

**Decision Regarding Assessment of the Business and
Administration Study Programme Group
Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre**

11/04/2017

**The Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education of the
Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education
decided to approve the report by the Assessment Committee
and to conduct the next quality assessment of the Business
and Administration study programme group in the first and
second cycles of higher education at the Estonian Academy
of Music and Theatre in seven years,
with a secondary condition**

On the basis of subsection 10 (4) of the Universities Act, point 3.7.3 of the Statutes of the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (hereinafter referred to as 'EKKA') and point 41 of the document, 'Quality Assessment of Study Programme Groups in the First and Second Cycles of Higher Education', authorised in point 3.7.1 of the above-mentioned EKKA Statutes; the EKKA Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as 'the Council') affirms the following:

1. On 25.11.2015 the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre and EKKA agreed upon a time frame to conduct a quality assessment of the study programme group.
2. The Director of EKKA, by her order on 10.10.2016, approved the following membership of the quality assessment committee for the Business and Administration study programme group in the first and second cycles of higher education at Estonian Business School, Tallinn University and the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre (hereinafter referred to as 'the Committee'):

Tanja Dmitrovic – Chair of the Committee	Professor, Head of the Chair, Faculty of Economics, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia
Jaakko Pekka Juhani Lehtonen	Professor Emeritus, University of Jyväskylä, Finland
Anne Perkiö	Lic.Ed, Head of the Programme, Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Finland
Kotryna Peilauskaite	Student member of the Committee, University of Vilnius, Lithuania
Tõnu Pekk	Entrepreneur, Estonia

Muhammed Abdul Rauf	Head, School of Business, Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences, Holland
Simone Ella Gertrud Wesner	University of London, Birkbeck, United Kingdom

3. The Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre submitted the following study programme for evaluation under the Business and Administration study programme group:
Cultural Management (MA), a joint programme of the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre and Estonian Business School
4. The Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre submitted a self-evaluation report to the EKKA Bureau on 7.10.2016 and the assessment coordinator forwarded it to the Committee on 7.10.2016.
5. An assessment visit was made to the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre on 09.12.2016.
6. The Committee sent its draft assessment report to the EKKA Bureau on 25.01.2017, EKKA forwarded it to the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre for its comments on 6.02.2017, and the Academy delivered its response on 17.02.2017.
7. The Committee submitted its final assessment report to the EKKA Bureau on 23.02.2017. That assessment report is an integral part of the decision, and is available on the EKKA website.
8. The Secretary of the Council forwarded the Committee's final assessment report along with the Academy's self-evaluation report to the Council members on 23.02.2017.
9. The Council with 11 members present discussed these received documents in its session on 11.04.2017 and, based on the assessment report, decided to point out the following strengths, areas for improvement, and recommendations regarding the Business and Administration study programme group in the first and second cycles of higher education at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre.

Assessment at the Study Programme Group and Programme Levels

Strengths

- 1) The joint study programme, created in successful collaboration between the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre (EAMT) and the Estonian Business School, educates dedicated and enthusiastic cultural managers and entrepreneurs. Its strong international focus imbues the study programme with a market advantage in Estonia. Both students and lecturers are very satisfied with the programme. Members of the teaching staff are enthusiastic and highly motivated. The students and staff members of the MA programme in Cultural Management form a dedicated academic community.
- 2) According to employers and other stakeholders, the professional preparation of graduates is of outstanding quality and integrates the strengths of both of the higher education institutions.
- 3) The study programme provides a solid professional basis for the students, and the practice and theory are well balanced in the programme. Employers particularly value the practical skills and reflective attitudes of students.
- 4) A special module to manage arts projects with societal impacts (the MAPSI module) has been developed as part of an international collaborative initiative, which sets a good example for the development of similar study programmes at the European level.
- 5) This is the only study programme in Cultural Management in Estonia which is taught in English.
- 6) Flexible opportunities have been created for students to complete their practical trainings abroad, further enhancing international prospects for the programme.

- 7) Libraries of both higher education institutions are well equipped. The EAMT library offers students and lecturers particularly good access to international journals which are essential to the programme.
- 8) The study programme is designed to take into account the needs of working students, accommodating both their full-time work and studies. The programme coordinator and teaching staff provide the students with personal assistance during the planning phase, as well as during their studies. The small size of study groups allows for developing students' communicative skills in an effective manner. Students find group work and teamwork particularly useful.
- 9) In the study programme, student feedback is taken into account in an expeditious manner.
- 10) One of the clear advantages of the programme lies in the practical professional work experience of the teaching staff.
- 11) Members of the teaching staff collaborate with various partners from other higher education institutions and creative industries, both locally and internationally.
- 12) Students and alumni of the study programme also show great initiative outside of their studies (e.g. setting up an Association of Professional Arts and Culture Managers of Estonia), and are active in the professional labour market.

Areas for improvement and recommendations

- 1) It is necessary to develop a strategy for the study programme in order to set clear objectives regarding the international cultural industries. Visibility of the programme in international markets should be enhanced and additional resources allocated for this purpose as needed. The programme's strengths should definitely be highlighted in the marketing materials and suitable media channels be chosen to reach the target groups.
- 2) The Cultural Management programme should be better integrated with other programmes at the EAMT, for example, by conducting joint research or projects.
- 3) The research component in the study programme should be strengthened and better integrated into the teaching and learning process. Students could also be offered research-focused practical training options.
- 4) For the sake of sustainability of the study programme, the degree of staff's engagement in research should be increased. Staff research activities should therefore be strongly encouraged and supported at the Academy level, including by organising seminars on research topics. Members of the teaching staff should also be involved in international research cooperation, including practicing at universities abroad.
- 5) When determining workloads for the teaching staff, their research loads and administrative tasks should also be taken into account, in addition to their teaching loads. Equal distribution of workload among all staff members must be ensured.
- 6) All members of the teaching staff should endeavour to enhance their pedagogical and professional skills on a regular basis.
- 7) The Academy should review the ECTS credit structure in the programme. In order to achieve international comparability of the programme, it must be ensured that the number of credits corresponds to a student's actual workload and is evenly distributed among the courses.
- 8) The number of elective courses should be increased to provide students with more specialisation options.
- 9) The clarity and transparency of assessment criteria must be guaranteed. Students should be given written qualitative feedback more systematically on all the components of a grade received. For the sake of equal treatment of students, the assessment process should be clearly documented. It is advisable to establish uniform feedback rules for all assessments of students.
- 10) Software should be introduced that makes it possible to detect plagiarism in different languages and to check the originality of student papers.

- 11) In view of the international focus of the programme, all key texts should also be translated from Estonian into English.
 - 12) In addition to textbooks, other alternative learning materials should be offered to students, such as podcasts, documentaries and open lectures from other universities abroad.
 - 13) Means of extending the best practices of MAPSI to other modules should be considered (the alignment of teaching methods with programme content, e-learning). Digital learning opportunities for providing guest lecturing should be employed to a greater extent.
 - 14) The Academy should fully support international staff and student mobility, to enable both to gain international experience and contacts. To this end, cooperation with other educational institutions with similar profiles would be useful.
 - 15) It is recommended that a formal English language test be used (e.g. IELTS) to evaluate candidates' proficiency in English to ensure that all students have uniformly high levels of language skills.
 - 16) The student dropout rate should be further reduced and students should be motivated to complete their MA studies in a timely manner.
- 10.** Point 41 of the document, 'Quality Assessment of Study Programme Groups in the First and Second Cycles of Higher Education', establishes that the Quality Assessment Council shall approve an assessment report within three months after receipt of the report. The Council shall weigh the strengths, areas for improvement, and recommendations pointed out in the assessment report, and then shall decide whether to conduct the next quality assessment of that study programme group in seven, five or three years.
- 11.** The Council weighed the strengths, areas for improvement, and recommendations referred to in point 9 of this document and found that the study programmes, the teaching conducted under these programmes, and development activities regarding teaching and learning conform to the requirements if the Academy eliminates the following shortcoming:
- According to clause 6 (7) 2) of the Government of the Republic Regulation, 'Standard of Higher Education', *a member of the teaching or research staff who conducts studies in a given subject must have the necessary teaching competence and his or her qualifications must support achievement of the objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme.*
- The degree of staff's engagement in research is low. Research is not sufficiently integrated into the teaching and learning process. Thus the research done by the teaching staff does not sufficiently support achievement of the objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme, as defined in the 'Standard of Higher Education'.
- 12.** According to clause 53 (1) 2) of the Administrative Procedure Act, *a secondary condition of an administrative act is an additional duty related to the principal regulation of the administrative act* and, according to clause 53 (1) 3), it is also *a supplementary condition for the creation of a right arising from the principal regulation of the administrative act.* Clauses 53 (2) 2) and 3) of the Administrative Procedure Act establish that *a secondary condition may be imposed on an administrative act if the administrative act cannot be issued without the secondary condition, or if issue of the administrative act must be resolved on the basis of an administrative right of discretion.* The Council found that, without a secondary condition, the next quality assessment of the study programme group should be conducted in less than seven years, and therefore, on the basis of points 41.1 and 42 of the document, 'Quality Assessment of Study Programme Groups in the First and Second Cycles of Higher Education', the Council

DECIDED

to approve the assessment report and to conduct the next quality assessment of the Business and Administration study programme group in the first and second cycles of higher education at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre in seven years with the following secondary condition:

No later than 11.04.2019, the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre shall submit a progress report in English to the Council on eliminating the shortcomings referred to in point 11 of this document. Members of the assessment committee shall be involved in the assessment of compliance with the secondary condition.

The decision was adopted by 11 votes in favour and 0 against.

- 13.** If the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre does not comply with the secondary condition by the due date, the Council will repeal this assessment decision and set a new date for a quality assessment of the study programme group, or establish a new secondary condition.
- 14.** The Council proposes that the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre will submit an action plan to EKKA with regard to other areas for improvement and recommendations pointed out in the report no later than 11.04.2019.
- 15.** A person who finds that his or her rights have been violated or his or her freedoms restricted by this decision may file a challenge with the EKKA Quality Assessment Council within 30 days after the person filing the challenge became or should have become aware of the contested finding. A judicial challenge to this decision is possible within 30 days after its delivery, by filing an action with the Tallinn courthouse of the Tallinn Administrative Court pursuant to the procedure provided for in the Code of Administrative Court Procedure.

Tõnu Meidla
Chair of the Council

Hillar Bauman
Secretary of the Council