

**Bachelor Dance  
Codarts,  
University of the Arts**

*Report of the extensive programme assessment  
26 June 2019*

## Colophon

### Programme

Codarts Rotterdam

University of the Arts

Programme: Bachelor Dance

Title: Bachelor of Arts

Location: Rotterdam

Mode of study: full-time

Croho: 34798

Result of institutional assessment: not applied for

### Assessment committee

drs. J.K.C. (Hans) Bloo, chair

M. (Melanie) Person BA, domain expert

dr. L. (Liesbeth) Wildschut, domain expert

R. (Rianne) Hagen, student

dr. M.J.H. (Marianne) van der Weiden, secretary

The assessment committee was presented to the NVAO for approval.

The assessment was conducted under responsibility of AeQui Nederland

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*This document is best printed in duplex*

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## Summary

On 26 June 2019 an assessment committee of AeQui visited the Bachelor programme Dance at Codarts Rotterdam. The committee judges that the programme meets each standard; the overall quality of the programme **meets the standard**. This four-year full-time programme consists of 240 ECTS and aims to educate creative, open and mature dance artists who can find their way and position in the work field, mapping out their career of life-long learning and personal success.

### Intended learning outcomes

The intended learning outcomes of the Bachelor of Dance meet national and international requirements of higher education in the field of dance, because they are linked to general (Dublin descriptors) and specific (arts) standards. The definition of four domains (dancer/performer, maker/performer, contextual studies and professional/entrepreneur) is helpful to clarify the intended learning outcomes. The programme aims for a high level of professionalism and shows a clear understanding of the changing dance landscape. Its hallmark is the combination of the students' artistic, technical and personal development. The extensive national and international network allows the programme to remain up to date and offer its students a wide range of possibilities in preparation of their entry into the work field.

### Curriculum

The committee considers that the curriculum is clearly articulated, with a strong focus on the professional skills and complemented by the artistic research trajectory. Students are given opportunities to participate in many performances during their studies and are prepared for the work field, especially through the final internship. Contextual studies broaden the students' horizon. The artistic research path gives students the opportunity to follow their curiosity and interest. The contents of the study programme give the students a thorough insight into the dance world. The Bachelor of Dance offers a learning environment that is challenging and supporting at the same time. The selection and intake procedure is balanced and respectful. The outcome is a diverse, international and highly qualified student population.

### Staff

The committee considers that the teachers of the Bachelor of Dance are very well-equipped, proficient in English, committed and dedicated as a team. The

communication is open and positive, both within the teaching team and with students and management. The combination of permanent and guest teachers works out well. It is clear that the students value their teachers. The committee recommends to speed up the professionalisation of teaching staff in assessment and examination.

### Facilities

The committee considers that the available accommodation is put to full use. The facilities are sufficient for the current number of students. The committee advises to continue the development of IT facilities, especially in view of the need to store and archive the videos of students' work. The committee appreciates the attention for healthy nutrition. The committee considers that the tutoring process of students is well-balanced: students are supported and guided throughout their studies, without being pampered. This way they are well prepared for their autonomous position as a professional dancer. The programme has a good system in place for individualised programmes. The information provision is adequate.

### Quality assurance

The committee considers that the programme has an explicit and widely supported quality assurance system in place. The approach is a good combination of formal procedures and informal ways of feedback. All relevant stakeholders are involved. The programme staff is evidently open to feedback, as is shown by the fact that questions and issues are addressed immediately.

### Assessment

The committee considers that the Bachelor of Dance has important mechanisms in place to guarantee the quality of assessment, such as the more-eyes principle, internal discussions to calibrate differences between assessors, and the safeguarding procedures

of the examination board with its assessment committee. The assessment methods are varied and fit the different learning objectives. The committee advises to continue the efforts to achieve a standardised Codarts set of assessment criteria. The committee urgently advises to increase the assessment knowledge and skills of the teachers shortly. Having seen and heard that the examination board has put these items on the agenda and that schooling activities are scheduled for next academic year, the committee has sufficient confidence that this will be carried out by the programme.

### **Achieved learning outcomes**

The committee is impressed by the high level achieved by the programme's graduates. This is evidenced by their positions in the international work field. The sample of final exams and the feedback from alumni and companies show convincingly that the Bachelor of Dance has achieved its objective to educate physically and verbally outspoken, unique and versatile dancers. The combination of artistic, technical and personal development has evidently been successful.

### **Distinctive feature**

The assessment committee observes that the feature Health and Wellbeing: Fit to Perform is distinctive, relevant and operationalised concretely within the programme. Codarts has developed an extensive system of support aimed at improving and monitoring the health and wellbeing of its performing arts students: Student Life. This support system has been fully integrated into the curriculum of the Bachelor of Dance programme. It distinguishes itself from other dance programmes through the unique way it has been implemented, establishing a close collaboration between the Student Life team and

educational staff members. The assessment committee confirms that the distinctive feature has been made concrete in all aspects of the programme, expressing the strong focus on health and wellbeing. The programme succeeds in delivering knowledgeable and self-aware dancers. The successful design of the health system has prompted other institutions and organisations in the field of performing arts to ask for input and support with regard to these themes.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

As stated in the position paper, Codarts fulfils its mission by providing a progressive curriculum and programme, delivered by an exceptional teaching faculty of diverse backgrounds. The Codarts values are clearly visible in the curriculum and the organisation, showing that the programme practices what it preaches. The professional environment fosters inclusion, openness and honesty. Support programmes and systems are in place for dancer wellbeing and entry into the field. Codarts delivers dance education at a very high level.

There is nonetheless room for improvement. In order to bring the programme to an even higher level of quality in the future, the committee issues the following recommendation:

- bring the reading lists in the module readers more up to date;
- continue the development of IT facilities, especially in view of the need to store and archive the videos of students' work;
- continue the efforts to achieve a standardised Codarts set of assessment criteria;
- increase the assessment knowledge and skills of the teachers, using the fundamentals of a BKE course.

All standards of the NVAO assessment framework are assessed positively; the assessment committee therefore awards a positive recommendation for the accreditation of the programme. The assessment committee also gives a positive recommendation for the granting of the distinctive Health and Wellbeing feature to Codarts' Bachelor of Dance.

On behalf of the entire assessment committee,  
Utrecht, September 2019

drs. J.K.C. (Hans) Bloo  
Chair

dr. M.J.H. (Marianne) van der Weiden  
Secretary

## Overview

The judgements per standard are presented in the table below.

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
1. Intended learning outcomes	<i>Meets the standard</i>
2. Orientation of the curriculum	<i>Meets the standard</i>
3. Contents of the curriculum	<i>Meets the standard</i>
4. Structure of the curriculum	<i>Meets the standard</i>
5. Qualifications of incoming students	<i>Meets the standard</i>
6. Staff: qualified and size	<i>Meets the standard</i>
7. Accommodation and infrastructure	<i>Meets the standard</i>
8. Tutoring and student information	<i>Meets the standard</i>
9. Quality assurance	<i>Meets the standard</i>
10 Assessment system	<i>Meets the standard</i>
11 Achieved learning outcomes	<i>Meets the standard</i>
<b>Overall judgement</b>	<b>Meets the standard</b>

## Distinctive Feature

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
1. The feature is distinctive	<i>Meets the standard</i>
2. The feature has been made concrete	<i>Meets the standard</i>
3. The feature is relevant	<i>Meets the standard</i>
<b>Recommendation distinctive feature</b>	<b>Positive</b>

## Introduction

This report describes the outcome of the evaluation of the Bachelor of Dance at Codarts Rotterdam, University of the Arts, on 26 June 2019. Codarts offers a wide variety of educational programmes in music, dance, circus arts, art education and art therapies. It covers the whole learning trajectory from preparatory programmes to PhDs and is characterized by its international orientation as well as a focus on interdisciplinary cross-over. Codarts has more than 1,000 students from 55 nationalities and approximately 340 employees. The bachelor's programme is a four-year, full-time course, built on strong international connections with the work field, that aims to educate creative, open and mature dance artists who can find their way and position in the work field, mapping out their career of life-long learning and personal success.

### The institute

Codarts University of the Arts was formed out of a merger between the Rotterdam Dance Academy and the Rotterdam Conservatory. It consists of two departments: the department Performing Arts and the department Music. The bachelor programme Dance is part of the Performing Arts department, together with the bachelor programmes in Dance in Education and Circus Arts, the master programmes Choreography and Art Therapies as well as Music Theatre of the bachelor Music. The Music department is comprised of the bachelor Music (Jazz, Pop, World Music and Classical Music), the bachelor Music in Education, the master Art Education and the master of Music. As described in its strategic plan (2017), Codarts' vision is to educate 'talented and driven dancers, musicians and circus artists [...] to become dedicated and inspiring artists, leaders and facilitators, ready to spread their wings in a dynamic, international context.' This vision is supported by six institution-wide values, that are translated and applied by all Codart's programmes: – craftsmanship, self-management, diversity, inquisitiveness, sustainability and connectivity.

### The programme

The programme is a four-year full-time bachelor programme, amounting to 240 ECTS. Students work towards the final qualifications with special emphasis on individuality, reflection & research, and social awareness. The curriculum is organised in four general domains: dancer/performer, maker/performer, contextual studies and professional/entrepreneur. In the first year, students are

taught the foundation of dance, body awareness, drama and improvisation. The emphasis is on the inner journey of the student as a dancer. In the second year, the focus widens to include both inner and outer reflection. Gradually, students are exposed to the working field. They work on a Youth production, are introduced to the international dance scene and receive network training. In addition to the classes by international lecturers, the third year includes the professional Talent On The Move performance and tour through the Netherlands and abroad, thematic workshops and the final Own Work creation. They work on a promotion video, to support their auditions for the fourth-year internship with a national or international dance company or independent production. Through the first three years of the programme, the artistic research process helps students to do their own research and form opinions and views, in order to develop their artistic signature as a creative and reflective dancer.

The programme runs in English because the world of dance for which students are prepared, is international. The work field is highly competitive and dance companies scout for the best dancers all over the world. The programme opts for an international student body, uses English as its official language and works with high-level international choreographers and guest teachers.

### Distinctive feature: Health and Wellbeing

Mental and physical safety, health and wellbeing play an important role in the bachelor's pro-

gramme. Codarts has developed an extensive student support programme, Student Life. This programme, launched in 2012, is aimed at supporting performing arts students in developing a sustainable and healthy artistic practice. Student Life has been fully integrated into the Dance programme. It offers information, education, guidance and care in relation to performance enhancement, personal development, injury prevention and general wellbeing from pre-entry to graduation. Student Life advocates a 'Team around the Artist'-approach: the student is supported by a team of health practitioners, teachers, study coaches, researchers and other supporting staff. Given its strong orientation on safety, health and sustainability, the Dance Bachelor programme has applied for the distinctive feature 'Health and Wellbeing'. The findings regarding this application are discussed in the final chapter of this report.

### **The assessment**

Codarts assigned AeQui VBI to perform a quality assessment of its bachelor programme Dance. In close co-operation with the programme management, AeQui convened an independent and competent assessment committee. A preparatory meeting with representatives of the programme was held to exchange information and plan the date and programme of the site visit.

In preparation for the site visit, the assessment committee studied the bachelor's programme's

position paper and the application for the distinctive feature. On 25 June 2019, the assessment committee attended the Talent on the Move Show, a presentation of nine choreographies, performed by the second and third year students. In addition, the assessment committee reviewed a selection of the final products of fifteen fourth year students of 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. The portfolios contained video registrations of the student's pitch on a solo performance and of the solo performance itself, a written explanation of the performance and assessment forms on a test class training consisting of ballet and modern. The assessment committee's findings were used as input for discussions during the site visit, which took place on 26 June 2019 (an overview of the programme of the site visit can be found in attachment 2). During the preparation and the site visit, the panel has discussed and taken into account the several programme assessments in the cluster. The assessment committee assessed the programme in an independent manner; at the end of the visit, the chair of the assessment committee presented its initial findings to representatives of the programme and the institution.

In this document, the committee reports its findings, considerations and conclusions according to the NVAO framework for extended programme assessment. A draft version of the report was sent to the programme management; its reactions have led to this final version of the report.



## Intended learning outcomes

The intended learning outcomes of the Bachelor of Dance meet national and international requirements of higher education in the field of dance, because they are linked to general (Dublin descriptors) and specific (ELIA) standards. The definition of four domains (dancer/performer, maker/performer, contextual studies and professional/entrepreneur) is a very helpful way to clarify the intended learning outcomes. The committee has seen that the Bachelor of Dance aims for a high level of professionalism and shows a clear understanding of the changing dance landscape. Its hallmark is the combination of the students' artistic, technical and personal development, which is made visible in the intended learning outcomes. The committee is impressed by the extensive national and international network, which allows the programme to remain up to date and offer its students a wide range of possibilities in preparation of their entry into the work field. The assessment committee assesses that the intended learning outcomes **meet the standard**.

### Intended learning outcomes

*Standard 1: The intended learning outcomes tie in with the level and orientation of the programme; they are geared to the expectations of the professional field, the discipline, and international requirements.*

### Findings

Codarts believes that the contemporary dancers of today need to be physically and verbally outspoken, unique and versatile. The (international) professional field, to which the study programme is oriented, places increasingly higher demands on the technical level of dancers. At the same time, more and more value is attached to whether dancers are able to embody repertoire, have a broad knowledge of contemporary techniques and are skilled in improvisation. In addition, there is increasing demand for dancers who are able to be an essential part of the creative process and help shape a choreography in co-creation. In order to reach their full potential and bring these broadly skilled and confident contemporary dancers to the international work field, Codarts aims to provide the dancers with a solid technical base to develop excellent movement and physical performance qualities, in consistent relation to the development of a distinct and personal artistic profile. While expectations and demands are high, students benefit from a sense of trust and personal attention, which makes them feel acknowledged, safe, and challenged. The integral view and attention to the artistic, technical and

personal development of the students is seen as a hallmark of the programme and its special appeal and uniqueness. Compared to other (international) dance schools, Codarts' bachelor of Dance distinguishes itself in its broader orientation and variety of styles and techniques. Codarts' dancers are open-minded, able to switch quickly between choreographic styles, and have strong creative and communicative skills.

The intended learning outcomes are derived from the national study programme profile, updated by the Netwerk Dans (Network Dance) and validated by the work field in 2016. This profile is based on general national and international level descriptions (HBO standard, EQF, NLQF, Dublin descriptors) and the 'tuning documents' by the European League of the Institutes of the Arts (ELIA). Three themes were given special emphasis: individuality, reflection & research, and social awareness. Codarts translated the national final qualifications into four general domains: (1) dancer/performer, (2) maker/performer, (3) contextual studies, and (4) professional/entrepreneur. In response to the previous accreditation's recommendation concerning research, a clear vision on research has been developed and integrated into the curriculum. In a reflexive process, students integrate various strands of information and learn how their inner world of thoughts, feel-

ings, ideas, intuitions and inspirations can be embodied in physical movement research and/or the other way around. They also learn how physical movement research can inform and influence their ideas, questions and investigative methods.

To meet international requirements, the bachelor's programme aims to give students as much stage experience as possible and, therefore, maintains close relations with a broad international network of choreographers, guest teachers, dance companies, production houses, ad hoc projects, and festivals. Commissioned projects, new works and performances are developed every year in collaboration with external partners and organisations. In order to continue the ambition to broaden its market, the Bachelor of Dance intends to extend its relationships with international companies and production centres through its internship programme. In the position paper, the programme notes that the latest generation of dancers seems to aspire less to obtaining long-term positions with dance companies, preferring to seek more varied and new learning experiences. They seem to take individual 'performer-ship' increasingly as a standard for working in the field. A new development is a more interdisciplinary approach, using the possibilities for crossovers within the school, between dance and music, drama/theatre and acrobatics/circus.

The Bachelor of Dance maintains relationships with other dance institutes within Europe through the Erasmus+ exchange programme, and outside the EU by organising joint masterclasses and workshops during one or two week visits. The position paper lists the relevant institutes and initiatives. These contacts help students to build their own network and peer community and help the teaching staff to exchange best practices.

The Bachelor of Dance work field committee is utilised to stay up to date and relevant in today's

market place. It consists of representatives from the countries where most of the graduates have found employment and reflects the broad graduation profile. The members attend performances, teach as guest teachers, hold internship auditions and work with students and alumni in their own companies and projects outside the university. Members are consulted individually at least once every season, usually during auditions or performances and/or before and during internships. In addition, other professionals from the local, national and international work field are consulted formally and informally.

### Considerations

Throughout the discussions, the assessment committee gathered that the Bachelor of Dance aims for a high level of professionalism and shows a clear understanding of the changing dance landscape. Its hallmark is the combination of the students' artistic, technical and personal development. The committee feels that this is made visible in the intended learning outcomes. The committee is satisfied that the learning outcomes meet national and international standards of higher education because they are linked to general (Dublin descriptors) and specific (ELIA) standards. The definition of the four domains (dancer/performer, maker/performer, contextual studies and professional/entrepreneur) is a very helpful way to clarify the intended learning outcomes. The committee is impressed by the extensive national and international network, which allows the programme to remain up to date and offer its students a wide range of possibilities in preparation of their entry into the work field.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee establishes that the intended learning outcomes **meet the standard**.

## Curriculum

The committee considers that the curriculum is clearly articulated, with a strong focus on the professional skills and complemented by the artistic research trajectory. Students are provided with extensive opportunities to develop their technical and creative skills, are given opportunities to participate in many performances during their studies and are prepared for the work field, especially through the final internship. Contextual studies broaden the students' horizon. The artistic research path gives students the opportunity to go into their own topics and follow their curiosity and interest. The contents of the study programme give the students a thorough insight into the dance world. The Bachelor of Dance offers a learning environment that is challenging and supporting at the same time. It moves from a structured programme into a more open system where students take responsibility and ownership, within a supportive community. The committee is impressed by the wide range of opportunities and the unique network offered to the students. The committee considers that the selection and intake procedure pays balanced attention to the technical and academic capabilities of the candidates, as well as to their motivation and communicative skills. The outcome is a diverse, international and highly qualified student population. The committee is pleased to hear from the students that respectfulness is a key element in the audition process, which is in line with the open and safe atmosphere that the programme wishes to create for its students. The pre-education programmes are helpful to get incoming students at the required basic level. The committee thinks that this is a worthwhile investment. The assessment committee assesses that the curriculum **meets the standard**.

### Orientation

*Standard 2: The curriculum enables the students to master appropriate (professional or academic) research and professional skills.*

### Findings

The study programme offers a broad interdisciplinary range of subjects, distributed over the four domains. In the domain of dancer/performer (146 EC, including the 30 EC internship) students develop their dance technique in ballet, modern dance styles and contemporary techniques, offered by Codarts teaching staff and a large number of guest teachers. Students work together with a range of choreographers on existing repertoire and new creations, resulting in various performances throughout the year. In the programme Talent on the Move students develop their artistic, professional and performance strengths. In rehearsals, students further learn the ethics, etiquette and professional norms of the dance field. The module Body Awareness and Conditioning (BAC) includes movement classes (fitness, Yoga and Pilates) and provides the physical support in the technically high demanding programme.

In the domain of maker/performer (44 EC) the focus is on the students' artistic and creative development, through the modules Performance Creative Skills and Artistic Research. Students gain in-depth knowledge of their individual talent, personality, creative capacity, investigative and reflective attitude and dance signature. They learn to continuously open up to new movement philosophies and dance trends within the field of dance and choreography. In the module Artistic Research student bridge and connect theory, are challenged in critical thinking, find links between the various curriculum components and develop their individual trajectory and self-values.

The contextual studies (21 EC) are designed to support and enrich the practice of dance and to ensure that the quality and level of the Bachelor of Dance degree is compliant with the current qualifications of arts bachelors in the Netherlands and Europe. This includes dance history, music theory, and the theoretical Maximising Performance Programme (MPP), dealing with anatomy,

injury prevention, nutrition, body image and performance psychology. Students gain the ability to think beyond borders and limited frameworks, developing into young artists who think progressively, globally, responsibly and sustainably.

The domain of professional/entrepreneur (29 EC) deals with practical aspects in the modules Orientation & Practice and with understanding and developing a professional attitude to work in the modules Professional Development. The overarching aim is to equip students so they can find a suitable and desired internship position for their fourth year.

An internship with one of the programme's relations is a fixed and compulsory part of the fourth year curriculum. Students are involved fulltime in the work process of a company or freelance production. The position paper lists examples of the companies in the Netherlands and abroad where students had their internships between 2013 and 2018.

The goal of the artistic research path is that students acquire and communicate text and language-based knowledge, but, more importantly, acquire, create and embody physical, visual, iconic and performative knowledge and skills. This is intended to support students in strengthening their sense of self, expanded with contextual and historical awareness and expressed through the instrument of the dancing body. The students told the committee that the artistic research trajectory, with its weekly meetings, feels like an umbrella, since students are encouraged to link classes and assignments to the topic of their artistic research.

In the past few years, the Bachelor of Dance has participated in the development and application of Motion Bank as an annotation tool, under the supervision of the research group Blended Learning. This was part of a European project. The annotation tool provides in developing a dance vocabulary in education and providing specific feedback, both in real time and from a distance.

The research group Performing Arts Medicine is discussed in more detail in the last chapter (Distinctive Feature). Findings from previous research groups, such as Jiří Kylián's research group One of a Kind, can be found in the Creation & Reflection modules, the interdisciplinary explorations in the fields of Dance & Music and Dance & Visual Arts, and the Master of Choreography COMMA.

### Considerations

The committee considers that the curriculum is clearly articulated, with a strong focus on the professional skills and complemented by the artistic research trajectory. Students are provided with extensive opportunities to develop their technical and creative skills, are given opportunities to participate in many performances during their studies, e.g. in Talent on the Move, and are prepared for the work field, especially through the internship. Contextual studies broaden the students' horizon. The artistic research path gives students the opportunity to go into their own topics and follow their curiosity and interest. The committee is convinced that crossover skills can be used to have students stand out in the work field.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee establishes that the programme **meets this standard**.

### Contents

*Standard 3: The contents of the curriculum enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.*

### Findings

The Bachelor of Dance is a four year fulltime course with a study load of 240 EC. The academic year is divided into 32 educational weeks and 8 project-oriented weeks. The content is described in module descriptions. Students can find these in the digital platform Osiris. Each module description contains information about the content, the study load, the learning objectives, the assessment form, assessment criteria and the scale of results. In addition, each module description

specifies how the module contributes to the programme's final qualifications.

The first year focuses on the inner journey of the student as a dancer. The programme is physically challenging, both academically and in practice. Students are taught the foundations of dance in ballet, modern dance techniques, contemporary jazz, BAC (Body Awareness and Conditioning), drama and improvisation. Students learn how to reflect and to use their observations for personal growth. They learn to understand music, rhythm and sound, and use the study of dance history to think analytically about dance in a social, political and historical context. They are taught about health and wellbeing in the dance profession and are introduced to the Dutch dance scene. By the end of the year they start with creating their personal portfolio.

The second year is meant for both inner and outer reflection. Gradually, students are exposed to the working field. While academic studies continue, performances out of school, in the Netherlands and internationally, are introduced to prepare the students for the even higher demands of the third year. The use of their own movement vocabulary increases and the students' own positioning in the history and future of dance is discussed in Dance History and other classes. Students write their research report, linked to artistic research. They contribute to the creation of a Youth production, further developing their ability, confidence and artistic insight in communicating ideas in dance. They are now introduced to the global (mostly European) dance scene and companies, and learn about organisational models and structures. They receive network training, to be used in the third-year internship auditions. The students who met with the committee, said that the second year is the most demanding of the study programme, both physically and mentally.

Year three has an external focus and is filled with international teachers, lecturers and guests. Special projects strengthen and develop the students' awareness and knowhow of the entrepreneurial

aspect of professional dancing. Students embark upon the professional Talent on the Move performance and tour through the Netherlands and abroad with choreographic work by established, current and new makers. They increasingly master their own movement vocabulary and are able to use improvisational and compositional tools and styles on an advanced level. Students participate in the collaborative project Blind Date with students of Rotterdam Conservatory BA in Composition and students of Willem de Kooning Academie Rotterdam of Applied Sciences, ending with public presentations of the outcome in the Theatre Hall of Codarts. In the second semester, students create an independent Own Work, as a solo, duet or group work. The student is fully responsible for all artistic, practical and entrepreneurial aspects. Selected works go on tour in Rotterdam, The Hague, on festivals. The first part of the season focuses mainly on preparing the students for their internship auditions, e.g. by the creation of a promotion video.

During the fourth year, students fully engage with the professional dance world by doing their internships. A wide range of national and international dance companies and independent productions provide opportunities for this final element of the bachelor programme. Students come back for the final exam for which they create a solo, demonstrating accumulated knowledge and their artistry as a maker/performer. This includes responsibility for the organisation of rehearsals, light design, use of music and costume. In the domain of professional/entrepreneur students create a personal and professional website, based on the personal branding files of their first three years at Codarts. They prepare a pitch that will be presented on their final exam, positioning themselves as professional artist.

During the site visit, the committee studied the vision documents of the four domains, overviews of the student performances between 2015-16 and 2018-2019, and a sample of four module readers.

## Considerations

The committee considers that the four year study programme provides the students with the necessary content and gives them a thorough insight into the dance world. The committee recognises a clear vision throughout the curriculum which is shared by all teachers. After the first year, in which a strong technical base is built, the programme opens up and provides increasingly more opportunities for students to develop their own signature. Every year enhances and adds new skills sets, leading up to the final internship. Based on the interview with teachers, students and alumni, the committee confirms that students learn to keep learning. The integration of health and wellbeing in the Fit to Perform programme is a strong point.

Having studied the readers, the committee assesses that the modules offer a wide coverage, e.g. in dance history. The committee also notes, however, that the reading list is rather limited and restricted to relatively old sources, while much more recent and relevant literature is available. The committee is reassured, on reading a sample of the artistic research reports, that students access more recent literature, but advises to bring the reading lists more up to date.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee establishes that the programme **meets this standard**.

## Structure

*Standard 4: The structure of the curriculum encourages study and enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.*

## Findings

Codarts views learning as an active process in which students gradually take responsibility for their own learning process. Participation, discipline, responsibility and communication are assessed by the entire teaching team. The official language of the Bachelor of Dance is English, as

this fits the international character, student population and work field of the dance profession. All programme documents are written in English. Staff and students are facilitated to improve their English proficiency where needed.

The study programme provides students with a challenging learning environment by giving them maximum freedom of choice within a broad and firmly structured educational programme. The programme pays continuous attention to the connection and collaboration in dance on a professional, artistic and personal level. Students learn to be credible and reliable, pioneering and respectful.

Students are introduced to Codarts and each other at the start of the programme, working on a joint presentation with circus and music students. This shows them the Codarts culture of diversity and peer learning and broadens their frame of reference. The programme Living in Rotterdam (LIR) helps students to feel at home at Codarts, in Rotterdam and with each other, and helps them to look after themselves from a practical point of view. The students informed the committee that they feel taken care of and that this helps them to open up to each other and to the teachers in the study programme.

The self-guiding and explorative ability of students is especially stimulated during the Creation and Reflection weeks, with subjects such as improvisation, orientation on the professional practice, artistic research and internships. Digital skills are becoming ever more important, necessary to build a website and create an audition video. Over the years, students expand their portfolio and orientate themselves on the international work field.

The curriculum contains various work forms and work processes. Students learn both existing and new repertoire and acquire the skills to work on solos, duets and group pieces. All students are seen as equal and are given equal opportunity to grow. Working independently co-exists besides

research, interactive lessons, group lessons, intervention, project weeks and working on case studies. All learning activities are linked to the practice and the broader application of knowledge. Students learn to see and make connections between the various subjects. They told the committee that they appreciate the combination of academic and artistic work forms and experience that it enriches their development. When asked about the most positive characteristic of the study programme, students mentioned the work field connections, the community between students, the high quality of the students with their many different backgrounds, the inspiration offered by the guest teachers in the third year and the project weeks where students from different years work together and with (guest) teachers.

The process of becoming an appealing, healthy, unique and successful professional is seen as an individual, complex, intense and demanding journey. For the purpose of evaluating a student's professional development the results of all modules are collected, allowing for an overarching view through all subjects, and involving all teachers. Students who do not meet the professional development requirements in the first year receive a negative binding study advice and are not allowed to enter the main phase of the studies.

### Considerations

The committee has seen confirmation from the teachers and the students that the Bachelor of Dance offers a learning environment that is challenging and supporting at the same time. It moves from a structured programme into a more open system where students take responsibility and ownership, within a supportive community. The committee is impressed by the wide range of opportunities and the unique network offered to the students. Students seem to be aware that this presents them with a luxury position.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee establishes that the programme **meets this standard**.

### Incoming students

*Standard 5: The curriculum ties in with the qualifications of the incoming students.*

### Findings

The programme is selective and admits approximately 30 students each year. The number of applications is much higher, 600 in 2018-2019. Candidates must have a secondary education equivalent to a Dutch havo-diploma, prove their proficiency in English and show their artistic talent in an audition.

Auditions are organised in Rotterdam, Poland, Spain, Portugal, Croatia, Italy and France. The international auditions make the Bachelor of Dance accessible and give the opportunity to select the potentially most interesting, likely-to-succeed and motivated candidates. The programme works together with a number of preparatory courses in Croatia, Slovakia, France, Portugal, Germany, Italy, Norway and Canada to facilitate a smooth transition to Codarts. Dancers from outside Europe have the option of doing an audition on video. Another method for scouting talented young dancers is to send teachers and Codarts representatives to sit on juries of international competitions. Codarts also invests in strengthening ties with partners and preparatory courses in the Netherlands, with the aim to increase the quality of the intake level. This includes the havo/vwo for Music and Dance and in-house dance training for children from the age of 10.

The selection process focuses on technical potential and aims for dance diversity in the group of admitted students and an equal gender balance. Other criteria are artistic qualities such as musicality, an intrinsic feeling for motion and expression, creative originality, openness to feedback and the ability to quickly apply corrections, and

sufficient strength and stamina. During the site visit, the management added that motivation, intellectual level and communication skills are taken into account as well. The audition takes place in two rounds: a pre-selection and a final selection, and includes a short ballet and a short modern dance class, including improvisation. The audition committee consists of four members, one of whom attends all auditions. Final decisions on admission are taken after all auditions have been completed. After admission, students undergo a medical test, which does not, however, affect their admission. One of the students commented favourably on the audition procedure, especially because of its organic and respectful approach, with feedback and explanations during the process.

Admitted students share discussions on general issues, such as housing, in a Facebook group. They are given information about the Student Life Monitor (see chapter on Distinctive Feature) with a pre-season Fit to Perform programme and exercises they can do in preparation of the school year.

Students enter the programme with very different dance backgrounds and experience. In the first semester, the teaching is quite diverse, aimed at achieving a more homogeneous group. Those with less technique are given extra attention to improve and those who are technically further are still challenged. The LIR programme (Living in

Rotterdam) also contributes to 'landing' in the study programme and the city. When the audition committee sees that a candidate is an exceptional talent, the committee may propose that the exam board approves an individual programme. In such a case, the student can start in the second year for the technical part of the study, while given extra crash courses to make up for the first year theory courses.

### **Considerations**

The committee considers that the selection and intake procedure is worth a compliment. The audition process pays balanced attention to the technical and academic capabilities of the candidates, as well as to their motivation and communicative skills. The outcome is a diverse, international and highly qualified student population. The committee is pleased to hear from the students that respectfulness is a key element in the audition process, which is in line with the open and safe atmosphere that the programme wishes to create for its students. The pre-education programmes are helpful to get incoming students at the required basic level. The committee thinks that this is a worthwhile investment.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee establishes that the programme **meets this standard**.



## Staff

The committee considers that the teachers of the Bachelor of Dance are very well-equipped, proficient in English, committed and dedicated as a team. The communication is open and positive, both within the teaching team and with students and management. The vision and values of Codarts are embodied by the teaching staff. The combination of permanent and guest teachers works out well. It is clear that the students value their teachers. The committee recommends to speed up the professionalisation of teaching staff in assessment and examination, to ensure that the national requirements are met. The committee agrees that courses and training in this domain should fit the Codarts teaching philosophy and practice, and advises to develop this in cooperation with other study programmes at Codarts. The assessment committee assesses that the staff **meets the standard**.

*Standard 6: The staff team is qualified for the realisation of the curriculum in terms of content and educational expertise. The team size is sufficient.*

### Findings

The teaching team of the Bachelor of Dance comprises 37 regular and guest teachers (20.48 fte). This includes 9 musical accompanists, shared with the Bachelor of Dance in Education, and 4 support staff members. The staff-student ratio is 1:6.41 (based on a total of 17.63 fte teaching staff and 113 students, reference date April 1, 2019). Eight out of the 37 staff members have a master degree or PhD (22%). Four of these are musical accompanists.

The position paper indicates that the staff policy for the Dance department (Bachelor of Dance and Dance in Education) is in line with that of the Codarts Institute in general. Codarts uses a cycle of interviews with regard to progress, functioning and evaluation of employees, partially based on the course evaluation results. In addition, work satisfaction, future perspectives and 'latent talents' as well as feedback about the functioning of superiors are topics in these interviews. The improvement of expertise is greatly valued. A list of trainings and courses is provided in the position paper, such as didactical training, English language courses for teaching staff, design thinking trajectories and a workshop time management. Teachers can apply individually for an exchange

(Erasmus+) or participation in conferences or festivals, support for research or innovative projects. None of the staff members have acquired the basic or senior qualification examinations (BKE/SKE). The management explained that the course did not fit the specific teaching and assessment practice in Codarts, which made it difficult to motivate staff members to attend the course. Codarts, therefore, decided to develop its own method of schooling. How to organise this is currently under discussion (see also on Standard 10).

The teaching team comprises people from various nationalities, backgrounds and disciplines, who bring in much and varied expertise. Most teachers have been active as dancers, performers or choreographers. They thus provide versatility in technique and approach and provide students with insight into what other skills they need in the work field. The Bachelor of Dance strives towards a good balance between teachers with a permanent appointment and guest teachers. The permanent teachers guarantee the daily execution of the study programme, while the guest teachers still have an active practice as professional dance artist and bring the most recent experience from professional practices with them. Each of the four domains of the study programme is coordinated by one of the permanent teachers and study coaching is assigned to permanent teachers as well. Guest teachers play a major role in the third

year. They are much appreciated by the students, as was mentioned in the interview with the assessment committee. The students value the commitment of all staff and their availability to answer questions or discuss concerns. They feel that the teaching staff is open for feedback. They are also positive about the lecturers' proficiency in the English language.

The work load of the teaching team is substantial, but teachers do not feel overstretched. They told the committee that they are all passionate about the students and teaching. They all work to their capacity and experience a high degree of mutual support within the team, helping each other out when necessary and looking for solutions. There is enough openness to discuss with management when the load is too much.

#### **Considerations**

The committee considers that the teachers of the Bachelor of Dance are very well-equipped, committed and dedicated as a team. Illustrative is that when the committee raised the issue of workload,

it was discussed with a smile. It is clear from the various discussions during the site visit that there is open communication, among teachers and also between teachers and students, and between teachers and management. The vision and values of Codarts are embodied by the teaching staff of the Bachelor of Dance. The combination of permanent and guest teachers works out well. It is clear that the students value their teachers. The committee recommends to speed up the professionalisation of teaching staff in assessment and examination, to ensure that the national requirements are met. The committee agrees that courses and training in this domain should fit the Codarts teaching philosophy and practice, and advises to develop this in cooperation with other study programmes at Codarts.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee establishes that the programme **meets this standard**.

## Services and facilities

The committee considers that the available accommodation is put to full use. The facilities are sufficient for the current number of students. The committee advises to continue the development of IT facilities, especially in view of the need to store and archive the videos of students' work. The committee appreciates the attention for healthy nutrition. The committee considers that the tutoring process of students is worth a compliment. It is a balanced approach: students are supported and guided throughout their studies, without being pampered. This way they are well prepared for their autonomous position as a professional dancer. The programme has a good system in place for individualised programmes. The information provision is adequate. The assessment committee assesses that the services and facilities **meet the standard**.

### Accommodation and infrastructure

*Standard 7: The accommodation and material facilities (infrastructure) are sufficient for the realisation of the curriculum.*

#### Findings

Dance education takes place on three floors of the Kruisplein building. There are eight average-sized dance studios (capacity for 25-30 students), two large studios (30-50 students) and a theatre (120 seats). All studios are equipped with the necessary facilities, as was verified by the committee on a tour during the site visit. In addition, there are twelve classrooms for theory classes, which are shared with other study programmes. Finally, Codarts Dance has a wardrobe atelier, an exercise room with fitness equipment, a common room for the teachers and dressing rooms with showers. The average occupation rate of classrooms and studios is high, but, after the expansion of opening hours of the building to evenings and weekends, the capacity is sufficient to execute the intensive study programme and to provide space for rehearsals and self-study. A scheduling programme ensures the efficient use of classrooms and studios.

The programme has invested in IT facilities. The system and network have been prepared to facilitate the blended learning environment, digital assessments and end-user-oriented apps. The programme has tried out different learning environments and has decided to continue with Brightspace. Expansion of the IT storage facilities

is needed for the video registrations of students' work in their portfolios. The development and use of Motion Bank as an annotation tool will be continued.

The Codarts media library has an extensive and up-to-date collection of repertoire, textbooks, CD/DVDs and videos. Students have online access from home to the library catalogue, electronic magazines and international databases, such as Dance in Video and the International Encyclopaedia of Dance.

Because of the special nutritional needs of dance students, a team of experts in health, food and education has developed a Healthy Nutrition Policy, based on nutrition guidelines, the latest insights from scientific research and best practices in the world of (elite) sports. This has led to a new catering concept of Codarts and the catering company Sodexo, which was awarded the 'Gouden Kantineschaal' by the Netherlands Nutrition Centre in 2018.

#### Considerations

The committee considers that the available accommodation is put to full use. The facilities are sufficient for the current number of students. The committee advises to continue the development of IT facilities, especially in view of the need to store and archive the videos of students' work. The committee agrees that Motion Bank is a

worthwhile tool to be implemented in the programme. The committee appreciates the attention for healthy nutrition.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee establishes that the programme **meets this standard**.

### **Tutoring and student information**

*Standard 8: The tutoring of and provision of information to students are conducive to study progress and tie in with the needs of students.*

#### **Findings**

Both the position paper and the interviews during the site visit give information on the extensive tutoring system for students in the Bachelor of Dance. In addition to the support provided as part of the programme 'Health and Wellbeing: Fit to Perform' (described in more detail in the final chapter of this report), students can call upon study coaches, the International Office and the student counsellor. All students are assigned a personal study coach who meet with them on a regular basis to monitor their progress and attendance and assist with other issues. The study coach helps students with decisions regarding their studies or study progress and career. The International Office advises and assists with travelling documents to enter the Netherlands, arranging a residence permit and registering at City Hall. It also coordinates educational exchange programmes such as Erasmus+. Students can consult with the student counsellor for advice and guidance on personal concerns or practical issues. Students should see the counsellor if they cannot attend lessons for a long time due to illness, injuries or other personal circumstances that may lead to study delay.

The teachers elaborated on the coaching system and explained that they are coaches in class, trying to discover in dialogue with each student what their aims are and giving feedback. Some students come from traditional backgrounds and

are not used to dialogue. Also, their English proficiency is not always sufficient in the beginning. Teachers try to create a group by asking the students how they learn best and asking questions about their background, so students better understand each other. The aim is to get students to ask questions and become investigators of their own content.

In year 3, students are coached on an individual basis, in preparation of the internship auditions. During the internship, the study coach visits the student, also abroad, and seeks information from both the company and the student. Other ways to remain in touch are Facebook, Skype and other informal ways. Students contact the school when they experience problems. The company is asked to monitor closely when a student has a problem. The internship can be quite a shock for students, since they have to deal with a new position. They do not always realise how privileged the circumstances are at school. The management considers intensifying the process of preparation, but feels that students have to experience the difference for themselves by facing the new situation.

Codarts is an inclusive university and is equally welcoming to disabled and non-disabled students. With the advice from the expert centre Handicap & Study, the policy plan, protocol and implementation plan have been refined, so that students with a disability can be offered additional tools. Students' health is continuously monitored by staff members of the Performing Arts Health Centre (which include physio-manual therapists, a sports dietician, speech and voice therapist, psychologist and mental coach) who have extensive experience working with performance artists. Students with injuries follow a special programme designed by the school's or an outside physiotherapist. With the student's consent the physiotherapist informs the study coach. The study coach may share, again with the student's consent, the necessary information with the management and the teachers. Students told the committee that an individualised study programme is set up for students who need to catch

up after an injury. They are satisfied with the way such circumstances are handled by the programme.

Codarts has improved the information provision in recent years. A central information desk (STIP) is available for all study related matters, the study guide has been renewed, a new scheduling programme has been implemented and more information is available on the intranet and internet. During the site visit, the committee examined the study guide, the vision documents on the four domains of the study programme, the student guide on internship and graduation, the code of conduct and brochures on the Bachelor of Dance and Student Life (see chapter on 'Health and Wellbeing: Fit to Perform').

### Considerations

The committee considers that the tutoring process of students is worth a compliment. It is a balanced approach: students are supported and guided throughout their studies, without being pampered. This way they are well prepared for their autonomous position as a professional dancer. The programme has a good system in place for individualised programmes, both for students who lag behind and for exceptional talents (see standard 5). The information provision is adequate.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee establishes that the programme **meets this standard**.

## Quality assurance

The committee considers that the programme has an explicit and widely supported quality assurance system in place. The approach is a good combination of formal procedures and informal ways of feedback. All relevant stakeholders are involved. The programme staff is evidently open to feedback, as is shown by the fact that questions and issues are addressed immediately. The position paper shows that the programme is aware of its own quality and possibilities for further development. The assessment committee assesses that the quality assurance **meets the standard**.

*Standard 9: The programme has an explicit and widely supported quality assurance system in place. It promotes the quality culture and has a focus on development.*

### Findings

Quality assurance at Codarts is aimed at continuous quality improvement and a culture in which the various study programmes and departments consider quality assurance as a shared responsibility. The activities within the Bachelor of Dance fit within the quality assurance cycle (PDCA) as applied throughout Codarts, consisting of surveys, target figures and regular reports on the results. All relevant parties (study programme committee, exam board, employees, students, alumni and the professional field) are actively involved in the internal quality assurance. The content and implementation of the curriculum are discussed in the study programme committee. The Bachelor of Dance is a member of the study programme committee of the cluster Performing Arts and is represented by one student and one teacher.

Students can give feedback on the programme and their teachers in the regular online questionnaires and through the student panels. Each cohort comprises two classes. Representatives from each class have meetings with the programme management on a regular basis and can raise concerns. The students told the committee that this is effective and that issues are addressed im-

mediately, such as the extension of physiotherapist hours. The students added that even without the questionnaires or student panels, the staff pick it up when something needs to be improved. Older students confirmed that the first year programme has already been improved, based on comments of the current third year students.

The position paper lists improvement measures and shows that the programme is aware of its own quality and possibilities for further development. Lines in the Bachelor of Dance are short and information and feedback are given freely, as was emphasised in all interviews during the site visit.

### Considerations

The committee considers that the programme has an explicit and widely supported quality assurance system in place. The approach is a good combination of formal procedures and informal ways of feedback. All relevant stakeholders are involved. The programme staff is evidently open to feedback, as is shown by the fact that questions and issues are addressed immediately. The position paper was a helpful document for the committee in preparation of the site visit.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee establishes that the programme **meets this standard**.

## Assessment

The committee considers that the Bachelor of Dance has important mechanisms in place to guarantee the quality of assessment, such as the more-eyes principle, internal discussions to calibrate differences between assessors, and the safeguarding procedures of the examination board with its assessment committee. The assessment methods are varied and fit the different learning objectives. The committee advises to continue the efforts to achieve a standardised Codarts set of assessment criteria. The committee urgently advises to increase the assessment knowledge and skills of the teachers, using the fundamentals of a BKE course, and to speed up the training efforts. Having seen and heard that the examination board has put these items on the agenda and that schooling activities are scheduled for next academic year, the committee has sufficient confidence that this will be carried out by the programme. The committee assesses that the assessment system **meets the standard**.

*Standard 10: The programme has an adequate student assessment system in place.*

### Findings

The programme's assessment policy is based on the Codarts Assessment Vision (2011) and the Teaching and Examination Regulations. Practical guides on assessment and evaluation have been developed and examiners have been trained in the use of these guides. Codarts has decided to further strengthen assessment quality by revising the 2011 Assessment Vision.

The assessment methods are laid down in the module descriptions. For each assessment, information is given on the learning outcomes, the evaluation criteria, the form of the assessment, including the weighing of elements and the result scale. Assessment methods in the Bachelor of Dance are written and oral exams, assignments, research reports, reflection reports, individual and group presentations, pitches and performances.

The assessment of the final year consists of the internship assessment and the final exam. The internship is assessed by the internship company on the basis of a set of four criteria: (1) professional attitude, (2) contribution to the creative process, (3) personal qualities and work attitude, and (4) artistic depth. Grades are given for each criterion and complemented by verbal feedback. The internship companies receive guidelines and a detailed description of the criteria. The other

half of the internship grade is based on the student's internship report and is the school's responsibility. Evaluation criteria are the student's description, evaluation and reflection on the internship period.

All fourth year students come to Codarts for their final exam. During this day, students are assessed on three subjects. Training skills are assessed on the basis of a ballet and modern exam. For the module Performance-creative skills students create a solo that they present as part of the final exam. Finally, for the module Orientation & Practice students work on their personal website (including video material) and prepare a pitch that is part of their final exam. The graduation modules are assessed by assessment committees that include at least two external experts.

To guarantee the quality of assessments the Bachelor of Dance has implemented a number of safeguarding principles. The more-eyes principle is used at practical tests and external experts are structurally deployed at final examinations and other tests. In addition, a shared vocabulary is developed to help calibrate differences between assessors and promote more in-depth evaluations and richer feedback. During the site visit, this was described by the examination board as sharpening the idiom that internal and external assessors use. Examiners usually agree on the quality of students' performances, but to formulate this in a

consistent way, also for the benefit of the students, is difficult. Teachers have not attended a formal training in constructing and assessing exams, such as a course for the BKE (basic qualification examinations). The argument given by the management is that available courses, such as the one offered by the Hogeschool Rotterdam, does not fit the teaching and assessment practice at Codarts. Neither does Codarts want to make such a course obligatory for teachers with a small appointment. As an alternative, Codarts emphasises intervision and discussions about assessment. New staff is introduced to the assessment system. The examination board added that they will ask the chair of the assessment committee (toetscommissie), who is an educational specialist, to help the management to organise assessment schooling for the teaching staff next academic year.

Codarts has an institution-wide examination board with two chambers, one for Performing Arts and one for Music. The examination board consists of six internal members and an external member with legal expertise. The examination board installed an assessment committee (toetscommissie) to perform specific screenings. For the Bachelor of Dance screenings were executed on the module descriptions and the assessment programme. Every year the examination board randomly attends a number of final examinations to check whether the assessment guidelines are properly implemented. The examination board confirmed in its meeting with the committee that this was indeed the case. Every year, the examination board reports on its activities and makes recommendations to the management

board and the departments. Recent recommendations are to organise further digitalisation of assessment organisation and assessments, to define the basis of assessment in criterion-oriented assessments, to improve the assessment skills of examiners through training courses and to revise the assessment vision so that it provides more guidance.

### Considerations

The committee considers that the Bachelor of Dance has important mechanisms in place to guarantee the quality of assessment, such as the more-eyes principle, internal discussions to calibrate differences between assessors, and the safeguarding procedures of the examination board with its assessment committee. The assessment methods are varied and fit the different learning objectives. The internship and the set-up of the final exam allow the assessment of all domains of the intended learning outcomes. The committee advises to continue the efforts to achieve a standardised Codarts set of assessment criteria. The committee urgently advises to increase the assessment knowledge and skills of the teachers, using the fundamentals of a BKE course, and to speed up the training efforts. Having seen and heard that the examination board has put these items on the agenda and that schooling activities are scheduled for next academic year, the committee has sufficient confidence that this will be carried out by the programme.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee establishes that the programme **meets this standard**.



## Achieved learning outcomes

The committee is impressed by the high level achieved by the programme's graduates. This is evidenced by their positions in the international work field. The sample of final exams and the feedback from alumni and companies show convincingly that the Bachelor of Dance has achieved its objective to educate physically and verbally outspoken, unique and versatile dancers. The combination of artistic, technical and personal development has evidently been successful. The assessment committee assesses that the achieved learning outcomes **meet the standard**.

*Standard 11: The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.*

### Findings

The programme keeps track of its alumni and in its position paper provides information about their success in the professional field. Lists of the last three graduate cohorts were made available for the committee and show that 55% of them have a fulltime contract with a company. On average, half of the company contracts came directly or indirectly out of the student's internship. The alumni and representatives of the work field confirmed the programme's statement in the position paper that Codarts graduates distinguish themselves by being strong individuals. They are not only outstanding technical dancers, but also creative, artistic, idiosyncratic, ambitious and independent. Many of them (19%) became active participants in the freelance circuit. Others started their own collective, practice in other dance-related professions or have continued their studies in e.g. a master's programme. The position paper lists the prizes won by alumni in recent years.

Looking back, the alumni emphasise the importance of the internship in preparing them for the professional world. The step from the safety of a school environment to 'the big world' is made easier, because there is so much to learn and interns are allowed to make mistakes that would not be accepted from young company members.

The programme remains in touch with its alumni via the dance companies they work for, social media, through surveys and on a personal basis. An

alumni committee was set up in 2015. The programme is currently investigating how to establish a more structural approach of alumni activities and facilitating mutual contacts. Alumni revisit the programme to collaborate in various activities, e.g. as tutors, teachers, assistants, or ambassadors for international auditions.

The committee attended the Talent on the Move show, with performances of second and third year students. The committee recognised the growth in technical and artistic skills between the two cohorts. The committee also studied the graduation files of fifteen students, a sample of the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 cohorts. The committee recognises the quality of their work and agrees with the grades awarded to them.

### Considerations

The committee is impressed by the high level achieved by the programme's graduates. This is evidenced by their positions in the international work field. The sample of final exams and the feedback from alumni and companies show convincingly that the Bachelor of Dance has achieved its objective to educate physically and verbally outspoken, unique and versatile dancers. The combination of artistic, technical and personal development has evidently been successful.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee establishes that the programme **meets this standard**.

## Distinctive feature: Health and Wellbeing

The assessment committee has taken into consideration the application for the distinctive Health and Wellbeing feature of Codarts' Bachelor of Dance. It observes that the feature is, indeed, distinctive, relevant and operationalised concretely within the programme. Codarts has developed an extensive system of support aimed at improving and monitoring the health and wellbeing of its performing arts students: Student Life. This support system has been fully integrated into the curriculum of the Bachelor of Dance programme. It distinguishes itself from other dance programmes through the unique way it has been implemented, establishing a close collaboration between the Student Life team and educational staff members. The assessment committee confirms that the distinctive feature has been made concrete within the programme: intended and achieved learning outcomes, the design and content of the learning environment, intake procedures, staff members as well as quality assurance; all express the strong focus on health and wellbeing. The programme succeeds in delivering knowledgeable and self-aware dancers. The successful design of the health system has prompted other institutions and organisations in the field of performing arts to ask for input and support with regard to these themes. The assessment committee, therefore, gives a **positive** recommendation for the granting of the distinctive Health and Wellbeing feature to Codarts' Bachelor of Dance.

### 1. Distinctive nature

Criterion 1: The feature to be assessed is distinctive for the programme in relation to other relevant higher education programmes in the Netherlands.

Codarts is the only performing arts university in the Netherlands where sustainability is a key element of its mission, vision and strategy. It recognises that performing artists must live up to high expectations and demands at every level. This specifically applies to dance, as it involves a high level of athletic and aesthetic ability as well as psychological strength of the performers. In Codarts' view, performing arts students need to develop a strong sense of self-awareness regarding their physical and mental health. After graduation, they must be able to conduct self-health management and remain resilient in a competitive profession to pursue a sustainable, successful career.

In line with its vision on health, safety and sustainability, Codarts has developed an extensive, integrated student support system that addresses mental and physical health and wellbeing: Student Life (launched in 2012).

Student Life offers information, education, guidance and care in areas relating to performance enhancement, personal development, injury prevention and general wellbeing, from pre-entry to graduation. Students receive regular health screenings and are monitored from the very start of the programme (Student Life Monitor). The outcomes of these inquiries are used as data for scientific research by the researchers at the Performing Arts Health Centre to continually improve the health and wellbeing programmes within the Codarts curricula. The Student Life team collects and connects different sets of data at various levels to monitor students' health on a monthly basis. The tool equips students, staff and the Performing Arts Health Team with relevant data and feedback on the students' health and wellbeing.

Based on the provided documentation and its conversations during the site visit, the assessment committee confirms that this comprehensive support system has been fully integrated into the Bachelor of Dance. The programme conducted a benchmark study with other (inter)national dance academies, the results of which are presented in the position paper. The findings show that the

Codarts dance programme is unique with regard to the scope and integration of the support system within the curriculum. Though other programmes do offer services in health and wellbeing, these are not necessarily offered as in-house services nor are they a part of an integrated system of student support.

As the assessment committee could establish during the site visit, the staff and Student Life team members of Codarts work closely together to monitor the individual health and wellbeing of the students. The students the assessment committee spoke to indicated that Student Life as a whole is essential to their self-awareness with regard to health and wellbeing and contributes to their development as professional artists who are able to sustain a long and healthy dance career.

The assessment committee concludes that the distinctiveness of the health and wellbeing programme can be found in the integrative approach, the scope and intricacy of the system and the manner in which the data on students are collected and analysed for the further improvement of the Student Life support system.

Based on these findings, the assessment committee judges that the programme **meets the requirements** of criterion 1 of the distinctive feature.

## 2. Concretisation

Criterion 2: The impact of the feature to be assessed on the quality of the education provided by the university has been operationalised on the basis of the relevant standards contained in the Assessment Framework for the Higher Education Accreditation System of the Netherlands.

The assessment committee confirms that the distinctive feature has been operationalised concretely in the quality standards of the Dutch national assessment framework for higher education.

### *Standard 1*

In the documentation and its discussions with students, teachers, management and the Student Life team, the assessment committee observed that the goals with regard to health and wellbeing are clearly defined and shared by all involved. During their studies at Codarts, students must become increasingly self-sufficient and develop the ability to organise and maintain their health during and after their career. This ability is assessed at different points during the programme. Students are expected to show their ability to apply comprehensive knowledge of physical fitness, mental skills and nutrition in their daily and future practice. They are also expected to devise their own weekly training programme or practice plan, based on the gained knowledge of Body Awareness Conditioning (BAC) and underpinned by the acquired theoretical and scientific knowledge of the Maximising Performance Programme (MPP).

### *Standard 2 and 3*

In the programme, students learn to take responsibility for their mental and physical health and wellbeing. As future dancers, they gain insight into their individual physical and psychological possibilities and limitations. The Student Life team, together with staff members of the programme, offer various tools and modules to achieve this goal.

### Research

Research is at the core of the Student Life programme. The researchers conduct applied research within the programme and investigate how to enhance performance, prevent injury and develop talent. New scientific knowledge, e.g. from the two PhD projects of Performing Arts Medicine, is used and integrated into the students' educational programme, trainings or injury treatments. The research sustains close collaborations with an increasing international network of scientists, medical specialists and experts. Students participate in the research projects of the Codarts professorship Performing Arts Medicine.

### Screening and monitoring

The Student Life Monitor (SLM) was developed by the Student Life team and the researchers of the professorship of Performing Arts Medicine. The SLM collects data on health problems and injury risk factors for dance students. SLM is integral to the dance curriculum and consists of various tools to monitor health:

- Screenings: at the beginning of the academic year, a comprehensive initial screening takes place for all new students and a compact version of the screening for the 2nd and 3rd year students. Ongoing, compact screenings take place every six months for all 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students. The screenings address aspects, such as (sport) medical and musculo-skeletal concerns, fitness, psychology and nutritional issues. The purpose of the screening is to give students a personal profile of their medical, mental and physical status. Screening can also help determine whether students can participate full time in training classes, identify possible injury risk factors and promote an ongoing healthy approach to training and performing.
- Online consult registration module of the Performing Arts Health Centre.
- Self-reported online health monitor: students are asked to report on physical and mental health problems on a monthly basis in the online health monitor module of SLM. The tool automatically sends surveys to dance students, stores the data in an encrypted database and visualises the results in a dashboard. Questionnaires include VAS pain scale, Oslo Sports Trauma Research Centre Questionnaire on Health Problems, mental complaints and items on sleep quality, mental energy, feelings and emotions and satisfaction with rehearsals and performances.

The individual results of the screening and monitoring tools are shared with the student in different ways. The sports physician and physiotherapist offer students individual feedback during

their screenings. Secondly, special classes are organised for students in order to give them feedback on their screening. Finally, students have access to their individual results in an online personal profile (Student Life Monitor). Within this profile, test scores are displayed and the students can monitor their own progress and compare themselves with previous measurements and with the average of the group.

### Modules in the curriculum

Students also follow different modules that are specifically aimed at offering theoretical and practical knowledge about health, safety and wellbeing issues relevant to performance artists.

- Body Awareness Conditioning (BAC): In their first and second year, students get dance-specific conditioning classes twice a week, where they work on improving their strength, coordination, stamina, balance and flexibility. In the first year, Yoga classes are offered twice a week and in the second year, students have Pilates classes twice a week. In the third and fourth year, students are responsible for their own physical preparation, to prepare them to be independent performers. They devise their own plan, with specific goals, at the start of the year.
- Maximising Performance Programme (MPP): The emphasis in this module is on theory, but includes practical assignments and exercises as well. The module covers Dance-Body (anatomy, biomechanics), Dance-Fit (physical fitness, injury prevention strategies and tools), Dance-Energy (nutrition) and Dance-Mind (mental skills such as focussing, goal-setting and confidence). The majority of the teachers are members of the Performing Arts Health Centre or from the professorship Performing Arts Medicine.

In addition, a programme 'Living in Rotterdam' (LIR) has been developed, to help international students to 'land' and adjust themselves to their new environment. LIR offers workshops on social,

life and practical skills. It also provides information about the work ethics/culture, communication style and manners within the Dance department, which is described as a healthy, 'human' way of working with each other.

Based on these findings, the assessment committee concludes that the health and wellbeing modules and screening programmes are fully integrated into the curriculum, forming a coherent system that is conducive to health awareness and the practices of the students as well as to their learning process as future dancers.

#### *Standard 4*

Student Life subscribes to the 'Team Around The Artist'-approach, which means that the student figures centrally in the educational programme, guided by a team of professionals (health practitioners, teachers, study coaches, researchers and supporting staff) who work collaboratively to facilitate and stimulate the learning process of the student. A health coach has been introduced in 2017-2018 as part of the team to guide students to get the most out of their potential. Various individual and group learning methods are used to encourage study. Students receive theoretical information and have to analyse their physical wellbeing on strength, flexibility, endurance, coordination, speed and posture in the fifth semester. Students with a disability can benefit from various facilities and services, such as extra coaching or extra examination time. According to the assessment committee, the health and wellbeing aspects of the learning environment are without a doubt fully student-centred and geared towards teaching students how to become self-sufficient, responsible dancers who know how to work in a healthy and safe manner. There is a clear build-up throughout the four years of education during which students are increasingly able to independently train their technical skills and the necessary physical fitness.

#### *Standard 5*

To match the physical and mental ability of incoming students with the expectations of the

programme, prospective students are offered a pre-screening during the auditions. They also receive advice on how to train during the summer before they start at Codarts. At the start of their studies, a screening is held to provide a profile of the student's medical and physical status. The student, the teacher and the Student Life team can use the information obtained to understand the student's strengths and areas of improvement. In this way, the programme ensures that the health and wellbeing of each student is monitored and supported from the very start and that students are aware of what is expected of them in this regard. Physical training is given at group level, but the exercises can be tailored to the individual differences, requirements and responses of students to exercise.

#### *Standard 6*

All staff members of the Performing Arts Health Centre (which include physio-manual therapists, a sports dietician, speech and voice therapist, psychologist and mental coach) are qualified professionals who have extensive experience working with performance artists. Many also have a teaching or pedagogical degree. The research team has regular professional development meetings with the staff members of the programme and organises training sessions on topics, such as warming-up, health and injury prevention and guidance of injured students. Students are referred to external partners (affiliated with Erasmus Medical Centre, IKAZIA hospital and Sportgeneeskunde Rotterdam) for the treatment of more serious injuries; these experts also have extensive experience working with performance artists. Based on its conversations with the staff members of the programme and the research team of Student Life, the assessment committee established that all staff members are fully involved in the health and wellbeing programme, and are always in close consultation with the health experts to ensure that students train and learn in a healthy and responsible manner. The assessment committee was impressed by the way scientific insight and knowledge was shared and operationalised by

the research team and teaching staff within the educational programme.

#### *Standard 7*

The accommodations and facilities offered by the programme support its focus on health and well-being, according to the assessment committee. Students have access to various facilities and materials to promote fitness, prevent injuries and performance enhancement. An in-house exercise room offers a wide variety of exercise equipment. In addition, students benefit from a physiotherapy treatment room and physiotherapy equipment on site where they can see the school's physiotherapist three times a week.

#### *Standard 8*

As described above, the programme works with a 'Team Around The Artist'-approach in which all researchers, study coaches, staff members and supporting staff work together to offer the student integrated guidance and tutoring. The Performing Arts Health Centre offers students access to a wide range of (para)medical specialists: four days a week, one of the physio(manual) therapists is available for dance students, three times a week on site of the dance department, twice a week consultation hours take place at the circus premises; every other week, students can visit a sports dietician for nutritional advice, and every Thursday they can consult a speech and voice therapist for advice on breathing techniques. A mental coach is present four days a week for consultations. A hearing and ear protection specialist is also available, and students follow a workshop on Movement & Hearing in the first year.

The programme's research team, staff members and study coaches work in close collaboration, ensuring that students' injuries are shared and addressed appropriately in classes. If a student is injured, specific classes or parts of the lessons can be adapted as a result of the student's feedback and the advice of health professionals. Weekly updates on the progress of injured students and their workload capacities are provided by the physiotherapists and shared with the study

coaches and teachers after consent of the student.

The assessment committee is very positive about the integrated and collaborative approach of tutoring in the dance programme as well as the extensive range of (para)medical specialists available on site to the students.

The Student Life programme communicates its services and data effectively from the very start of the programme. Incoming students receive a screening and advice on healthy training at the auditions and are informed about the SL programme in an introduction letter sent out by the programme. During the introduction week, they are further introduced to the health programme of SL. Furthermore, information regarding the SL programme is shared via intranet, the Codarts website and notices/posters on site at the dance premises. The students the assessment committee spoke with were very well informed about the SL-procedures and could explain clearly how they contributed to their own training programmes and learning trajectory.

#### *Standard 9*

The assessment committee judges that the Bachelor of Dance has an effective evaluation system in place specifically aimed at measuring the quality and effectiveness of the health and well-being programme of Student Life. Quality reviews include:

- Every other year, the programme conducts student satisfaction evaluations of Student Life, including questions on services, facilities and specialists.
- Student Council meetings are held on a regular basis, attended by the Head of Student Life upon invitation, and students actively contribute to the SLM and research projects via specific student panels.
- Course evaluation takes place biannually through EvaSys, including student satisfaction on the modules BAC and MPP.

Results of the EvaSys evaluation 2017 show that 87.1% of the students are familiar with Student Life (compared to 64% in 2013) and are more than satisfied with the services provided by Student Life: 3.3 on a four point scale.

#### *Standard 10*

Students are assessed on their professional development and need to demonstrate a level of literacy as well as actual implementation related to health and wellbeing. This is assessed by all of their teachers in the module Professional Development over all eight semesters. In addition, their ability to demonstrate the required level of physical fitness is tested in the group exam of the module BAC. Students need to demonstrate their level of self-awareness and knowledge about health and wellbeing and how they apply this in their own field of expertise by making written exams and in their final oral exam of MPP. The assessment committee judges that health and wellbeing aspects are assessed in an adequate manner, measuring the level of self-awareness of students and their ability to apply effective techniques that contribute to a healthy sustainable professional practice.

#### *Standard 11*

Based on its conversations with students and representatives of the working field, the assessment committee was able to confirm that students, indeed, acquire the necessary competencies with regard to the management of their health and wellbeing within a professional dance context. Students are self-aware and confident about their ability to sustain a healthy career, and are knowledgeable about the different aspects of health and wellbeing for performance artists. Finally, the Performing Arts Medicine staff indicated that Codarts students have significantly fewer injuries than students from other schools or professionals in sports or performing arts.

### **3. Relevance**

Criterion 3: The feature to be assessed is of essential importance to the nature of the programme.

Based on the findings and considerations described above, the committee is convinced that the distinctive Health and Wellbeing feature is essential and integral to the Bachelor of Dance. There is a strong, interrelated system of health support through scientific research, screening, monitoring, teaching, tutoring and appropriate facilities, which together offer the students a learning environment in which they receive guidance tailored to their individual physical and mental abilities. In the view of the committee, this approach is unique to the Dance domain and something that other bachelor's programmes in this domain could profit from given the high workload and physically and mentally challenging nature of the profession. By educating students about their own abilities and ways to arrive at a healthy practice, the programme contributes to the working field by delivering knowledgeable and self-aware students who can fulfil a long career in the dance profession. That the Student Life programme is unique, effective and, therefore, relevant to the discipline and working field of performance arts can also be derived from the fact that the research group presents its work at different venues, such as the I ADAMS conferences, and the fact that other art and sport institutes (for example, football club Feyenoord, the Dutch National Ballet and Scapino Ballet and the Rotterdam Philharmonic) ask the research team for input and support. Recently, international partners have shown interest as well. Starting with the Royal College of Music, London, the intention is to build a European network. This strongly proves the relevance of Codarts' health system for the professional dance field and the performing arts in general.





## Attachments

## Attachment 1 Assessment committee

Deze notitie is volgens het NVAO-format opgesteld.

<b>Naam panellid (incl. titulatuur)</b>	<b>Korte functiebeschrijving van de panelleden (1-3 zinnen)</b>
Drs. J.K.C. (Hans) Bloo, voorzitter	Hans Bloo is a healthcare and movement scientist, and a physical sports-therapist
Mevr. M. (Melanie) Person	Melanie Person is Director and The Ailey School, New York, and is a.o. responsible for the BFA-programme
Mevr. E.M.M. (Liesbeth) Wildschut	Liesbeth Wildschut is onderzoeker Theater en dans Studies aan de Universiteit Utrecht.
Mevr. R. (Rianne) Hagen, student-lid	Rianne Hagen is student Industrial Design Engineering aan de Twente. Ze is lid van de faculteitsraad.

De commissie werd bijgestaan door dr. M.J.H. (Marianne) van der Weiden, extern secretaris gecertificeerd door NVAO.

Alle commissieleden en de secretaris hebben een verklaring van onafhankelijkheid en onpartijdigheid ingevuld, ondertekend en deze zijn ingeleverd bij NVAO.

## Attachment 2 Programme of the assessment

26 June 2019

- 09.00 – 09.30 Internal deliberation assessment committee
- 09.30 – 10.15 Board and management  
*Welcome, goal and programme visitation*
- 10.30 – 11.45 Teachers  
*Goals of the programme, curriculum, assessments, quality of teachers*
- 12.00 – 12.45 Examination board  
*Assessments and realised learning outcomes*
- 12.45 – 13.30 Lunch and assessment of documents
- 13.30 – 14.15 Students  
*Programme, assessments, quality of teachers*
- 14.30 – 15.15 Alumni and professional practice  
*Connection programme to professional practice, assessments and final examination*
- 15.30 – 16.15 Distinctive feature: Health & Wellbeing: fit to perform
- 16.15 – 17.45 Additional examination, conclusions
- 18.00 Feedback
- 18.30 End of visit

## Attachment 3 Documents

- Position paper
- Graduation Projects of 15 students
- Brochure Dance Performer
- Brochure Student Life
- Vision Dancer-Performer
- Vision Maker-Performer
- Vision Contextual Studies
- Vision Professional-Entrepreneur
- Internship and Graduation Guide 2018-2019
- Code of Conduct Students 2018-2019
- Study Guide 2018-2019
- Glossary B Dance
- Alumni: where are you
- A Book about Dance (Guido Bosma)
- Overviews of performances 2015-2016 through 2018-2019
- Sample of four module readers
- Three examples of dance history research reports
- Three examples of artistic research reports
- Examples of personal branding assignments (years 1-2-3)
- Assessment criteria of the internship
- Alumni data 2015-2016 through 2017-2018



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