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**Master of Arts Therapies  
Codarts Rotterdam  
University of the Arts**

*Report of the extensive programme assessment*  
6 December 2019

Utrecht, The Netherlands  
March 2020  
[www.AeQui.nl](http://www.AeQui.nl)  
*Assessment Agency for Higher Education*

## Colophon

### *Programme*

Codarts Rotterdam

University of the Arts

Programme: Master of Arts Therapies

Title: ~~Bachelor of Arts~~

Location: Rotterdam

Mode of study: part-time

Croho: ~~34128~~

Result of institutional assessment: not applied for

### *Panel*

Ab Groen, chair

Susan Scarth, domain expert

Marinus Spreen, domain expert

Jos De Backer, domain expert

Elody Postma, student member

Jesseka Batteau, secretary

The panel was presented to the NVAO for approval.

The assessment was conducted under responsibility of

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*This document is best printed in duplex*

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## Summary

On 6 December 2019 an assessment panel from AeQui evaluated the Master of Arts Therapies of Codarts Rotterdam. The panel determines that the programme **meets each of the standards** of the NVAO-framework and has many commendable strengths. The three-year, part-time programme consists of 120 ECTS and can be characterised as a dynamic training course for professional arts therapy practitioners. The programme is still developing its vision and identity as an arts-based and arts-informed dance and music therapy curriculum. It has a professional and cohesive team of expert tutors, coaches and supervisors and offers a challenging, fully student-centred learning environment for its students who themselves are strongly invested in the continual improvement of the programme.

### *Intended learning outcomes*

The intended learning outcomes of the programme meet standard 1. The programme aims to train talented dancers and musicians to become professional, dedicated and reflective dance or music therapy practitioners who are able to contribute to the development of the professional domain of mental health and wellbeing. The panel judges that the programme's intended learning outcomes are concrete and adequate, in accordance with the relevant (inter)national frameworks for the profession, and therefore meet the current demands of the working field. The panel is impressed by the unique profile and potential of the programme.

### *Curriculum*

The programme meets standards 2 – 5 which address the content, orientation and structure of the curriculum and student admission. The programme offers a strong, ambitious and well-structured curriculum as well as a challenging and dynamic study environment which is fully student-centred, with short lines and good communication between student and staff. Students and staff are passionate about their profession and the curriculum indeed succeeds in training students to become authentic practitioners who are well prepared for the professional roles. The panel praises the content and professional orientation of the programme, which offers a good integration of research, practice and theory, a wide range of methods as well as a strong focus on the development of professional skills and self-knowledge. The programme offers a carefully designed intake-procedure that ensures that level and qualifications of incoming students are aligned with the content and goals of the programme.

### *Staff*

The composition, number and quality of the staff meet the criteria for standard 6. The panel judges that staff members and study coaches of the master's programme are qualified and highly dedicated to the education and support of students as they progress through the programme. The staff members, many of which have an international background, have extensive experience and expertise in the domain of dance and music therapy. The panel applauds the strong sense of community shared by both the students, staff and management alike, which helps to create an open and safe atmosphere in which students can develop their individual profile as arts therapist. There is a good communication between the coordinators of the specializations, the tutors, coaches and the staff responsible for the research line.

### *Services and facilities*

The services and facilities offered by the programme meet the requirements of standard 7 and 8. The Codarts building suites the needs of the programme, with a sufficient number of classrooms, studios, stage facilities and instruments for music and dance presentations and practice sessions. The panel judges that the quality of the tutoring within the programme is very high and supports students in every possible way. In this sense it is fully aligned with the high demands, responsibility and ethics of the profession of arts therapy. The programme provides good information about the curriculum via different media. The panel does see some room for improvement with regard to the availability of relevant literature, since the library is relatively small and not completely up to date.

### *Quality assurance*

The panel judges that the quality assurance meets standard 9. The panel qualifies the quality assurance system of the programme as flexible and responsive, leading to a true quality culture shared by all involved. It observes that the programme actively strives for continual improvement and that it structurally involves its students and teachers in its quality assurance processes. The panel establishes that reviews and evaluations have resulted in concrete improvements to the programme in recent years. It applauds the programme's open attitude and the manner in which input from teachers, students and all relevant partners is taken seriously.

### *Assessment*

The panel qualifies the assessment procedures of the programme meet the required standard 10. The assessments of the programme are valid, objective and transparent due to the use of standard assessment forms, the implementation of the four-eyes principle for practical exams and involvement of external assessors during the final exams. The panel also appreciates the active and professional involvement of the exam board and the assessment panels.

### *Achieved learning outcomes*

The panel judges that the programme realises its goals and that students achieve the intended learning outcomes. The programme therefore meets standard 11. The theses and final projects meet the required level of a master's degree in arts therapy and demonstrate that the students have achieved the necessary competencies for as a professional and ethically responsible dance or music therapist. The theses show that students have acquired the necessary (applied) research skills and that they are able to report on their findings in an appropriate manner. The majority of graduates finds in employment in the domain of arts therapies. The programme maintains a strong relationship with its

alumni community through its alumni programme. Exit talks with graduates and alumni surveys are actively used to implement change in the curriculum.

### *Recommendations*

The panel has much appreciation for the strengths and high potential of the programme. For the further development of the programme in the following years it would like to offer the following recommendations:

- It encourages the programme to further develop and make concrete its vision and aims for the future, more specifically with regard to its unique profile as an arts-based and arts-informed art therapies programme and its ambitions for further growth and international outreach, for example as a full-time master's programme.
- The panel recommends that the programme find more focus in its research orientation, in alignment with its unique profile as an arts-based and arts-informed curriculum. This implies an emphasis on the specificity and internal mechanisms of the specific artistic discipline within the therapeutic context. Having a professorship with a specific research assignment in arts therapies could support the programme to find this focus.
- The panel judges that the integration of arts-based/arts-informed approaches with the therapeutic paradigm as well as a focus on issues of transfer and the system in which clients and patients function should be made more explicit in the final theses.
- With regard to feasibility and the international dimension of the programme, the panel urges the programme to think of ways to incorporate international internships more fully into the curriculum so that the integration between theory and practice is the same for all students.

All standards of the NVAO assessment framework are assessed positively; the assessment panel therefore awards a **positive** recommendation for the accreditation of the programme.

On behalf of the entire assessment panel, Utrecht, March 2020

dr. ir. Ab F. Groen  
Chair

dr. J.M. Batteau  
Secretary

## Overview

The judgements per standard are presented in the table below.

### Extensive Programme Assessment

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

## Introduction

This report describes the outcome of the evaluation of the Master of Arts Therapies at Codarts Rotterdam, University of the Arts, on 6 December 2019. Codarts offers a wide variety of educational programmes in music, dance, circus arts, art education and arts therapies. It covers the whole learning trajectory from preparatory to post graduate programmes and is characterized by its international orientation as well as a focus on interdisciplinary cross-over. Codarts has around 1000 students from 50 nationalities and approximately 340 employees. The master programme is a three-year, part-time course that aims to train students to become dedicated and reflective dance or music therapists who are able to contribute to the development of the field of mental health and wellbeing.

### *The institute*

Codarts University of the Arts was formed out of a merger between the Rotterdam Dans Academy and the Rotterdam Conservatory. It consists of two departments: the department Performing Arts and the department Music. The Master of Arts Therapies is part of the Performing Arts department, together with the Bachelor in Circus Arts, Dance and Dance in Education, the master programme Choreography and the bachelor programme Music Theatre. 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 (2017-2022), 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 concepts which inform the aims and focus of all Codart's programmes: craftsmanship, self-management, diversity, inquisitiveness, sustainability and connectivity. Two additional focus areas are talent scouting and organization & facilities.

### *The programme*

The Master of Arts Therapies is a three-year, part-time programme of 120 EC. It offers two specializations, one in dance therapy and one in music therapy. Codarts was the first in the Netherlands to offer a part-time arts therapy master's programme. It started out as a number of certified

courses for dance therapy in 1995, later developing towards a postgraduate programme. It became a master's programme in 2008. Several years ago, in 2016, music therapy was added to the programme. The programme aims to teach and explore dance and music therapy from a variety of angles, incorporating different disciplinary perspectives, but also laying a strong emphasis on the performing art as the basis for therapeutic practice. The programme is designed to establish a strong connection between theoretical insight and knowledge and applied, practical experience through educational components such as fieldwork, research, theory and arts therapy work. Students acquire sound knowledge of their profession, develop their artistic and research skills in relation to health, wellbeing in therapeutic settings, and are trained in the critical-reflective and ethical attitude required of a professional arts therapist. The programme is taught by a large number of national and international guest teachers and 8 permanent staff members. The programme admits students every other year. The number of students enrolled in year 2018-2019 was 46, 30 in the dance therapy specialization and 16 in the music therapy specialization (sum of new admissions and already enrolled students year 3).

### *The assessment*

Codarts assigned AeQui to perform a quality assessment of the Master Programme of Arts Therapies. At this moment, there are three master's programmes in arts therapies in the Netherlands.

These programmes have been assessed as part of a 'cluster-assessment' in 2019. The independent panel members, who are also involved in the assessment of several of the other programmes in the cluster, have been selected and appointed in close cooperation with the programme management. AeQui convened a preparatory meeting with representatives from Codarts' master's programme to exchange information and to plan the date and itinerary of the site visit.

In preparation for the site visit, the panel studied the programme's position paper. In addition, the panel also reviewed a selection of 15 theses from the most recent cohorts of graduates. The panel's findings were used as input for discussions during

the site visit, which took place on 6 December 2019 (an overview of the programme of the site visit can be found in attachment 2). The panel assessed the programme in an independent manner; at the end of the visit, the chair of the assessment panel presented its initial findings to representatives of the programme and the institution. This report presents the findings, considerations and conclusions of the panel in accordance with the NVAO framework for extended programme assessment. A draft version of the report was sent to the programme management for a fact check of its content; any corrections have been included in this final version.



## Intended learning outcomes

The panel judges that the programme **meets** the criteria for this standard. The programme aims to train talented dancers and musicians to become professional, dedicated and reflective dance or music therapy practitioners who are able to contribute to the development of the professional domain of mental health and wellbeing. To this end, the programme has formulated end qualifications in close consultation with the (international) professional and educational fields. The panel judges that the 7 intended learning outcomes are concrete and adequate, in accordance with the relevant (inter)national frameworks for the profession, and therefore meet the current demands of the working field. The panel is impressed by the unique profile and potential of the programme. It encourages the programme to further develop and make concrete its vision and aims for the future, more specifically with regard to its unique profile as an arts-based and arts-informed arts therapies programme and its ambitions for further growth.

### 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

#### *Profile and objectives*

The master's programme aims to educate professional, critical and authentic art therapists who are able to contribute to the professional domain of mental health and wellbeing and who are able to use their artistic, therapeutic skills in wide range of settings and in service of different types of patients and clients.

Dance and music therapy originated from working with the arts in a therapeutic context. The focus was mainly on clients' experiences while dancing and making music, eliciting participation and promoting vital and expressive movements and sounds. However, in the past decade there has been a development towards the application, study and teaching of theories and methods that highlight the active working factors within dance and music and focus on the meaning of dance/music and aesthetics for mental health and wellbeing. This orientation aligns closely with the profile and aims of the master at Codarts, which is strongly arts-based and arts-informed.

Codarts was the first in the Netherlands to offer a part-time arts therapies programme at a master's level. Arts therapies in the Netherlands are generally offered as a full-time (professional) bachelor's programme of four years. Since there was no national educational profile for a Master of Arts Therapy, the Codarts programme has used the learning outcomes of the medical specialist (at post-graduate level) as a guiding framework for the learning outcomes of its dance therapy programme. The profile and learning outcomes of the dance therapy programme were validated as 'good' by the previous evaluation panel in 2012, and Codarts has set up those of the music therapy specialization according to the same set of standards.

The programme has formulated 7 intended learning outcomes, which form the basis for the module goals and end qualifications. The panel was presented with overviews of the relation between the Dublin descriptors, the Codarts learning outcomes, the competency profile of the Dutch Federation for Arts Therapies, and the curriculum of the master. (See attachment 3 for a full overview of the final qualifications). The programme has also gone through a thorough process of calibrating of the master's level of the curriculum, matching its learning outcomes to the Dutch professional profile for Music Therapy.

In addition, the profile and learning outcomes of the programme are in accordance with the

national and international standards for arts therapies:

- The programme is recognized by the Dutch Association for Dance Therapy (NVDAT) and Dutch Association for Music Therapy (NVvMT): students can become members when they enroll in the Codarts program;
- The NVDAT is a full member of the EADMT (European Association for Dance Movement Therapy). Similarly, the Dutch Association for Music Therapy (NVvMT) is a full professional member of the EMTC (European Music Therapy Confederation).
- The programme is a member of the European Consortium for Arts Therapies in Education (ECArTE); ECArTE only accepts government accredited programmes that operate within a university structure;
- Graduates of the Codarts Programme can register with the (Dutch) Stichting Register Vaktherapie.

The programme is currently working on a further refinement of its intended learning outcomes for the following cohort (2020) so that these goals are more geared towards the beginning therapist and more strongly arts-based.

The panel observes the programme has achieved a lot in the past years and is impressed by the huge potential of its curriculum. The panel would like to encourage the programme to further develop and articulate what it aims are for the future, most particularly with regard to the specification of its arts-based and arts-informed profile and how this is made into a more prominent feature of the student's training programme. This could include more collaborations between the specializations music and dance, but also with other arts disciplines, a stronger focus on the integration of theory and practice and the development new theories starting from the language of music and dance. Another aspect that the programme needs take in consideration in the formulation of its vision for the future according to the committee, is its ambitions for further growth, for example through the opening up of the possibility for a fulltime master's programme and/or

opting for professionalization and post-graduate courses, which would contribute to more diversity within the student population.

#### *Links with professional and educational field*

The programme ensures that its objectives are aligned with the developments and requirements of the profession in several ways. As described, the current programme was set up in alignment with the international professional and educational standards for music and dance therapies. From its inception an advisory committee consisting of members from the board of the Dutch Association of Music/Dance therapy and other active professionals, such as dance or music therapists and psychotherapists/psychiatrists, have been involved in the programme. Twice a year the programme management and advisory panel meet to discuss developments and safeguard the translation of the learning outcomes into the curriculum and their alignment with the demands of the professional field. This alignment is further supported by the expertise and networks of the international and Dutch staff members of the programme who have extensive teaching and professional therapeutic experience in psychiatry, education and/or in private practices. Within the Netherlands the programme has a close connection with professional practices through the Dutch associations for dance therapy and music therapy. Member meetings of the associations are often hosted by Codarts.

The Master of Arts Therapies is involved with other programmes, both nationally and internationally. Within the Netherlands there are regular meetings with other arts therapies courses via the LOO-VB (Landelijk Overleg Opleidingen Vaktherapeutische Beroepen). The programme is also a member of KenVak, a cooperation of several Universities for Arts Therapies Educations. KenVaK's goal is the development of the body of knowledge of the arts therapies, by means of (collaborative) research in practice and curriculum development in the bachelor and master programmes. The Codarts programme also actively participates in the national project group for the research agenda of arts therapies, initiated by the

Dutch Federation of Vaktherapie (FVB). The programme's participation in the European networks and confederations (EMTC, EADMT and ECarTE) for music and dance therapy ensure that it is attuned to global developments in the professional domain. Finally, the connection with Anglia Ruskin University (Cambridge, UK) has fulfilled an important role in of design and teaching of the music therapy specialization: one its professors acted as a consultant for the programme during the initial set-up of the curriculum and several of their staff members also teach in the Codarts programme.

### *Considerations*

The panel judges that the goals and profile of the programme meet the expectations of the professional field of arts therapies. The panel is positive about the programme's ambitions to educate professional, dedicated and reflective dance and music therapists who practice an arts-based and arts-informed arts therapy in the professional domain of mental health and well-being. The panel

highly appreciates the unique profile of the programme, which makes it stand out from other programmes, both nationally and internationally. It is impressed by what the programme has achieved in the past years and what it has to offer for the future. The panel also applauds the flexibility and open mindedness of the staff and management, which enables them to keep developing and adjusting to the demands and dynamics of the professional field. In order to fully realise its high potential, the panel urges the programme to develop a concrete vision for the future, stimulating what specific goals it wishes to achieve with regard to its model for growth and the potential partners it could collaborate with. More importantly, the panel thinks that the programme should clarify how it wishes to realise and translate its arts-based and arts-informed profile in the training of its students and what it expects them to achieve at the end of the course, also when it comes to research and final project. Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment panel judges the that programme **meets** standard 1.

## Curriculum

The panel is very positive about the orientation, contents and structure of the programme. According to the panel the programme offers a strong, ambitious and well-structured curriculum as well as a challenging and dynamic study environment which is fully student-centred, with short lines and good communication between student and staff. Students and staff are passionate about their profession and the curriculum indeed succeeds in training students to become authentic practitioners who are well prepared for their professional roles. The panel also recognises that the content and professional orientation of the programme is of a high quality, which offers a good integration of research, practice and theory, a wide range of methods as well as a strong focus on the development of professional skills and self-knowledge. For the future development of the programme, like to challenge the programme to find more focus in its research orientation, in alignment with its unique profile as an arts-based and arts-informed curriculum. It will also help students to pay close attention to the specificity of arts-based and arts-informed arts therapies in their research projects, which includes a careful study and analysis of the internal mechanisms of the specific artistic medium in which the student works. Having a professorship with a specific research assignment in arts therapies could support the programme its further development with regard to research and in finding its unique arts-based focus. Staff members are fully engaged with the programme, and highly experienced educators and arts therapies professionals, and have the necessary expertise to support and guide students in their learning trajectories. The programme offers a carefully designed intake-procedure that ensures that the level and qualifications of incoming students are aligned with the content and goals of the programme. With regard to feasibility and the international dimension of the programme, the panel urges the programme to think of ways to incorporate international internships more fully into the curriculum so that the integration between theory and practice is the same for all students. With regard to recruitment, the panel supports the programme in its plans to invest in becoming more visible in other professional domains in order to arrive at a more diverse student population.

### Orientation

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

#### Findings

##### *Professional orientation*

A central notion informing the philosophy and design of the programme is that theory and practice are interwoven and must go hand in hand. The course is geared toward establishing a strong connection between the students' experience and capacities in their art discipline and the therapeutic contexts in which clients receive treatment for issues of mental health and wellbeing. Students are prepared for real-life professional therapeutic settings in several ways. First of all, fieldwork, research, psychotherapy theory and dance/music therapy work are interrelated from the start, thus

enabling a direct application of acquired knowledge and insight. In order to develop performative skills for their therapeutic work, students are regularly asked to present, using both verbal and nonverbal (artistic) components, underpinned with relevant theory. This happens in various dance/music therapy modules, and at different stages of their research trajectory. Furthermore, an important component of the programme involves learning within real-life professional contexts to train the necessary skills and competencies. To this end, students engage in fieldwork, do an internship in the second or third year, receive group and one-on-one supervision as well as personal psychotherapy. Fieldwork is mandatory for all students and the goal is to acquaint them with clinical practice, various dance therapy and music therapy approaches and client populations and is therefore a tool in the

preparation of their internship. Students are asked to observe dance/music therapists at work while visiting institutions at least 8 times. There are several assignments connected to this module that are also part of the research portfolio, like an interview with a therapist or an observation of a session. International students can do fieldwork visits together with a Dutch speaking student.

In year 2 the majority of students start with their internship, the workload of which might intensify later on, depending on the student's available time. The two internship coordinators, one for music therapy and one for dance therapy, oversee and, together with the on-site supervisor, assess the students' progress. After conclusion of the internship period, the coordinators collect feedback from the internship organizations on the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the Codarts programme. Students need to have a minimum of 400 hours of professional experience over a minimum period of nine months in a clinical setting. However, the programme urges students to continue the internship beyond these 9 months in order to acquire as much experience as possible. Supervision of the internship is provided by the internship organization and the programme. The students must receive a minimum of 60 hours on-site one-on-one supervision from a therapist. The Codarts programme offers a minimum of 42 hours group supervision. Students bring internship material to these supervision sessions, which focus upon the student's interpersonal dynamics, dance/music therapy skills and safe practice. Finally, students are required to receive a minimum of 50 hours of personal therapy during the 3 years programme. This can be done with either a registered dance/music therapist, an arts therapist from a different discipline, or with a registered psychotherapist. The personal therapist is not involved in the programme.

#### *Research*

Research in the programme aims to not only offer students profound knowledge of the relevant theoretical frameworks and the scientific qualitative and quantitative methods of investigation, but also wishes to introduce students to arts-

based and arts-informed research methods and show that these can be applied in a systematic manner. The programme positions itself within the framework of evidence-based research and makes the conscious choice to introduce students to a broad and diverse spectrum of approaches and methodologies, enabling students to delve into their specific field of interest and use the methods that suite his or her inquiries best.

The research learning line is structured by research classes and the research labs. Research classes have a theoretical orientation and train students in research methods and techniques (quantitative, qualitative, arts-based and mixed methods). The research labs focus on practical applications of the theories and support the students to develop their own research skills. At the end of year 1, students must pitch a portfolio containing the research assignments of year 1 and formulate a first concept of their research question. In year 2, this research question can be used for the critical literature review. At the end of year 2, students are coached in small groups in writing a research proposal. The programme gives students personalized coaching in year 2 and to help them integrate the research practices into their professional learning processes. In year 3, students embark on the research project, gather data and write a thesis, which they must also present to the assessment panel (see also standard 10 'Assessment' and standard 11 'Achieved Learning Outcomes'). The research team, consisting of the head of research and the tutors/coaches, closely follow and evaluate the progression of the students' research.

Since the previous accreditation of the dance therapy programme in 2012, several important adjustments have been taken to improve the feasibility and quality of the research projects. Students often struggled to complete their research project, finding it hard to continue their research activities in combination with work-related responsibilities. They also did not always have the necessary research tools to realize their initial plans. In 2016, the programme remodeled the research programme to include more arts-specific

(dance or music) components in the research modules and to further integrate the students' clinical practice with their growing theoretical knowledge and research skills. Arts therapy specialists, also research coaches, are invited to contribute to help build a clinically informed body of knowledge (e.g. research questions coming from the clinical field). Analysing how clients present their problems in the arts modalities, studying movement or musical patterns and structures and offering specifically tailored interventions, are closely interwoven with the formulation of research interests stemming from the clinical analyses. To help students navigate the research trajectory successfully, the programme introduced research coaches into the research classes and -labs. Next to the support they give the students, they establish a connection between different components within the research programme.

Research in the programme is also supported through exchange and collaboration with other research units and programmes at Codarts, thus ensuring that the programme receives continuous input with regard to research developments in its own discipline and adjacent domains. It has, for example, taken part in a research project of the research unit Blended Learning of Codarts, a study funded by the EU Creative Culture Programme. Also, more and more students, tutors and PhD candidates of the programme take part in the annual Codarts Research Festival and present their research projects.

### *Considerations*

The panel is very positive about the professional orientation of the programme and the design of the course components presented above. It applauds the strong integration of theory and practice and observes that the curriculum delivers students who are very professional, self-aware and reflective. Both fieldwork and the internships contribute to the interweaving of knowledge and insight with practical skills and professional competencies. In its conversations during the site visit, the panel learned that international students sometimes have difficulty in finding a suitable

internship in the Netherlands due to the language barriers. Although the programme does offer them the option of postponing the internship until the third year, the panel thinks this is less desirable since they then miss the connection between course content and its practical application, which is a such a strong feature of the programme. It would recommend thinking of ways of incorporating the international internship within the given structure of the curriculum. Furthermore, the panel supports the programme in its ambitions to extend its international outreach, for example by creating a fulltime course alongside the existing part time course, or by offering separate classes and workshops for the (inter)national professional community. These initiatives will help the programme become more visible in other domains and enable a further diversification of its learning community, according to the panel.

The panel is positive about the design of the research line in the programme, which offers students a range of methods and tools, introduces them to different perspectives and approaches and gives them the necessary support during their final thesis. The panel observes that there is a good integration of theory, research and practice in the programme, which lead to high quality research outcomes and therapeutic practices. The programme's approach also helps students to become critical and reflective practitioners and gain insight into types of research that informs practice in the professional field. The broad range of subjects and approaches also gives them the opportunity to choose their own direction and follow their individual research interests.

Though the panel acknowledges the advantages of a broad approach, it would like to challenge the programme to find more focus in its research orientation, in alignment with its unique profile as an arts-based and arts-informed curriculum. Finding and explicating its position with regard to research in relation to other research practices in the domain of mental health and wellbeing could contribute to a more prominent featuring of the programme's strengths and unique selling points. It will also help students to pay close attention to

the specificity of arts-based and arts-informed arts therapies in their research projects, which includes a careful study and analysis of the internal mechanisms of the specific artistic medium in which the student works. Having a professorship with a specific research assignment in arts therapies could support the programme its further development with regard to research and in finding its unique arts-based focus.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the panel judges that the programme **meets** this standard.

## Contents

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

### Findings

The master's programme is a three-year, part-time course consisting of 120 EC (For an overview of the study programme see attachment 4). Students are often already working in the domain of dance or music, and classes take place during weekends and intensive weeks. The curriculum consists of 5 units:

1. Dance/Music Therapy Theory, Skills and Methods (28 EC);
2. Observation and Analysis (8EC);
3. Psychological and physiological framework (25EC);
4. Research (30EC);
5. Professional Practice (29EC).

The coherence of the programme is ensured both horizontally as vertically. Each of the 5 components consists of multiple modules and has its own build-up throughout the three years. At the same time, the programme is designed in such a way that there is an increasing integration of, and exchange between theory, skills, research and professional. Year one is focussed on personal and professional development of the dancer/musician into an arts therapy practitioner. The first year offers insight into the diverse aspects of the field of arts therapy and stimulates a critical reflection on the students' own capacities. Students

learn about the therapeutic potentials and working mechanisms of their art form and explore their own movement/dance and musical preferences, strengths and weaknesses, a process that is necessary in order to become an authentic and critical reflective practitioner in the field. Year two is about connecting the students' personal interests to the professional clinical setting. Students learn how to apply theory, skills and methods and practice facilitating therapeutic sessions for different client populations, and within different realistic settings. They can start practicing what they have learned in actual professional contexts once they have started their internship. Year three is about the full integration of all the knowledge, insight and skills learned in the previous two years. This results in a research project and master's thesis.

Students alternate modules which are discipline-specific with modules that are interdisciplinary (dance and music), such as the Development Laboratory in year 1 and 2, and courses on psychological and physiological theory.

During the site visit, the panel spoke to students and alumni of the programme. They indicated that they were very satisfied with the content of the programme, which they praised for its broad scope, its attention for the individual interests and development of the students, the focus on arts-based and arts-informed research, and the natural way in which their identities as performing artists are connected to their development as arts therapies practitioners.

### Considerations

The panel concludes that the content of the programme is of a high level, offers a broad scope of theories, practices and methodologies, and is designed in such a way that there is a continuous integration of theory, practice and research as well as careful attention for the individual trajectories of the students in their development towards professional music and dance therapists. This finding is supported by the panel's conversations with students and alumni, who are without

exception very positive about what the programme offers them. Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the panel judges 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

The programme subscribes to the didactical concept of Codarts, which is geared towards experiential learning. It views learning as an active process in which students are expected to take responsibility for their own development as a professional. The learning processes of students within the programme are supported and stimulated by a learning environment that is student-centred, varied in theoretical and practical work forms, with many opportunities for learning in professional settings. The programme strongly emphasizes the importance of learning and discovery through practical experience, and the integration of theory and practice. The tutors are all therapists therefore have the experience and expertise in providing a safe environment for these processes of discovery and critical reflection. The programme offers many different work-forms, appropriate to the goals of the modules and in service of the integration of the principles of dance/music therapy. It includes regular classes, participation in labs, self-study, fieldwork visits, internships and regular personal therapy. Students are expected to be actively involved and attend at least 80% of the classes. The research learning line offers a blended learning format and consists of research lectures, research labs, online courses (Epigeum), group coaching and individual coaching. Personalized coaching is aimed at helping students to integrate the research practices into their professional learning practices. English is the official language of the programme. This choice is supported by the fact that the international working field, the master programme

profile, the student population and the teaching staff are predominantly English speaking. The programme wishes to have a good international orientation and connection with other arts therapies programmes. Being an English speaking programme helps to attract good international candidates as well as excellent (guest) teachers. It also facilitates exchange with the international working and educational field. The general Teaching and Examination Regulation is available in both Dutch and English. The sub-TERs are only available in English. The same goes for the study guides of the MAT programmes.

The ethical dimensions of the arts therapies profession also receive ample attention in the programme. Students are introduced to general ethical issues and responsibilities as found within group work, shared leadership and individual commitment. This growing awareness for ethical issues mirrors the learning process of a trainee (a student in internship) being gradually exposed to ethical responsibilities in a clinical situation. The Codarts Arts Therapies Ethics Panel functions as an independent advisory group and offers advice on ethical aspects related to doing research in a clinical setting.

Students and alumni the panel spoke to characterized the programme as very student-centered, dynamic, and with a good connection with the professional domain. They indicated that the staff, mentors and coaches are highly ambitious, passionate and very invested in the success and progress of the students. They also appreciated the different perspectives offered on the profession, and the manner in which they are encouraged to think critically, make connections between different insights and theories, and to choose their own personal style in their arts therapy.

### Considerations

The panel is positive about the structure and educational approach of the programme. It underwrites the choice for English as the main language of communication within the programme, which makes sense in view of the international profile, the incoming students, the strong connections with arts therapies programmes abroad and the



international tutors and guest teachers that are structurally involved.

Furthermore, the committee confirms that the programme revolves around the individual learning trajectories of the students, has an appropriate build-up and that the varied work forms are aligned with what the programme wishes to achieve. Both students and teachers are clearly passionate about their profession and highly invested in the programme. The panel was also struck by the sense of community expressed by all involved, teachers as well as students. The positive, safe and dynamic atmosphere created by the programme is highly valued by the students, who feel that they are seen for who they are and are guided accordingly by teachers and coaches. Students feel they are free to give feedback and suggestions for improvement and feel that they are indeed heard when they do so. The programme has made adjustments at various points in the past years in response to feedback from students. In short, the panel characterises the programme as challenging, well-structured and fully student-centred, sustaining an open atmosphere in which staff and students can freely communicate. Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the panel judges that the programme **meets** this this standard.

## Incoming students

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

### Findings

#### *Intake procedure*

The programme admits students every other year, most often around 24 candidates in total. It has a carefully designed intake-procedure, which ensures that the level of incoming students meets the requirements of the curriculum.

Students must have a bachelor's degree (or equivalent) plus work- and life experience to be admitted into the programme. They must have a minimum of two years of work experience after

having acquired a bachelor's degree. If the CV shows the candidate does not have this work experience, he/she will not be invited for the dance/music audition. In case a candidate is not in possession of a bachelor's degree, the CV, showing adequate and ample work experience, the letter of motivation, (reflections on) the audition, the life story and intake interview, will need to convince the audition panel that the candidate has a bachelor's level of thinking and the ability to learn. If such a student is admitted, the programme must first ask permission from the Codarts' Board of Directors and Codarts' examination board.

The programme mostly selects students who have a strong and diverse professional background in dance or music. However, the programme also allows other (related) professionals to enroll if their music/dance background is strong enough. In this way, the programme aims to create a diverse group of students from different backgrounds and cultures which enriches students' educational process and at the same time prepares them for issues of diversity that may come up later in internship and work situations. Students are assessed on their proficiency in English before being admitted. The minimum level of proficiency in English at Codarts is a 5.5 score IELTS (academic level) or an equivalent norm. For those who have to improve their English language skills, Codarts offers an English course.

The entrance process for Codarts' programme consists of introduction workshops, the writing of a motivational letter, a digital preselection (for students from abroad), an audition, a written life story and an interview. The MAT organizes introduction workshops once or twice per year. During these introduction days participants experience different approaches in music/dance therapy and meet several of the tutors. They can find out whether this way of working suits them and if this is really a career they would like to pursue. Most audition candidates participate in one of these weeks.

All candidates are requested to write a motivational letter about why they are interested in the

Codarts dance/music therapy programme. The letter should explain why they want to enroll, how their art form has influenced their own (mental) health, as well as the health of others, what their expectations for the future are. This letter will give the programme a good sense of how well candidates can express themselves (in English) and is an essential part of the selection procedure.

Due to the large number of international candidates the programme asks candidates traveling from abroad to participate in a preselection round by sending in a YouTube link with some dance/music assignments. On the basis of this video the candidate can be invited to come to the audition in Rotterdam and is offered the opportunity to conduct the intake interview on the same day.

During the auditions, dance therapy candidates are assessed on physical coordination, variation in movement and efforts, authenticity, ability to develop an improvisation task, make an instant choreographic phrase, reflect verbally on tasks and generally on their ability for non-verbal interaction. Music therapy candidates need to show a high standard of flexible musicianship, demonstrated on one instrument, preferably on a second one as well, such as on keyboard or another accompanying instrument. They also need to show performance qualities, musical communication and improvisation skills and have the ability to reflect verbally on the given tasks.

The audition is followed up by the intake interview. For this interview the student must send in a written life story. The intake interview allows the panel to discuss some personal issues that may have been raised in the motivational letter, music/dance audition or life story which could be of influence in following the programme. Asking candidates to reflect on their music/dance experiences in the audition, what music /dance means for them personally and what motivates them to want to become therapists can indicate maturity and depth of thinking. In the intake interview the panel also asks candidates whether they have

some basic knowledge of psychology/psychotherapy, research methodologies, and some experience in personal therapy. Advice might be given in a letter of acceptance how to further prepare for the education. Students who have completed a bachelor's programme in Arts Therapies and have shown sufficient mastery of research methodologies (to be assessed as part of the audition procedure) may apply in year 1 for an alternative, more compressed research trajectory.

The students with whom the panel spoke were very positive about the intake procedure. They were particularly appreciative of the introduction workshops that gave a good impression of the content and orientation of the programme. Students were also positive about the relationship between their prior education and the level of the programme. In the conversations students also indicated that they were attracted to the Codarts programme because of its unique arts-based, arts-informed profile, the emphasis on research and the excellent reputation of the involved teachers. They were also drawn by the personal, student-centred approach of the programme.

### *Considerations*

The panel establishes that the programme has a highly effective intake procedure that ensures that the qualifications of admitted students are in line with the level, profile and aim of the curriculum. The panel was impressed with the careful unique design of the intake process which offer students a good impression of the curriculum, the staff and the study environment and allow the programme to select those students that are most suited to the curriculum and the given cohort.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment panel judges the programme **meets** standard.

## Staff

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment panel concludes that the programme **meets** the criteria for this standard. The panel judges that staff members and study coaches of the master's programme are qualified and highly dedicated to the education and support of students as they progress through the programme. The staff members, many of which have an international background, have extensive experience and expertise in the domain of dance and music therapy. The panel applauds the strong sense of community shared by both the students, staff and management alike, which helps to create an open and safe atmosphere in which students can develop their individual profile as art therapist. There is a good communication between the coordinators of the specializations, the tutors, coaches and the staff responsible for the research line. Students praise the knowledge, skills and experience of the staff and coaches and appreciate that as students they are valued and supported in their individual trajectories towards the arts therapy profession.

*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 master's programme follows Codarts in its staff development policy, using a cycle of interviews with regard to the progress, functioning and evaluation of its employees. Staff members of the programme receive many opportunities to improve their expertise within Codarts as well as outside of the institute. One of the tutors, also coordinator of the dance therapy specialization, for example, has started on a PhD research project at Erasmus University Rotterdam.

The master's programme has achieved a good balance between permanent teachers who bring continuity to the learning environment and the involvement of guest teachers who have active practices within the professional field and can inspire both students and teachers. At the moment, the programme has 8 permanent teachers next to a large number of guest teachers. The team of permanent and guest teachers is comprised of professionals with extensive teaching and professional therapeutic experience. The large majority have a master's degree and have good English proficiency. The tutors have a background in dance/music and improvisation, a quality which supports the programme's specific arts-based and arts-informed profile. The research coaches

all have a PhD title and are themselves experienced in conducting applied research. The programme is managed by the head of programme, in close collaboration with the coordinators of dance therapy and music therapy specializations and the head of research. The team is supported by a management assistant (0,4 FTE).

In response to the feedback given by the previous accreditation panel, the programme has invested a lot of time and effort in its relationships with the Dutch professional field by reaching out to its alumni after they have acquired several years of experience as professional dance/music therapists. Many of the current tutors and two members of the advisory committee are themselves graduates of the master's programme. The programme also makes sure that it regularly instructs and keeps its research coaches up to date on the developments in the programme and the individual trajectories of the students.

### Considerations

In its conversations with staff members, the panel was able to establish that the programme has a cohesive, experienced, ambitious and passionate team of staff members who share the same goals regarding the education of the students. There is an open atmosphere and a real involvement with the learning trajectories of the students. The staff members the panel spoke to are very satisfied

with the programme's working environment, which they deemed open and aimed at improvement. Students indicated that they feel supported and cared for, were very positive about the expertise and experience of their tutors and (international) guest teachers and praised the sense of community created by the programme.

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

## Services and facilities

The panel judges that the services and facilities of the master's programme meet the required standard. The panel observes that the Codarts building suites the needs of the programme, with a sufficient number of classrooms and studios for music and dance presentations and practice sessions. The programme also has access to theatre and stage facilities as well as many different instruments that can be used during lessons. The panel judges that the quality of the tutoring within the programme is very high and supports students in every possible way. In this sense is fully aligned with the high demands, responsibility and ethics of the profession of arts therapy. Students are positive about the accommodations and facilities and praise the manner in which they are supervised by the tutors, personal tutors, coaches and supervisors. The programme provides good information about the curriculum via different media. The panel does see some room for improvement with regard to the availability of relevant literature, since the library is relatively small and not completely up to date.

### Accommodation and infrastructure

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

#### Findings

The master's programme is located in the Codarts building on the Kruisplein, in the direct vicinity of Rotterdam Central Station. During the site visit, the panel was given a tour through the building and could get an impression of the facilities, instruments and classrooms used by the programme. The dance therapy specialization has a reserved studio on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor and uses smaller classrooms for small scale group work on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor. The music therapy specialization uses an ensemble room on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor, if it is available, and otherwise uses smaller classrooms on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. The programme also has access to theatre and stage facilities as well as many different instruments that can be used for practice sessions. The average occupation rate of the classrooms and studios within Codarts is high, but there is sufficient capacity to execute all study programmes and provide space for rehearsals and self-study. This is also made possible by the relatively recent expansion of the opening hours of the Kruisplein building (in addition to evenings, the studios are now also open on Sundays) and the implementation of the scheduling programme Asimut, which was developed especially

for professional art education and enables a more efficient use of studios and classrooms.

Students have access to Osiris (also in the recently introduced My Codarts app), Asimut and the Codarts intranet. Furthermore, the IT system and network have been prepared for facilitating the 'blended' learning environment, digital assessments and end-user-oriented apps. The programme took part in a pilot study to find out which digital systems and administrative management tools can be applied to support the overall Codarts educational processes.

Students have access to the Codarts media library which has a collection of relevant literature, repertoire, CD/DVDs for professional education in music, dance, arts therapies and circus arts and provides online access to international journals and databases in these areas. Students can access the online library catalogue and electronic journals from their home via the Codarts intranet. The library is open on some Saturdays and always takes care to schedule these parallel to the programme's schedule, as the master students are regular visitors. New literature is purchased when this is requested.

#### Considerations

According to the panel, the accommodations and material facilities meet the requirements of the programme. There are a sufficient number of appropriate classrooms and studio's available for

the teaching of different types of classes and group work. Students can make use of the necessary instruments and other facilities needed for dance and music therapy practice. The electronic and digital tools are appropriate and specific to the needs of the students within an art education context. The library offers a reasonable amount of relevant (online accessible) literature and articles, but the panel thinks the collection could be updated to include more recent core literature relevant to the profession of music and dance therapy.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment panel concludes 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*

Sustainability is a key element of the Codarts mission, vision and strategy. Its aim is to offer students the best mental and physical support to stay physically and mentally healthy as a performer and sustain a durable professional practice. All students have access to the Codarts Performing Arts Health Centre with physio-manual therapists, a (sports)dietician, a speech and voice therapist, a psychologist and a mental coach. Furthermore, the International Office provides a wide variety of services including advice and assistance with travelling documents to enter the Netherlands, arranging a residence permit and registering at City Hall. All students at Codarts can seek guidance and advice from the student counsellor if they have personal problems or need help dealing with practical issues. Students are expected to see the student counsellor if they cannot attend lessons for a long time due to illness, injuries, or other personal circumstances that may lead to a delay in the study.

OSIRIS is the student information system that records all student data, from enrolment up until

graduation. Study coaches and the student counsellor use OSIRIS to record and consult information about the students. Information on study results may be obtained for the purpose of teacher meetings.

In recent years, and in response to student evaluations, Codarts has further improved the information provision to students. It has opened a central information desk (STIP) at the Kruisplein location for all study-related matters, renewed the study guide, introduced the new scheduling programme Asimut, and provided more information via different digital and social media.

In addition to the services offered to all Codarts students, the master programme has its own specific system of tutoring and guidance. This includes a personal tutor for each student, who they can consult for educational and practical matters or for instance for advice about the type of personal therapist they should seek. Furthermore, the programme offers research coaches to guide students through their research trajectory and supervisors for the training of therapeutic skills. In this way the programme ensures that students integrate research into their personal learning processes and develop the necessary skills to act professionally and in an ethically responsible manner in a therapeutic setting.

### *Considerations*

The panel praises the design of the tutoring system of the programme, as well as the broad range of (para)medical specialists available to the students via the Performing Arts Health Centre. Students are provided with good information about the programme via various channels, which function well. In its conversations with the students and alumni the panel could establish that they are quite satisfied with tutoring and information provision by the programme. Students have few complaints with regard to the communication of their tutors and coaches. This also has to do with the fact that the school is relatively small and fosters a strong sense of community: communication lines are short and there is an open

atmosphere in which informal exchange comes naturally.

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

## Quality assurance

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment panel concludes that the programme **meets** this standard. The panel qualifies the quality assurance system of the programme as flexible and responsive, leading to a true quality culture shared by all involved. It observes that the programme actively strives for continual improvement and that it structurally involves its students and teachers in its quality assurance processes. The panel establishes that reviews and evaluations have resulted in concrete improvements to the programme in recent years. It applauds the programme's open attitude and the manner in which input from teachers, students and all relevant partners is taken seriously.

*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 within the programme follows the quality assurance policy of Codarts. The PDCA-cycle consists of an Institute Plan, the annual statement on Finances & Quality Assurance, the activity summaries per study programme/department and a biannual, 'traffic-lights' report. These are discussed in bilateral consultations with the Executive Board. All relevant parties (study programme panel, exam board, employees, students, alumni and the professional field) are actively involved in the various aspects of the internal quality assurance. The programme uses various tools to evaluate its curriculum and facilities: the National Student Survey, EvaSys for the evaluation of the educational programme and services, a Staff Satisfaction Survey (every other year), the HBO Arts Monitor for alumni and U-multirank. In addition, the programme has an advisory committee which it consults twice a year in order to receive feedback on the goals, content and outcomes of its programme. Furthermore, external experts/assessors are involved in assessing the graduation projects.

The results of the evaluations are shared and discussed in the general teacher meetings as well as with the study programme panel and the student council. Improvement measures are translated into the concrete plans and become part of the regular PDCA cycle. Students and employees are informed about relevant developments,

evaluation results and improvement measures via the website, intranet, newsletters, Codarts email and via social media.

The content and implementation of changes in the curriculum are discussed in the study programme committee of the Performing Arts department, which includes the Arts Therapies programme, the programmes Performance and Dance in Education, Circus Arts and Music Theatre. The master programme is represented by 2 students. At certain the head of the programme is invited to clarify certain curriculum changes. In addition, the programme has an active student council that proposes ideas and wishes concerning the content of special weeks and the invitation of guest teachers.

In its conversations with management, teachers and students, the panel observed that the programme sustains an open dialogue with all involved and continually strives for improvement. Students are involved and committed, and their input is taken seriously by the programme. The panel also confirmed that concrete measures have been taken in recent years to improve various aspects of the programme, such as the implementation of a new research curriculum, the application of LMA in the dance therapy specialization, the linking international students to national students for the fieldwork and creating a clearer route from internship to research for the international students.



## *Considerations*

The panel is positive about the way the programme assures its quality. All interested parties are involved in the process of quality improvement. Students and teachers are committed to the programme and collectively strive to find ways to improve it. Also, there are many opportunities for informal exchange and deliberation on issues of quality improvement. The lines are short due to the shared sense of community and the relatively small size of the school. The committee

praises the flexible and responsive nature of the programme's quality assurance system. It observes that a long-term vision for the programme, as discussed under standard 1, will help to avoid ad-hoc decisions and guide it in making the appropriate choices in response to student evaluations.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment panel qualifies judges that the programme **meets** this standard.

## Assessment

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment panel concludes that the programme **meets** the criteria for this standard. The panel has established that the assessments of the programme are valid, objective and transparent due to the use of standard assessment forms, the implementation of the four-eyes principle for practical exams and involvement of external assessors during the final exams. The panel also appreciates the active and professional involvement of the exam board and the assessment panels. The panel thinks that the 20-point scale for the assessment of the theses might need to be reconsidered. It urges the programme to formulate and incorporate criteria for the assessment of arts-based/arts-informed research methods in alignment with its profile and goals.

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

### Findings

#### *Valid, objective and transparent*

Codart's policy for assessments is described in the document *Education and Assessment at Codarts* (2019) and in the Teaching and in the Examination Regulations. Codarts has taken several measures to further improve its quality assurance in the past years, which include the introduction of practical guides for teachers, 'Assessment and Evaluation', and the training of examiners, particularly the chairpersons of the assessment committees involved in the assessment of graduation.

The master programme has translated the Codarts policy into its own assessment system. It implements the four-eyes principle for practical assessments, structurally deploys external experts at final examinations and invests in developing a shared vocabulary to help calibrate differences between assessors and promote more in-depth evaluations and richer feedback. Assessment methods and criteria can be found in the module descriptions, the assessment programme and practical guides. For each assessment, the programme has formulated the following aspects: learning outcomes, evaluation criteria, assessment method and the manner in which each criterion is weighed. With the exception of the thesis and its presentation, all modules are assessed as either passed or not-passed, according to the specific criteria stipulated in the course outlines.

This form of grading reflects the programme's highly process-oriented structure which in turn mirrors the process-oriented nature of arts therapy itself. The programme takes measures to train and instruct its teaching staff in the correct execution of the assessment procedures.

The graduation level is assessed on the basis of the internship, the thesis and the thesis presentation. The thesis is assessed independently by two coaches and the thesis presentations are assessed by an assessment committee that includes one external expert. Internships are assessed by the internship on-site supervisor and the internship coordinator. Every year the examination board attends a random selection of examinations to check whether the assessment guidelines are properly implemented. In recent years the examination board attended a number of thesis presentations (three in 2016-2017 and three in 2018-2019) and found that the guidelines were fully adhered to. In 2016-2017 the examination board recommended to further clarify the assessment criteria and re-evaluate the assessment scale. The head of research, together with the research coordinator and coaches changed the evaluation system from assessing the various criteria of the thesis with plus/plus-minus or minus into a 20-point numerical scale. The cohort graduating in July/August 2019 was the first to be assessed this way. The programme also developed a shared vocabulary for calibration in various meetings with coaches and second readers, resulting in clearer criteria and a new assessment

format for the thesis and thesis presentation. In order to calibrate its assessment criteria and to receive external feedback on its assessment procedures, the programme occasionally exchanges theses and assessments with the master's programme at Windesheim.

#### *Final theses*

The panel looked at the assessments of the 15 theses of the last two student cohorts (2014-2017 and 2016-2019). It observes that the programme uses standard assessment forms with clear assessment criteria for the assessment of the thesis. All end products are assessed via an assessment form that distinguishes between writing, process and outcomes; the findings of the examiners are summarized on a final form. The panel was satisfied with the manner in which these products were assessed and in agreement with the grades given. However, the panel does think that the programme might have to reconsider its choice for the 20-points assessment system for the final exams, instead of the plus/plus-minus or minus system, since it leads to a lower cesura (i.e. a lower 'pass'-grade and therefore to students passing their exams more easily). Furthermore, the committee urges the programme to incorporate assessment criteria for arts-based/arts-informed research methodologies (integration and application) in its assessment (forms) of the theses. This would strengthen its position as an arts-based/arts-informed arts therapy programme and establish a stronger connect with the approaches and methodologies used within the curriculum.

In its conversations with students and alumni, the panel established that they were satisfied with the programme's assessment procedures. They valued the intersubjective nature of the assessments and felt that they were judged fairly and carefully throughout the programme. According to the students, the intended learning outcomes, assessment methods and criteria were communicated in a transparent manner.

#### *Examination board and assessment panel*

The Codarts examination board consists of two 'chambers': a chamber of Performing Arts/Education and a chamber of Music. The examination board also includes an external member with legal expertise. All members of the examination board have taken part in external trainings for examination board members. The panel observes that the exam board of Codarts is proactive and critical when it comes to the monitoring of the assessment procedures. In recent years, it has taken different measures to evaluate and improve the quality of the assessments. They inform examiners of their appointment and the guidelines they need to follow. New chairpersons receive in-house training and already appointed chairpersons are required to take part in an intervention meeting once every two years. In 2013-2014, the examination board installed an assessment committee to specifically execute evaluations of assessment programmes on behalf of the examination board. The assessment panel screened and fully approved of the assessments of the master programme for the academic year 2017-2018.

#### *Considerations*

Based on the findings described above, the panel concludes that the assessments of the programme are valid, objective and transparent due to the clear definition of learning outcomes, assessment methods and criteria of each module as well as the use of standardised assessment forms, the application of the four-eyes principle and the involvement of an assessment jury with external members for the assessment of the thesis. It approves of the pass/non-pass assessment system for the modules. Students are well informed about the intended learning outcomes, assessment methods and criteria. The panel appreciates the professional and proactive attitude of the examination board and the appointment of an assessment committee to closely investigate the assessment procedures and practices within Codarts as a whole. It values the strong division of roles between the examination committee and the programme, which ensures the independent

and objective position of the examination committee. The evaluation committee is also positive about the way Codarts and the programme have incorporated the feedback it received from the examination committee in past years. The assessment of the final theses will benefit from a rethinking of the grading-scale and the

incorporation of assessment criteria for arts-based/arts-informed research. Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment panel judges that the programme **meets** this standard.

## Achieved learning outcomes

The panel judges that the programme achieves its learning outcomes and therefore **meets** the criteria for standard 11. According to the panel, the theses and final projects meet the required level of a master's degree in arts therapy and demonstrate that the students have achieved the necessary competencies for as a professional and ethically responsible dance or music therapist. The theses show that students have acquired the necessary (applied) research skills and that they are able to report on their findings in an appropriate manner. The panel judges that the integration of arts-based/arts-informed approaches with the therapeutic paradigm as well as a focus on issues of transfer and the system in which clients and patients function should be made more explicit in the final theses. The majority of graduates finds in employment in the domain of arts therapies. The programme maintains a strong relationship with its alumni community through its alumni programme. Exit talks with graduates and alumni surveys are actively used to implement change in the curriculum.

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

### Findings

#### *Master's level*

In preparation for the site visit, the panel studied a selection of 15 theses from the last two student cohorts (2014-2017; 2016-2019). The theses studied by the panel were of the required master's level. The theses show that students have acquired the necessary (applied) research skills and that they are able to report on their findings in an appropriate manner. Overall, the theses were characterised by good research questions, a solid application of methodologies and valuable outcomes and conclusions. What the panel did however miss in the theses it studied, was an explicit focus on the arts-specific micro and macro parameters and the integration of these with the therapeutic paradigm. It states that the unique arts-based and arts-informed approach could be made more visible in the research programme by developing methods for the exploration of the internal mechanisms of art itself. The resulting insights then could serve as a basis, as evidence, for the therapeutic treatment/approach. By thinking about how to bring this aspect more to the fore, the programme can strengthen its unique position as strongly arts-based and arts-informed arts therapy curriculum.

In addition, the committee also noted that the conclusions of the research for the final thesis often did not reflect on aspects of transfer and the system in which the client/patient functions, nor was there a lot of attention for the effects of the treatment in the short- and long term. This too could be added as an important aspect of arts therapy research and could receive more emphasis in the research trajectories of the students, according to the committee.

In addition to the theses, the valuation of the internships by on-site supervisors also prove that students meet the intended learning outcomes and master's level of the programme. Music therapy students are praised for their excellent musical skills, their researching attitude and knowledge. Likewise, dance therapy supervisors value the strong dance skills, professional flexibility and independence of the students, as well as their theoretical and practical knowledge and skills.

#### *Alumni*

The programme maintains a strong relationship with its alumni community through its alumni programme. It keeps track of their careers, involves them in the programme as tutors and offers refresher courses suited to their needs as professional arts therapy practitioners. The Bachelor Dance in Education and the dance therapy specialization of the programme have, for example,

taken the initiative to organize summer schools as a continuous professional development for both dance teachers and dance therapists, looking for shared fields of interest, such as working with young children and toddlers or composition tools for amateurs/clients and improvisation according to Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) elements.

The exit talks and alumni surveys are actively used to implement changes to the curriculum. One example is the stronger focus on the integration of clinical practice, critical reflection and research skills in the revision of the programme in 2016 in response to the finding that alumni felt a need for this. The programme also intends to offer the current cohort more opportunities for exchange with peers during the third year.

Graduates of the programme find employment quickly and easily in domain of arts therapy. More than 80% of the alumni are active in the arts therapy domain. Alumni work in the arts, in mental health programmes, in therapy or science, as an advisor, facilitator, tutor, researcher, contributor to diagnostics, as (multidisciplinary) team member in psychiatric settings, are active in the Dutch, Belgian, German Dance Therapy Associations and/or they have started a private practice. The alumni and representatives the panel spoke to during the site visit were very satisfied with how they had been prepared for the profession, all of them had found employment.

### *Considerations*

Based on its findings, the panel concludes that the graduates of the master's programme meet the standards for and level of a Master of Arts Therapies. This is evident in the theses, which demonstrate that the students can successfully conduct applied research, have acquired the competencies and goals formulated by the programme and are prepared for a profession in the field of dance or music therapy.

The panel thinks that the integration of arts-based/arts-informed approaches with the therapeutic paradigm needs to be made more explicit in the final theses. Also, the specific internal mechanisms of the arts discipline should be articulated more. Finally, panel urges the programme to pay more attention to issues of transfer and the system in which clients/patients function in the final theses. To achieve this, these aspects need to be addressed at the beginning of the research trajectory in the formulation of the research question and choice of methodology.

The careers of the alumni prove that the programme is successful in training art therapists who can further develop the professional and educational domain. The panel praises the manner in which the programme succeeds in keeping its alumni close and creating a bridge between the educational and professional domain. Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the panel judges that the programme **meets** this standard.

## Attachments

## Attachment 1 Assessment panel

dr.ir. Ab F. Groen

Ab Groen is zelfstandig organisatieadviseur in het hoger onderwijs

dr. M. Spreen

Marinus Spreen is lector Social Work & Arts Therapies, NHL Stenden Hogeschool

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Teacher, researcher and coordinator of the BA and MA training program of music therapy at LUCA School of Arts

Susan C. Scarth BSc.Hons., MCAT, RDMP, UKCP, CMA, SP (level 1), Dip. Sup., RSMT/E

Private DMT practice, as well as a visiting Lecturer/Interpersonal Learning Group facilitator, Queen Margaret University

E. Postma

Elody Postma is zelfstandig gevestigd psychomotorisch therapeut en studeert M Vaktherapie bij Windesheim

The panel was supported by Jesseka M. Batteau PhD



## Attachment 2 Programme of the assessment

Friday December 6, 2019

Location: Kruisplein room 6.01, Rotterdam

09.00 – 09.30	Internal deliberation panel
09.30 – 10.15	Board and management <i>Welcome, goal and programme visitation</i>
10.30 – 11.30	Presentation
11.30 – 12.30	Research group
12.30 – 13.15	Lunch and assessment of documents
13.15 – 14.15	Teachers <i>Goals of the programme, curriculum, assessments, quality of teachers</i>
14.30-15.30	Students, alumni and professional practice <i>Programme, assessments, quality of teachers; Connection programme to professional practice, assessments and final examination</i>
15.45 – 16.30	Exam board <i>Assessments and realised learning outcomes</i>
16.30 – 17.45	Additional examination, conclusions
18.00 -18.30	Feedback

## Attachment 3 Documents

- Position paper
- Teaching and Examination Regulations (Codarts + programme specific)
- Study guide 2019-2020
- Research Handbook
- Internship Guide 2019-2020
- Overview tables of relation between Dublin Descriptors, intended learning outcomes, national competency profile and curriculum
- Overview teachers + CV's
- Staff/Student ration and Study Output
- Assessment plans music therapy and dance therapy
- Evaluations and Reports Examination Committee
- Theses of students with following student numbers: