Decision Regarding Assessment of the Arts Study Programme Group

Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences

29/09/2017

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 Arts study programme group in the first cycle of higher education at the Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences in seven years

On the basis of subsection 21^1 (2) of the Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act, 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 41.1 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 Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education of EKKA (hereinafter referred to as 'the Council') affirms the following:

1. On 22.03.2016 the Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences 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 17.02.2017, approved the following membership of the quality assessment committee for the Arts study programme group in the first cycle of higher education at Euroacademy and the Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences (hereinafter referred to as 'the Committee'):

Judy Glasman	Chair of the Committee, Dean of School of Creative Arts, University of Hertfordshire; Vice Chair of Council for Higher Education in Art and Design, United Kingdom
Soledad Garcia Ferrari	Senior lecturer in architectural design, Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom
Sonja Spee	Manager of Quality Assessment and Educational Development in Art Education, Royal Academy of Fine Arts and Royal Conservatoire, Artesis Plantijn University College Antwerp, Belgium
Andres Tali	Freelance artist and graphic designer, Estonia

Georg Fischer	Student, Leipzig University of Applied Sciences, Germany

3. The Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences submitted the following study programmes for evaluation under the Arts study programme group:

Game Design and Development (Prof HE)
Web Design and Digital Graphics (Prof HE)

4. The Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences submitted a self-evaluation report to the EKKA Bureau on 14.02.2017 and the assessment coordinator forwarded it to the Committee on 15.02.2017.

5. An assessment visit was made to the Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences during 29–30.03.2017.

6. The Committee sent its draft assessment report to the EKKA Bureau on 24.05.2017, EKKA forwarded it to the Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences for its comments on 25.05.2017 and the University delivered its response on 1.06.2017.

7. The Committee submitted its final assessment report to the EKKA Bureau on 2.06.2017. 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 University's self-evaluation report to the Council members on 25.08.2017.

9. The Council with 9 members present discussed these received documents in its session on 29.09.2017 and, based on the assessment report, decided to point out the following strengths, areas for improvement, and recommendations regarding the Arts study programme group in the first cycle of higher education at the Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences.

Strengths

1) The higher education institution makes a good contribution to the development of creative industries and the digital technology sector in Estonia through its students, graduates and its collaborations with entrepreneurs and the general public.
2) The study programmes pay attention to entrepreneurial and collaborative skills development. The study programmes enable students to acquire the needed technical skills (such as programming) and knowledge of related applications.
3) The study programmes incorporate flexible and learner-centred courses which meet the needs of working students well.
4) Members of teaching staff from other faculties also make interdisciplinary contributions to the programmes, supporting the development of students' broad-based knowledge and professional skills. Students appreciate that the study programmes include subjects such as psychology and organisational behaviour. Innovative modules bring together students from design and technology alongside business students in mixed groups.
5) Practitioners in the field have been involved in development and delivery of the programmes. Regular meetings are held with stakeholders.
6) The structure and syllabus of the Game Design and Development programme meet the needs of the changing working world. The study programme is innovative and develops students' problem-solving skills. Members of the teaching staff work closely with employers, who also contribute to the programme development. The study programme has close ties with professional networks and communities, and is constantly updated.
7) Staff members encourage students to participate in the activities of a professional networked digital community, which helps them understand the needs of different users.

8) The computer suites are up to date and also accommodate the growth in student numbers. A broad selection of industry standard software is available.
9) Teaching staff make use of different active teaching methods, which motivate students and encourage them to think independently. Assessment methods are appropriate, diverse and support learning.
10) The study programmes are designed to fit the needs of students with different abilities and skills.
11) The majority of teaching staff are enthusiastic, committed to teaching and engaged in professional activities. The teaching work of staff members is closely related to their creative practice.
12) The University's Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching provides teaching staff with good-quality trainings on the use of digital systems and web-based learning.
13) Students appreciate the individual support from their supervisors.
14) The 'traffic light' system within the Study Information System alerts teaching staff promptly to students who may be experiencing difficulties with their studies.

Areas for improvement and recommendations

1) It would be desirable to link the study programmes more closely to a contemporary cultural background and, with regard to specialist courses, to refer more specifically to an international context.
2) According to the students, the positioning of some general modules in relation to the year of study is not logical, being at variance with the logical sequence of studies – for example, some introductory modules are conducted in the final years of study.
3) It is advisable to develop some modules to be delivered in English for study programmes currently taught in Estonian.
4) In the Web Design and Digital Graphics programme, more emphasis should be placed on design thinking, creative processes and problem-solving skills. Consideration should be given to replacing a number of courses of low credit values with courses having higher credit values, which would include different specialisations and allow students to pursue subjects in greater depth.
5) In the Web Design and Digital Graphics programme, students should have some exposure to the analogue world, giving some attention to the materials and techniques of making design artefacts, particularly in the first two years of study.
6) Examination and assessment procedures should be reviewed to ensure that final decisions on student work are not made by just one staff member. Double marking across all subjects helps ensure the transparency of assessment procedures and an equal treatment of students. A larger number of external practitioners could be involved in the assessment of students' work and in the provision of feedback on such work.
7) Standard questionnaires should be used to collect student feedback across all study programmes. The curriculum councils should analyse student progress and the feedback from different stakeholders by academic year in a more regular manner and, based on that, plan further activities.
8) Students across all curricula must be provided with sufficient guidance on how to use digital information and learning resources.
9) In the context of possible future growth in student numbers, teaching staff should review the teaching methods currently in use, including planning for the provision of technical remedial classes for the less experienced students as needed.
10) The international staff and student mobility rates should be increased and international teaching staff should be involved in the teaching to a greater extent. Comparisons between the University's study programmes and other Estonian and international programmes should also be

carried out, which would require collaboration between different art institutions of higher education and their students. The international focus of the study programmes should be sharpened in order to better identify the needs of different users at the global level.

11) Staff members should more actively share their best teaching practices and tools, by introducing their effective and innovative teaching methods to one another.

12) A formal system of annual staff development interviews should be established. The progress of students and their feedback, as well as the staff's self-development and programme development work should be taken into account while evaluating the performance of the teaching staff (including visiting lecturers and practical training supervisors).

13) Students and staff of all subjects should more actively participate in the activities of professional networks and the art world in general.

14) More public exhibitions of students' works could be organised. Environments should be created in the academic building to display student and staff work (e.g. on screens).

15) Online capabilities should be developed to introduce the work and achievements of students of the programmes to potential applicants and employers.

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, and

DECIDED

to approve the assessment report and to conduct the next quality assessment of the Arts study programme group in the first cycle of higher education at the Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences in seven years.

The decision was adopted by 9 votes in favour and 0 against.

12. The Council considers it necessary to include the programmes of the Arts study programme group in a programme sampling for the next institutional accreditation of the Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences, since it was not possible at the time of this assessment to ascertain whether the learning outcomes of the study programmes correspond to the (constantly changing) needs of the labour market.

13. The Bureau of EKKA will coordinate a date for the next quality assessment of the study programme group with the Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences no later than 29.09.2023.

14. The Council proposes that the Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences will submit an action plan to EKKA with regard to the areas for improvement and recommendations pointed out in the report no later than 29.09.2018.

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.

Maaja-Katrin Kerem
Vice-Chair of the Council

Hillar Bauman
Secretary of the Council