



Assessment report

Extensive programme assessment

hbo-masteropleiding
Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design

Full time

University of the Arts Utrecht (HKU)

De kracht van
kennis.

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University of the Arts Utrecht (HKU)
CROHO nr. 49114

Hobéon Certificering

Dated

21th of October 2019

Audit committee

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1. GENERAL AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

INSTITUTION	University of the Arts Utrecht (HKU)
status	Government funded
Outcomes of Institutional Quality Assessment	N.A.
Name of programme in Central Register of Higher Professional Education (CROHO)	Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design
ISAT-code croho	49114
sector croho	Taal & Cultuur
Orientation	Hbo
Level	Master
Relevant grade and title	Master of Arts
Number of credits	120 EC
Specialisations	Fine Art Scenography
locatie	Utrecht
variant	Full Time
Language of Education	English
Date of site-visit	3rd of July 2019

2. SUMMARY

The Master-programme Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design of the University of Arts Utrecht (hereafter also referred to as Fine Art and Design) consists of two interlinked yet distinct programmes: Fine Art and Scenography. The Fine Art programme is positioned in the School of Fine Art, Scenography in the School of Theatre. The Scenography programme was transferred in 2014 from Hanze University of Applied Sciences to Utrecht as a consequence of the Sector Plan for Higher Professional Art Education.

Both programmes within the Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design share a large joint line of work and field of practice since contemporary art and design puts disciplinary thinking on edge raising questions and issues on visual culture, public and private space, technology and techniques, and politics of presentation (performance/curatorship).

Fine Art focuses on transmedial forms of visual, spatial, sonic and conceptual artistic research practices. This is emphasised by a specific view on curatorial practice, namely the curatorial agency of the artist. This specific approach acquaints students with transdisciplinary forms of (re-) presentation, sharing, and with a rigorous engagement with artistic and non-artistic communities. For Scenography this means expanding scenography into new realms (public space, exhibition space, nomadic theatre, installation art, etc.) as well into new ways of using technology (for instance virtual reality, mixed reality, sonic scenography, sensuous lighting and atmospheric spaces).

Standard 1: Intended Learning Outcomes

The Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design at HKU is an experimental research driven platform for artistic practice hosting two specific programmes: the MA programme Fine Art and the MA programme Scenography. The programmes have translated the educational aims formulated by Overleg Beeldende Kunst (OBK) in 2017 into competences regarding context, art practice, methodology, art research, communication and positioning. The programmes have a well-articulated vision on their own and their communal professional field and mutually benefit of their contributions. The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard.

Standard 2 – 5: Teaching and Learning Environment

The orientation of the programmes relates the work of students closely to the professional context they are trained for. The focus points do stress the importance of a receptive attitude towards the world around them, both locally and internationally. Students are aware of their own position and how this position relates to contemporary contexts within the field of Art. Self-direction is, according to members of the audit committee, instrumental in the preparation for their professional future.

The key points context, disciplinarity, research and self-direction turn out to be driving a student-centred programmatic approach.

The hybridity of the teaching staff, all lecturers work as professionals in relevant practices and/or research, builds direct relationship between education and (international) practice.

The intended learning outcomes have been moulded into three themes that reoccur each of the four semesters: Make, Think and Share. These themes interrelate around the central underlying concept of artistic research and the complexity extends per semester.

The learning goals of the subsequent modules tie in with the intended learning outcomes. As English language-based courses, the MA programmes tie in with international art communities in which international English forms one of the grounds to exchange on. The cohesion of the programme is clear, also for the students, in the three themes that reoccur. These themes Make, Think and Share make sure there is a firm balance between theory, praxis and performance skills.

The audit committee regards the academic skills, research approach and professional competences as appropriate for these programmes.

The programmes make individual learning paths possible. The members of the audit committee were impressed to hear how well considered students co-shape their own curriculum supported by their experienced lecturers.

The number of admitted students is limited to approximately 30 students per year. Considering a very low drop-out rate in recent years and a high diploma ratio of 91%, the audit committee sees no reason for concern regarding the quality of the selection process and regards the entry requirements fitting the intended learning outcomes.

The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of these standards.

Standard 6: Teaching staff

The lecturers of the programmes form a highly motivated and qualified teaching team with backgrounds that match the courses. Small appointments make it more difficult to facilitate cohesion and further collaboration between the two departments.

Competent course leaders that provide a backbone for the teaching team, are focussing on mutual collaboration between Fine Art and Scenography, but that requires time. The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard.

Standards 7 and 8: Facilities and information

The audit committee regards the broad spectrum of available HKU-facilities as sufficient, though attention is needed to improve the physical learning environment.

The programmes have created an atmosphere of a close learning community, consisting of students, lecturers and professionals, all committed to facilitate the learning process of each student. Students are very complimentary about their tutors. The students and staff are well equipped to find and provide administrative information using the proper online channels of communication.

The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard.

Standard 9: Quality assurance

The programmes use the PDCA-cycle intensively, formal structures are in place and informal information finds its way to the course leaders and is acted upon. All relevant stakeholders are actively involved, students, staff, alumni and representatives of the professional field. The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard.

Standard 10: Assessment

In general, the assessment policy of the programmes is up to par, assessors are qualified, criteria are known and understood by students, the assessment facilitates the learning process. The position of the Boards of Examiners needs attention in the eyes of the audit committee. There is no reason to doubt the competence of both boards, but it is not desirable to have separate boards under one programme Fine Art and Design. The Boards of Examiners do function appropriately within their separate contexts. The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard, because of the structures and criteria in place. It does think improvement of certain aspects is necessary.

Standard 11: Achieved Learning Outcomes

The audit committee values the level of graduation of all portfolios (product, presentation and research report) as satisfactory at Masters-level, while the committee did see a wide range of achievements.

The committee appreciates the ambition to bring closer artistic practice, research and dissemination (Make, Think, Share), but questions the necessity to separate the three parts during the assessment procedure at the end of the course. An integral assessment would be more in tune with the course ambition.

Alumni and professionals from the field respond positively towards the way the programme prepares students for their future career and have ample access to the learning environment to indicate professional developments.

The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard.

Overall conclusion:

The audit committee savoured the vibrant artistic community in which both the Fine Art and Scenography programme thrive. The hybrid vision on art disciplines ensures both mutually benefit being in the Master programme Fine Art and Design.

The panel evaluates all Standards as meeting the requirements. Hence, following NVAO regulations the overall judgement on the Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design of the University of Arts Utrecht (HKU) reads: positively meeting the requirements.

Therefore, the panel recommends the NVAO to award accreditation for another six years to the Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design of the University of Arts Utrecht (HKU).

The audit committee recommends replacing the separate boards of examiners with one board and two chambers. Some examiners should be active in both chambers to create more consistency.

The panel also recommends a reorientation on the physical facilities, both in accessibility and fitting for purpose.

Upon agreement with the panel members the chair in The Hague adopted this report on 21th of October 2019.

3. INTRODUCTION

The Master of Arts programme in Fine Art and Scenography of the University of Arts Utrecht (HKU) resorts under the ISAT-code 49114, Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design. The transfer of the Scenography course from Hanze University of Applied Sciences to Utrecht took place in 2014. The national conversion of all master courses (2017) reclassified the original Scenography Masters Degree course to Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design. The HKU combined this programme with the previous one year course Master of Arts in Fine Art.

The assessment has been conducted in a cluster with Willem de Kooning Academy in Rotterdam and Academie Minerva in Groningen.

The two programmes Fine Art and Scenography are delivered by two different Schools of HKU, Scenography by HKU Theatre and Fine Art by HKU Fine Art.

References will be made specifically if the Scenography and Fine Art programmes differ. Non-specified means the programmes are identical in this aspect.

The previous accreditation of the Master programme Scenography (positive, 2014) has been issued before the transfer of the programme from Groningen to Utrecht, some of the recommendations of the panel were no longer applicable. Other recommendations have been taken into account in the setup of the programme at HKU.

A part of the audit committee has been present at the graduation performances of six Scenography students on the 28th of May and six Fine Art students on the 2nd of July prior to the site visit.

4. FINDINGS AND JUDGEMENTS

4.1. 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.

Explanation NVAO: The intended learning outcomes demonstrably describe the level of the programme (Associate Degree, Bachelor's, or Master's) as defined in the Dutch Qualifications Framework, as well as its orientation (professional or academic). In addition, they tie in with the regional, national or international perspective of the requirements currently set by the professional field and the discipline with regard to the contents of the programme. Insofar as is applicable, the intended learning outcomes are in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations. The points of departure for the set-up of the programme chime with the educational philosophy and the profile of the institution. The intended learning outcomes are periodically evaluated.

Findings

The Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design at HKU is an experimental research driven platform for artistic practice hosting two specific programmes: the MA programme Fine Art and the MA programme Scenography. The programmes focus on research, which is embedded in artistic practices, aiming for in-depth individual and collective development. In these practices the process of making is central. New approaches, forms, contexts and diverse modes of (re-)presentation (performative, narrative, context responsive, interactive, generative) are explored through both making and critical reflection, and different forms of sharing.

The programmes have translated the educational aims formulated by Overleg Beeldende Kunst (OBK) in 2017 into the following competences:

- *Context*

Master-level graduates make an original contribution to the development and/or application of ideas, by formulating specific questions, dilemmas or currently relevant themes. They understand the broad cultural framework in which they operate.

- *Art practice*

Master-level graduates have the learning skills that allow them to have a practice that is largely of a self-directed nature. They are able to apply, develop, integrate and deepen their own artistic, intellectual and technical knowledge and skills within contexts that expand their own discipline, exploring the possibilities of new connections and new modes of practice and (knowledge) production.

- *Methodology*

Master-level graduates have developed a demonstrable critical awareness of the methods, work processes and techniques, which they apply in the approach to their research. They are able to evaluate their steps and decisions in the process and to create/organise feedback loops, thus deepening their understanding on the basis of experience.

- *Art research*

Master-level graduates have developed a critical and systematic understanding and knowledge of problems; insights; theories; methods and making strategies and techniques that are relevant to their field of research and (professional) practice.

- *Communication*

Master-level graduates are able to present their work as a specific curatorial practice and coherently and convincingly share their thinking and making process, and the knowledge, motives and considerations underpinning their findings in word and image as well as in writing, to a specialist and non-specialist audience. They are able to document their work as praxis, integrating theory and practice, conceptual thinking and artistic expression.

- *Positioning*

Master-level graduates are independent artists able to create within an international context of peers, multi-disciplinary and collaborative environments and state of the art (aesthetic) theories, aware of cultural and social developments; and through their practice play an original role in formulating questions and reformulating questions and co-defining this context.

This set of competences also leans on the Dublin Descriptors, but is translated in close consultancy with a variety of stakeholders in the arts academies and the professional field into clear and precise educational aims. Those aims show a stronger focus on a questioning approach, instead of aiming for the application of knowledge, and for problem solving, than is formulated in the Dublin Descriptors.

In reference with the Dublin Descriptors and Fine Art tuning document (by the European League of Institutes of the Arts, ELIA) this led to the set of competences above, based on its unique profile. These apply to both the programme Scenography and the programme Fine Art.

Both research and internationalisation are explicitly present in the intended learning outcomes, in Methodology and Art research and internationalisation in Positioning.

Considerations and Judgement

Considering the recent transfer of the Scenography programme, combined with the new setup of the Fine art programme, the audit committee appreciates the carefully worded profile of the Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design. The members expect this profile to become more explicit over the next period, to underscore the distinct national and international characteristics of these programmes. The Fine Art programme could frame and communicate more precisely.

The MA Fine Art has a specific focus by going beyond established voices of the Western Art contexts and Western art practices, drawing attention to 'other voices' and marginalised practices.

The Fine Art and Scenography programmes have good and sustainable collaborations with BAK and other likeminded institutes and it would be a plus to motivate this fact and emphasise the interest in diversity and performativity more clearly in relation to those collaborations with 'third parties'.

The intended learning outcomes are derived from the very recent OBK-framework and adjusted in close communication with the impressive and active international network of both HKU Theatre School and HKU Fine Art School in the professional field.

The programmes have a well-articulated vision on their own and their communal professional field and mutually benefit of their contributions.

Judgement

The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard.

4.2. Programme

Standard 2: orientation of the programme. The programme enables acquiring adequate professional and research skills.

Explanation NVAO: The curriculum ties in with current (international) developments, requirements and expectations in the professional field and the discipline. Academic skills and/or research skills and/or professional competencies are substantiated in a manner befitting the orientation and level of the programme.

Findings

The orientation of HKU Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design has been explored extensively over the past couple of years in co-operation with the Overleg Beeldende Kunsten (OBK), which is the Consultation Committee on Visual Arts. The four identified key points that are found to be relevant to all fine art and design programmes at master level are: Context, Disciplinarity, Research and Self-Direction. For HKU programme's orientation they perform as follows:

Context: Contemporary cultural practitioners work from an eco-system of contexts, consisting out of a multitude of networks, support structures and influences. Crucial for the work in the MA course is to get a grip on and be able to build upon the various and hybrid components of the individual eco-systems of the students' artistic practices. The context is chosen to be international.

Disciplinarity: Both MA programmes offer the opportunity to obtain, analyze, and deploy specialised knowledge and to gain expertise in one or more disciplines, including the understanding of their methodology. Since both programmes understand the contemporary urgency of a complex approach, disciplinarity always also means inter-disciplinarity that is the interaction of different forms of knowing. This includes collaborative working forms that necessarily accompany a layered and engaged practice.

Research: Artistic research presupposes that artists are able to speak and write about their work and to devise the best possible curatorial or sharing model that is not separate but part of the research. It means to create a practice that feeds and is fed by theory, a theoretical reflection and forms of sharing that again drives practice and research.

Self-direction: The MA course in Fine Art and Design puts self-organisation of the students centre stage and their capacity to develop a balance between using already existing structures and pro-actively generating possibilities for themselves.

The interaction with the professional field is intensive, for instance all lecturers are working in relevant practices and/or research.

Considerations and judgement

The orientation of the programmes places the student immediately in the professional context they are trained for. The focus points do stress the importance of a receptive attitude towards the world around them, both locally and internationally. Self-direction is, according to members of the audit committee, instrumental in the preparation for their professional future.

The key points context, disciplinarity, research and self-direction turn out to be driving a student-centred programmatic approach.

The hybridity of the teaching staff ensures the international influences are providing constant input for the educational praxis of the programme. The audit committee regards the academic skills, research approach and professional competences as appropriate for these programmes.

Judgement

The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard.

Standard 3: the contents of the programme enable the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Explanation NVAO: The learning outcomes have been adequately translated into educational objectives of (components of) the curriculum.

Findings

The intended learning outcomes have been moulded into three themes that reoccur each of the four semesters: Make, Think and Share. These themes interrelate around the central underlying concept of artistic research and the complexity extends per semester. While the students experience the necessary room for experimentation, the learning process is facilitated by the approach of creation, reflection and performance, both in scenography as in fine art. The several written assignments of artistic research in the Think-theme safeguards the student's comprehension of the body of knowledge.

As English language-based courses, the MA programmes tie in with international art communities in which international English forms one of the grounds to exchange on. Both programmes have relations with several research centres in universities of the arts abroad. They also have a large number of international guest lecturers who lead tutorials, projects, workshops and seminars. As stated before, the vision of the programmes also stresses these art forms do not care for borders. This is illustrated by a group of international students bringing their cultural backgrounds to the programme and a large number of visiting lecturers and researchers.

Considerations and judgements

Contentwise the programmes are up to par in the eyes of the members of the audit committee. The learning goals of the subsequent modules tie in with the intended learning outcomes. The cohesion of the programme is clear, also for the students, in the three themes that reoccur. These themes Make, Think and Share make sure there is a firm balance between theory, praxis and performance skills. The audit committee has observed the added value of an international student and lecturer community in these specific professional contexts.

Judgement

The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard.

Standard 4 (learning environment): The structure of the programme encourages study and enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Explanation NVAO: The curriculum is designed in a manner conducive to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. The teaching-learning environment encourages students to play an active role in the design of their own learning process (student-centred approach). The design of the learning environment chimes with the educational philosophy of the institution. If the programme is taught in a language other than Dutch, the programme must justify its choice. This also applies if the programme bears a foreign language name.

Findings

Both programmes of the MA in Fine Art and Design at HKU offer a curriculum that content-wise provides students with input, questions and opportunities from which they can develop, realise and show work, which is research-based and focuses on the interaction and integration of both theory and practice.

The study and research focus of students are developed throughout the semesters in the following four distinct stages: 1. experimentation; 2. collecting and curating; 3. conceptualising an artistic system; 4. documentation, communication and presentation of research results.

By placing the students and their practices and work first and foremost, the lecturers work as facilitators, support, referents and critical friends of their developments. Moreover, the curriculum is also programmed as a platform for the exchange of knowledge and experiences.

Since students enter with a preliminary profile and plan, the exact realization, in dialogue with actualities, differs year to year. The programmes are research-based, and as such, ask for independent approaches of students, which are supported and contextualised by a certain amount of curated programming by the course leaders and their teams.

The international context of the programmes, underlined with the ties with foreign institutions and the international staff including guest lecturers justify the choice for a programme taught in English.

Considerations and judgements

Students understand the design of the programme and recognise the intertwining of the different aspects of their future profession. The programmes make individual learning paths possible. The members of the audit committee were impressed to hear how well considered students tailormade their own curriculum supported by their experienced lecturers. Also, on a communal level the learning environment is stimulating because of a vibrant student and faculty community.

The program does not necessarily direct its attention towards Western Art contexts and Western art practices and draws attention to marginalised practices. The programmes are being executed in English and the audit committee regards that fully justified.

Judgement

The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard.

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

Explanation NVAO: The admission requirements in place are realistic with a view to the intended learning outcomes.

Findings

The programme selects students via an entrance exam that is conducted by two core lecturers (incl. Course Leader), possibly the tutor, and at least one student. This happens in several stages in which this admissions committee assesses the suitability of candidates, advises the school director on this, on the basis of which she/he makes a final decision on admissibility. The requirements for admission are in agreement with the Academic and examination regulations including language requirements and requirements concerning previous education. These requirements are clearly communicated to candidates.

Dutch and foreign students are selected following identical procedures. In short students need to be able to show a bachelor level of working and thinking, potential for studio practice on a master's level, potential for developing an artistic research practice and they need to be able to support their plans with reference to both practice and theory.

Considerations and judgements

The audit committee considers the entry requirements fitting the intended learning outcomes.

The number of admitted students is limited to approximately 30 students per year. Considering a very low drop-out rate in recent years and a high diploma ratio of 91%, the audit committee sees no reason for concern regarding the quality of the selection process.

Judgement

The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard.

4.3. Staff

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.

Explanation NVAO: The teachers have sufficient expertise in terms of both subject matter and teaching methods to teach the programme. The teachers have a sufficient command of the language in which they are teaching. The staff policy is conducive in this respect. Sufficient staff is available to teach the programme and tutor the students.

Findings

The teams of both programmes consist of a small number of core teachers (still part time) and many guest lecturers or lecturers with a very small position. Virtually all lecturers are also active in the professional field and/or artistic research, forming a hybrid teaching team. The close-knit art community enables the programme to hire specific expertise if needed for one particular student.

All core lecturers have been trained in didactical and examination skills, following the central policy of the HKU. Of the core group of lecturers 63% is Master-qualified, 11% PhD, and all lecturers have a good command of the English language.

The teams of Fine Art and Scenography form an interactive community, for instance monthly 'table meetings' provide a challenging art inspired platform, parallel to official team meetings that deal with educational matters.

The teaching community of the programmes fluctuates because of small contracts and guest lecturers.

Considerations and judgements

The audit committee have met a highly motivated and qualified teaching team with backgrounds that match the courses.

The staff is of artistic importance and fully committed to the process of professional growth in every student. The audit committee appreciates the interchanging of lecturers over different years in the programmes. To facilitate the ambitious and adventurous profile of the programmes, the audit panel suggests to enhance the teaching backbone in future vacancies by including some even more surprising and out-of-the-box lecturers.

Small appointments make it more difficult to facilitate cohesion and further collaboration between departments.

Competent course leaders that provide a backbone for the teaching team, are focussing on mutual collaboration between Fine Art and Scenography, but that requires time.

Judgement

All-in all the audit committee regards the educational teams of both programmes as competent, sufficient and qualified. The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard.

4.4. Facilities

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

Explanation NVAO: The accommodation of the programme and the facilities are in keeping with the intended learning outcomes and the teaching-learning environment.

Findings

Both programmes have a core facility that functions as the heart of the learning environment. For the programme Fine Art, this is the studio facility De Loods, for Scenography it is the Pastoe Fabriek, formerly a famous design factory of furniture. In addition, both programmes use nearby HKU facilities for specific purposes, for instance the campus IBB that provides library facilities and technical studios and Scenography students use also the facilities of HKU Theatre at Janskerkhof.

Facilities are open on Monday and Tuesday 8 to 9pm, other working days till 5pm.

Considerations and judgements

The students were not completely satisfied with the facilities provided, especially the opening hours of both Pastoe Fabriek and De Loods were too limited for these artists and the quality of the facilities leaves room for improvement in their eyes.

The audit team notices the multitude of sometimes very modern facilities of HKU and acknowledges the effort course leaders are making to cater for their student group and try to improve the physical learning environment. The audit team recognises the feedback of students and feels the locations have hampering limitations in the way they interact and ability to adjust if the needs of the programme change. The programme deserves a more dynamic and less static environment.

Judgement

The audit committee regards the broad spectrum of available HKU-facilities as sufficient, though attention is needed to improve the physical learning environment.

The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard.

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

Explanation NVAO: Students receive appropriate tutoring (including students with a functional impairment). The information provision of the programme is adequate.

Findings

Student guidance, information provision and tutoring are quite intensive in these small programmes. Students are especially content with the close bond with their tutors, they feel they are up to their task and very accessible. HKU has all the necessary student services available for the students of these programmes as well. International students report the housing situation in Utrecht as problematic, which takes away focus on their studies that is needed, especially in the starting phase of the programmes.

The students and staff are well equipped to find and provide administrative information using the proper online channels of communication.

Considerations and judgements

The audit committee is impressed by the atmosphere of a close learning community, consisting of students, lecturers and professionals, all committed to facilitate everyone's learning process. To facilitate the international learning environment HKU could intensify its student housing efforts, this is a serious challenge for foreign students.

Judgement

The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard.

4.5. Quality assurance

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.

Explanation NVAO: The programme organises effective periodic feedback that supports the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. Existing programmes implement appropriate improvements based on the results of the previous assessment. They initiate appropriate evaluation and measurement activities to that end. The outcomes of this evaluation demonstrably constitute the basis for development and improvement. Within the institution, those responsible are held to account regarding the extent to which the programme contributes to the attainment of the institution's strategic goals. Quality assurance ensures the achievement of the intended learning results. The programme committee, examination board, staff, students, alumni and the relevant professional field are actively involved in the programme's internal quality assurance. The programme's design processes, its recognition, and its quality assurance are in keeping with the European Standards and Guidelines. The programme publishes accurate, reliable information regarding its quality, which is easily accessible to the target groups.

Findings

The Quality Assurance system finds its basis in the Quality Plans of the schools (Theatre and Fine Art), but is customized to the ambitions and needs of the MA course. The Quality Plan describes that the curriculum is developed and revised where necessary (PLAN), verified after completion of the education (DO), and checked by determining if the desired learning results are achieved (CHECK). From the experience gained, and the lessons learned the next cycle is prepared and implemented (ACT). The respective course leaders formulate improvement and actions to be taken both on the curriculum structure and learning environment as well as on the Quality Plan itself in an annual plan.

The course committee (OC) is committed and active and forms an instrumental platform for course leaders to continuously improve their programmes. In addition, the informal monthly sessions of lecturers provide an extra route for information to surface. With alumni and guest lecturers involved in the programme, all relevant stakeholders are actively involved in quality assurance.

Considerations and judgements

The programmes use the PDCA-cycle intensively, formal structures are in place and informal information finds its way to the course leaders and is acted upon. All relevant stakeholders are involved in quality assurance.

Judgement

The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard.

4.6. Assessment

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

Explanation NVAO: The student assessments are valid, reliable and sufficiently independent. The quality of interim and final examinations is sufficiently safeguarded and meets the statutory quality standards. The examining board exerts its legal authority. The tests support the students' own learning processes.

Findings

Even before students are admitted they experience the artistic assessment process, students are well suited for these evaluations.

In this artistic educational field peer review and feedback sessions, as part of the body of assessments and evaluations, play a vital role, and given the complexity of the context the peers are as diverse as possible: professionals, doctorate students, and colleagues from other MA courses, as well as alumni, (guest)lecturers, and fellow students. As such, assessments and evaluations do not 'only' fulfil an administrative-educational aim, but activate as well an important aspect of the programmes: how to share. This is a considered approach to both formative and summative assessments and evaluations.

Each semester starts with a formative evaluation providing the student with feedback and feed forward on the basis of their plans for the semester. Each semester ends with a summative assessment. These summative assessments are assessments from which marks are given for the modules with a number of credits attained according to the objectives and assessment criteria as described in the modules. The fourth semester ends with the final examination which is a high-stake assessment for which the students present their final artistic works and their final research document. To assure that the practice of assessing runs according to a valid, transparent and trustworthy system several issues are addressed: matrices that connect the learning goals with the assessment criteria, multiple perspective assessment and an assessment policy that is transparent to students and assessors alike.

Assessors have been trained (BKE) in assessment skills.

The programmes have separate Boards of Examiners, from the respective schools.

Considerations and judgements

In general, the assessment policy of the programmes is up to par, assessors are qualified, criteria are known and understood by students, the assessment facilitates the learning process. The audit committee considered the assessments sufficiently valid and reliable.

In some cases, the audit committee saw that the assessment criteria play a rather implicit role during the discussions of the assessors. We would advise to enhance that role explicitly to strengthen the transparency of the assessment.

The position of the Boards of Examiners needs attention in the eyes of the audit committee. There is no reason to doubt the competence of both boards, but it is not desirable to have separate boards under one programme Fine Art and Design. The committee would expect one Board of Examiners with Chambers for both streams showing overlap in members. The Boards of Examiners do function appropriately within their separate contexts.

Judgement

The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard. It does think improvement of certain aspects is necessary.

4.7. Achieved Learning outcomes

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

Explanation NVAO: The achievement of the intended learning outcomes is demonstrated by the results of tests, the final projects, and the performance of graduates in actual practice or in post-graduate programmes.

Findings

Alumni and professionals from the field are satisfied with the role of the programme and the effect the study has on the professional development of students. The Master programme is not the end of their education, but rather feels like the start of their professional artistic development.

The audit committee studied sixteen graduation portfolios evenly distributed between Fine Art and Scenography and parts of the panel visited the end presentations of six scenography students and six Fine Art students.

The intended learning outcomes are realised at the moment of graduation. By having completed all modules of the first 3 semesters, at the end of the fourth semester with the final artistic works (make, semester 4), and the final research document (think, semester 4), and by contribution to graduation exhibition and presenting their work at the final examination (share, semester 4), the students accomplish all course specific competences and learning outcomes at the end of the study. At the final examination the mentioned deliverables are assessed according to the assessment criteria of the modules of final semester.

Considerations and judgements

The audit committee values the level of graduation of all portfolios (product, presentation and research report) as satisfactory at Masters-level, while the committee did see a wide range of achievements.

The committee appreciates the ambition to intertwine artistic practice, research and dissemination (Make, Think, Share), but questions the necessity and desirability to separate the three parts during the assessment procedure at the end of the course, where an integral assessment is in tune with the course ambition.

The alumni and work field are positive about the way the programme prepares students for the rest of their career and have ample access to the learning environment to indicate professional developments.

Judgement

The audit committee judges the programme meets the requirements of this standard.

5. OVERALL CONCLUSION

The audit committee savoured the vibrant artistic community in which both the Fine Art and Scenography programme thrive. The hybrid vision on art disciplines ensures both mutually benefit being in the Master of Arts programme in Fine Art and Design.

The panel evaluates all Standards as meeting the requirements. Hence, following NVAO regulations the overall judgement on the Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design of the University of Arts Utrecht (HKU) reads: positively meeting the requirements.

Therefore, the panel recommends the NVAO to award accreditation to the Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design of the University of Arts Utrecht (HKU).

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The audit committee recommends replacing the separate boards of examiners with one board and two chambers. Some examiners should be active in both chambers to create more consistency.

The panel also recommends a reorientation on the physical facilities, both in accessibility and fitting for purpose.

Appendix I Overview of judgements

Results overview University of the Arts Utrecht (HKU) Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design Full time	
Standard	Judgement
Intended Learning Outcomes	
Standard 1. Intended Learning Outcomes	P
Programme	
Standard 2. Orientation programme	P
Standard 3. Content programme	P
Standard 4. Programme design	P
Standard 5. Connection to previous studies	P
Staff	
Standard 6. Staff qualifications and quantification	P
Facilities	
Standard 7. Housing and facilities	P
Standard 8. Tutoring and information provision	P
Quality Assurance	
Standard 9. Quality assurance system	P
Assessment	
Standard 10. Assessment	P
Achieved learning outcomes	
Standard 11. Achieved learning outcomes	P
Overall judgement	positive

Appendix II Site visit, working methods and rules of decision

Audit schedule Extensive Assessment of Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design, University of the Arts Utrecht -HKU.

Programme visitation Course MA in Fine Art and Design -HKU

Location: HKU Location Pastoe Fabriek, Rotsoord 3, Utrecht

Date location visit: 3 July 2019

Time	Converstation partner (incl. function/roles)	
08.15 – 08.30	Walk in & reception audit committee	
08.30 – 09.15	Preliminary consultation audit panel	
09.15 – 10.00	<p>Panel management team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ director HKU Fine Art ▪ director HKU Theatre ▪ course leader Scenography ▪ course leader Fine Art 	<p>Acquaintance MT and set the agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ strategic policy, vision, mission developments in and relation with work field ▪ market position / positioning & profiling ▪ international orientation ▪ vision on applied research professorship & knowledge circle ▪ staff policy /development ▪ hbo-level / educational achievement ▪ quality assurance
10.00 – 10.15	Pause / Internal consultation audit panel	- internal consultation
10.15 – 11.00	<p>Panel Lecturers</p> <p>Scenography:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ lector Performative Making Processes; lecturer research and writing and individual tutorials 2nd year ▪ core lecturer scenography ▪ lecturer scenography and light: make 1st year; individual tutorials 2nd year) ▪ lecturer scenography transmedia, share 1st year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fine Art ▪ core lecturer Fine Art, OC ▪ core lecturer Fine Art ▪ lecturer research studies, head of pre-PhD programme ▪ lecturer Fine Art, research document 2nd year; sound and listening practice 1st year) <p style="text-align: center;">OC = Course Committee</p>	<p>Conversation topics lecturers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ coherent educational environment ▪ content, design, developments, profile <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ and consistency course (characteristics) ▪ relation with / input of work field ▪ practical components /internships ▪ international component ▪ research line ▪ interaction research and education ▪ connection entrants ▪ study career guidance / feasibility, study load ▪ professional space / staff development ▪ workload

Time	Converstation partner (incl. function/roles)	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ influence on / involvement with the course ▪ involvement lecturers and work field ▪ assessment strategy / assessments ▪ assurance level
11.00 – 11.15	Pause / Internal consultation audit panel	- Internal consultation
11.15 – 12.00	<p>Panel Students</p> <p>Scenography:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ student 2nd year, OC ▪ student 2nd year ▪ student 1st year ▪ student 2nd year <p>Fine Art:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ student 2nd year, OC ▪ student 1st year, student representative ▪ student 1st year <p style="text-align: center;">OC = Course Committee; student representative (= klassevertegenwoordiger)</p>	<p>Conversation topics students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ connection previous education / admission ▪ quality and relevance of the course ▪ feasibility, study load ▪ study guidance (incl. extracurricular component / internships) ▪ quality lecturers ▪ provision of information ▪ course-specific provisions ▪ assessment ▪ graduation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conversation topics Course Committee: ▪ interaction with the management (course leaders) ▪ role in internal quality assurance ▪ involvement in decision-making process
12.00 – 13:00	Lunch and internal consultation	
13:00 – 13.45	<p>Panel Board of Examiners</p> <p>Theatre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ chair; lecturer dramaturgy and projects ▪ tutor <p>Fine Art:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ chair ▪ member, teacher Fine Art 	<p>Conversation topics Board of Examiners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ authorizations, tasks and roles relation to the management /course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ leaders ▪ quality assurance assessments ▪ quality assurance graduation
13.45 – 14.00	Pause/ Internal consultation audit panel	- internal consultation

Time	Converstation partner (incl. function/roles)	
14.00 – 14.45	<p>Panel Work field /alumni</p> <p>Scenography:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - alumna 2016 & pre-PhD 2018 - alumnus 2018 - director Het Huis, home for artists and new ideas, Utrecht - Collectief Walden <p>Fine Art:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ alumna 2016 ▪ alumnus ▪ director BAK, Utrecht ▪ active member of EARN-Network, European Platform for Artistic Research, formerly head of the Academy Valand, Gothenburg Sweden. Currently, on sabbatical for BAK fellowship, Utrecht 	<p>Conversation topics alumni:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ quality and relevance of the course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (programme, lecturers) ▪ functioning in the work field or further education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conversation topics work field: ▪ actual developments and translation in the course ▪ other wishes from the work field ▪ own profiling of the course ▪ internships and guidance ▪ research component ▪ involvement in quality assurance ▪ realised level
14.45 – 15.00	Pause / Internal consultation audit panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ internal consultation ▪ determine any pending issues
15.00 – 15.15	<p>Pending issues if needed</p> <p><i>(all conversation partners are available for this)</i></p>	- determine preliminary assessment
15.15 – 16.15	Internal consultation audit panel	
16.15	Feedback (public)	

For privacy reasons, the names are not included in this report. The names of auditees are known to the secretary of the audit panel.

Working methods

The programme has been evaluated on the basis of the Assessment framework for the Higher Education Accreditation System of the Netherlands 2018.

Selection of the delegations / the auditees

In compliance with the NVAO regulations the audit panel prior to the audit decided on the composition of the delegations (auditees) in consultation with the course management and on the basis of the points of focus that had arisen from the panel's analysis of the course documents.

Auditing process

The following procedure was adopted. The panel studied the documents regarding the programme (see Annex Documents reviewed) and a number of theses. Based upon documentation provided by the programme the audit committee was able to put together a picture of the primary and secondary processes of both programmes.

The panel secretary organised input from the auditors and distributed the preliminary findings among the panel members prior to the audit. A preparatory meeting of the panel was held before the site visit took place at the institute, on the 3rd of July 2019 (see Annex: Programme of the site visit).

The panel formulated its preliminary assessments per theme and standard immediately after the site visit. These were based on the findings of the site visit, and building on the assessment of the programme documents.

A first version of the assessment report was drafted by the secretary and circulated among the members of the panel for review and comments. The final draft was subsequently forwarded to the institute to correct factual inaccuracies. The panel finalized the report on 21st of October 2019.

Assessment rules

Extensive framework

According to assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands, September 2018.

Final conclusion

Positive:

The programme meets all the standards.

Conditionally positive:

The programme meets standard 1 and partially meets a maximum of five standards, with the imposition of conditions being recommended by the panel (see Additional assessment rules regarding conditions).

Negative:

In the following situations:

- The programme fails to meet one or more standards;
- The programme partially meets standard 1;
- The programme partially meets one or five standards, without the imposition of conditions being recommended by the panel;
- The programme partially meets six or more standards.

Appendix III Documents reviewed

- Self-evaluation Report institute
- OBK: Consultation Committee in Visual Arts, Vision Document (2017)
- Matrix
- Modules with Assessment Criteria
- Documents Guidelines
- Assessment Forms
- Assessment Plan
- Quality Plan
- Annual Reports of Exam Boards
- representative selection of final projects, selected by the panel, of the past two years with corresponding assessment criteria and requirements;

Following NVAO regulations the panel prior to the audit the panel has studied sixteen students' final projects and attended twelve final presentations. For privacy reasons, the names of these graduates and their student numbers are not included in this report. The names of the graduates, their student number, as well as the titles of the final projects, are known to the secretary of the audit panel.

Appendix IV Composition of the audit panel

On January 23th 2019 the NVAO endorsed the composition of the panel to assess the Master of Arts in Fine Art and Design of the University of Arts Utrecht -HKU, registration number 007747.

Naam visitatiegroep:	HBO Master Beeldende Kunst en Vormgeving diagonaal
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Succinct CV's of panel members

Name	Function
Mr. Drs. W.G. van Raaijen	Mr. Van Raaijen is CEO at the Assessment Agency Hobéon and has chaired numerous accreditation audits in Higher Education.
Mr. G. Lester	Mr. Lester is lecturer Fine Art at the Sandberg institute in Amsterdam
Mrs. Y. Dröge Wendel	Mrs. Dröge Wendel (artist) presides the Fine Arts department of the Rietveld academy in Amsterdam and tutors in the contextual design-programme of the Design Academy Eindhoven. PhD candidate (artistic research) UTwente.
Mrs. M. Nouwens	Mrs. Nouwens is a master student Fine Arts and research fellow at the St. Joost academie in Den Bosch.
Drs. R. van der Made / V. Bartelds MBA	secretary

Prior to the audit all panel members undersigned declarations of independence and confidentiality which are in possession of the NVAO. This declaration certifies, among other things, that panel members do not currently maintain or have not maintained for the last five years any (family) connections or ties of a personal nature or as a researcher/teacher, professional or consultant with the institution in question, which could affect a fully independent judgement regarding the quality of the programme in either a positive or negative sense.



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