources to support the development of digital culture and competencies
- The institution offers a range of opportunities for students to gain an international perspective
- Commend graduates' achievements in relation to subsequent employability
- Applaud the committed, confident, purposeful and articulate students
- Commend the commitment of the institution to staff development, including investment in support staff
- Commend the targeted investment in IT and technological training to support the development of digital competencies of staff
- Congratulate the institution on the achievement of realising significant improvements in estate
- Commend the institution's highly effective and committed support staff



- Effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the institution, cultivating a strong community affiliation and institutional confidence
- Members of the institution share the core values that serve as a basis for its development plan
- Commend the institution for the focus and investment in the establishment of the quality systems
- The team commends the active and successful participation between the institution and wider Estonian cultural sector and society

