



CENTER FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

OVERVIEW REPORT FOR FILM STUDY FIELD

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report is based on the external quality evaluation of the Film study field in *Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre*. The external evaluation was organised by the Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC).

Comprehensive external evaluation report including strengths and weaknesses and concluding witsome recommendations was prepared for Film study field in *Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre* (separately for first and second cycle) and included evaluation marks. This overview focuses on the main findings of the external evaluation of the Film study field from a general point of view.

Based on the findings of Film study field evaluation, expert panel have come to a decision to give **positive** evaluation to HEI: at *Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, the first and second cycles*.

On the basis of external evaluation report of the study field SKVC takes a decision to accredit Film study field and first cycle for 7 years and Film study field and second cycle for 3 years.

II. STUDY FIELD OVERVIEW BY EVALUATION AREAS

1. INTENDED AND ACHIEVED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

The panel found that there is a clear awareness of the Academy's mission and ambitious vision within the Film field studies area. First cycle and the second cycle study programmes across the Film field studies area are strong and are closely linked to the national professional film landscape. There is a very good clearly vertically and horizontally structured curriculum across all specialisations and there is very good responsiveness to industry needs both locally and nationally. There is a very good emphasis on practical skills and professional competencies which were highly valued by students and alumni. The high quality and collaborative nature of the final projects is commendable. Flexible and interactive approaches to learning and artistic mentorship that value the heritage of traditional art education are in place. There are close links across the departments of LMTA and other national Higher Education Institutions (HEI). A clear action plan or formal analysis with regard to the vision of internationalisation would enable the field studies area to develop more coherently. Within the second cycle study programme the panel found that there were less opportunities for personalisation of the curriculum than exists at the first cycle. The panel found that research needs to be further developed in the Film field studies area and that the relationship of practice and research is not well established and connected particularly in the second cycle studies.

2. LINKS BETWEEN SCIENCE (ART) AND STUDIES

The Film field studies area has a range of partners in place to enable good links between Art and studies. The panel found that there are good opportunities for students to make links with major events and festivals although some of these need to be more international and more big name festivals. More support is needed for students' the first cycle and the second cycle diploma films to enable them to enter major international film festivals. Students have good accessibility to equipment and to other student cohorts for collaborations and are supported by staff in this area.

3. STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT

The panel found that there are some good supports in place for students. Admissions processes are generally clear and are well organized and easily comprehensible for prospective Academy's students. There is a good and effective range of financial and personal support in place for the students. Staff provide good support and advice and offer links and contacts to students to enable them to complete their studies. The panel did note that there is a lack of possibilities for students from abroad to study in the Academy. There is also a lack of a formal on-line studying process tracking system which would help staff and students to track learners' individual progress.

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING, STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

There is good evidence of strong teaching and learning in the field studies area. Teaching and learning processes are generally good and adapt informally due to the very responsive academic staff and the small size of the institution. Good financial assistance and support for socially deprived groups is in place. Close ties in a small professional field allow for informal awareness of employability and career opportunities. Students commented favourable on the agility and cooperation of academic staff to customize and adapt the processes which reduces the need for over bureaucratic formal applications and procedures. The panel noted some areas of improvement in relation to the need for a course catalogue and some missing documentation, e.g., around support for disabled students to enable prospective students to better understand the Film field studies are and the supports available.

The panel felt that there was room for improvement in relation to procedures for students to make formal complaints which would be helpful in more serious or sensitive cases.

5. TEACHING STAFF

The quality qualifications, enthusiasm and commitment of the teaching staff is very good. There are highly motivated and qualified teachers, many of whom are recognised artists; Staff provide good supports to students and enable them to make contacts professionally. Processes are in place for the recruitment of staff. Whilst the staff have benefited from staff development related to their subject area and many have benefited from training and other events offered through membership of Association of Film and Television Schools (CILECT) the panel notes that most staff have not had training in pedagogical studies to improve their teaching. The international mobility of teachers is somewhat limited and this is an area that is noted for improvement.

6. LEARNING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

The Film field studies area has a good range of learning facilities and resources in place to support learning. A close and working relationship with the rental houses and external facility providers is in place and supports learning and the arrangement with the Lithuanian Film Centre is exceptionally good. Training in the use of equipment is good. Students have good access to equipment and to technical support and seemed genuinely happy with the resources available. Premises are generally good although a clear updating strategy for facilities and equipment would be helpful. Whilst there is a clear plan for the refurbishment of a new building which will add significantly to the footprint some of the premises e.g. the multi-floor premises on T. Kosciuskos str. are not accessible to students with mobility problems.

7. STUDY QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

The Film field studies area has some good quality assurance systems and procedures in place. A Quality Management Centre that coordinates quality across the programmes is in place and seems to work well. There is a comprehensive set of quality policies and procedures in place and these are readily available e.g. on the website. The quality of the first cycle study programme is good, its structure and learning outcomes are clear appropriate and well understood by staff and students. Whilst there were some examples of student surveys and feedback mechanisms, student participation in formal surveys would benefit from more encouragement for students to complete surveys. There are some good international links including membership of CILECT but the Film field studies area would benefit from the development of a more formal system of benchmarking internationally with identified best practice institutions. The panel recommend that a more formal system of student complaints would be helpful as this informal approach may prove difficult in the case of more serious complaints. Whilst there are good opportunities for individual staff to partake in international conferences and events there is a lack of in-house pedagogical training and a development plan for staff would help improve the quality of the first cycle and the second cycle study programmes.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

MAIN STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT IN STUDY FIELD

📌 Strategic recommendations at institutional level (for Higher Education Institution):

The First Cycle

- Subject specific and specialisation learning outcomes would benefit from a clearly and individually defined comprehensive course catalogue and avoidance of generic definitions.
- The specification of assessment methods, teaching mode and grade weighting by subject would enable a better understanding of the study for prospective students and experts.

The Second Cycle

- Documentation of subject-specific learning outcomes would greatly aid the understanding of the programme.
- The relationship and connection between practice and research could be better outlined.
- Introducing additional formal and structured opportunities for personalisation of the programme is a fundamental opportunity for improvement.
- Research, particularly in relation to the MA, would greatly benefit from a clearer focus, more distinctive strategy and planning and support.
- More encouragement and practical support for the second cycle students' final research theses should be provided including developing opportunities to publish the works on databases

The First Cycle and The Second Cycle

- A clear action plan with regard to internationalisation and supports for internationalisation and strategic future development would enable a better understanding of the HEI vision.
- Precise subjects' catalogue will greatly enhance the understanding of the first cycle and the second cycle study programmes.
- Development of a formal system of pedagogical training for staff in order to improve teaching quality would be helpful.
- A plan to improve the international mobility of teachers after the pandemic would help grow international mobility.
- It is suggested that a clear updating strategy for facilities and equipment be developed. Some of the premises e.g., the Multi-floor premises on T. Kosciuskos str. are not accessible to students with mobility problems, a short-term plan to improve these buildings pending new premises completion is recommended to be developed.
- Industry stakeholders and alumni are involved in QA processes and planning on a largely informal basis. LMTA would benefit from a more formal system of stakeholder engagement being in place.
- The field studies area would benefit from the development of a more formal system of benchmarking internationally with identified best practice institutions.

Strategic recommendations at national level (for the Ministry of Education and Science):

- The panel would encourage the Ministry to continue to recognise the specific nature of art based schools and the unique positioning of this Academy and its Film programmes within Lithuania. The Film Studies programmes are resource heavy which may require more practical support for resources (this is an international problem also).
- The panel would encourage the Ministry to support and fund the development of strong international links outside of the local region.
- The panel is of the view that there are issues around the grading criteria used in the SKVC evaluations. A Grade 4 is problematic in that for an area to have no deficiencies is very difficult. Different Grade 3 or 4 descriptors where good and very good are distinguished separately would be helpful.