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LIETUVOS MUZIKOS IR TEATRO AKADEMIJA

VEIKLOS VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW REPORT OF

LITHUANIAN ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND THEATRE

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CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION.....	3
II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSTITUTION.....	5
III. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	6
IV. ACADEMIC STUDIES AND LIFE-LONG LEARNING	13
V. RESEARCH AND ART ACTIVITIES	18
VI. IMPACT ON REGIONAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.....	21
VII. GOOD PRACTICE AND ENHANCEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	24
VIII. JUDGEMENT	29
ANNEX. HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION RESPONSE TO REVIEW REPORT	30

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The review of the LITHUANIAN ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND THEATRE (LMTA) (referred to below as “LMTA” or “the Academy”) was organised by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC), Lithuania, in its role as the Authorized Agency prescribed by Lithuanian law. The review was conducted in accordance with the prescribed methodology according to the Procedure for the External Review in Higher Education approved by Government Resolution No. 1317 of 22 September, 2010.
2. The Academy submitted a Self Assessment Report (SAR) with Annexes, and further documentation as requested by the review team. References to this documentation are made in this report. The review team visited the Academy from 15 – 17 April 2013 and conducted several meetings, meeting with representatives of all relevant bodies of the Academy.
3. The team considered that there could have been a greater amount of analysis and self-reflection in the SAR, which was predominantly descriptive.
4. The expert review team explored the four principal areas of the Academy’s activity as set out in the ‘Methodology for Conducting an Institutional Review in Higher Education’ (referred to below as “the Methodology”): strategic planning and management, academic studies and life-long learning, research and art activities, and impact on regional and national development. Within each area of activity the review team made appropriate reference to the criteria set out in the Methodology and took due account of the lists of sub-criteria in reaching their decision.
5. The expert team consisted of team leader *Professor Frans De Ruiter*, Professor and Director of Leiden University Academy of Creative and Performing Arts, The Netherlands; and members *Professor Philippe Dinkel*, President of the Conference of the Swiss Music Academies, and President of the Music Department of the University of Applied Sciences of Western Switzerland; *Mr Vytautas Karoblis*, Student, Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, Lithuania; *Professor Grzegorz Kurzyński*, Head of the Piano Chair of the Academy of Music in Wrocław Poland; *Ms Lina Puodžiukaitė-Lanauskienė*, Dean of the Department of Dance, M.K. Čiurlionis Arts School, Vilnius, Lithuania; *Professor Airi Rovio-Johansson*, Gothenburg Research Institute, School of Business, Economics, and Law, University of Gothenburg, Sweden; and review secretary: *Ms Tara Ryan*, Educational Partnerships and Student Services Manager, Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Ireland.
6. The review team made a number of general and overarching observations which they view to be of particular significance for the Academy in enhancing its provision and in contextualising a review of this nature.
 - The conduct of a review of an arts institute is a unique and important type of higher education review. It is recognised that it can be challenging to evaluate an arts institute under broad-based criteria for established for multi-disciplinary institutes. Regulation is generally tailored to the latter types of institution and therefore the conduct of review of arts institutions undertaken against such criteria needs to be one of expertise and sensitivity to the nature of the organisation as a specialist provider, such as the Academy in this instance. Respect for the particular context is required from the external panel as well from the institute itself in conducting its self-evaluation and presenting its findings to the panel. Similarly it is required from, the national accreditation agency and from society in general.
 - An understanding of the context of the artist is essential. It is a complicated profession which inspires dreams for its practitioners; its value for society and peoples is deeply

important. Artists are sometimes criticised that they cannot write down things in an evidential format. Whilst the arts can benefit from a thorough and in-depth written reporting on the evaluation of examinations and performances it is essential that the wider higher education community understands that not all things can be written down in the context of a domain where what can be described as the “unspeakable” happens. Peer review in this environment happens through listening and looking. Arts institutions have a different way of functioning to that of other fields of learning and this is the perspective from this review is conducted. The review team recommends a deepening of an understanding of this intrinsic nature of the artist and the arts institution and note such a deepening will enhance the Academy’s educational provision and also contribute to society’s appreciation of and benefit from the arts. This is a matter on which the Academy can provide leadership to both the higher education community and society in general.

- The Academy is a unique higher education organisation in Lithuania and has a particular role to play in the promotion of the arts and in reflecting international best practice, heightening both the institution’s reputation and that of Lithuania in the Academy’s specific domains of study. The Academy has huge potential and merits support and promotion.
- The concepts of “communities of learning” and “community of learning” are useful ways of thinking about the learning environment. Reflection on these may lead the Academy to achieve greater insight into professional education and lifelong learning as well as contributing to the holistic development of the Academy.

In particular the review panel noted the maturity of the Academy, its unique contribution to the arts in Lithuania and its commitment to lead arts education in Lithuania. In the context of this capacity and maturity the panel has offered significant suggestions and recommendations herein in order to support the Academy in its important cultural, social and educational work.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSTITUTION

7. The Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (LMTA) regards 1933 as the year of its foundation, tracing its roots to the Conservatoire of Kaunas. In 1949 the Conservatoire of Kaunas and the Conservatoire of Vilnius (founded in 1945) were merged into the Lithuanian State Conservatoire, in 1992 being renamed as the Lithuanian Academy of Music (LMA), and in 2004 as the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (LMTA). The Kaunas branch left the LMTA in 2011 integrating into Vytautas Magnus University (VMU).
8. The Academy is governed by the 2009 Law on Higher Education and Research, as a state higher education institution. It operations under operates under Statute of LMTA, approved by Resolution No. XI-1322 of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania.
9. The Academy has approximately 481.2 posts and 643 employees. 60 members of the staff hold doctoral degrees and 138 are ‘recognised artists’.
10. In the academic year 2011/12 there were 951 students across all fields of study. In addition 105 learners participated in professional development programmes through distance education and a further 844 participated in various professional development events.
11. Students attend higher education programmes across the three Bologna cycles, Bachelor, Master and Doctorate all of which have received accreditation. There are 14 Bachelor programmes, 13 Master programmes and 4 Doctoral programmes leading to the award of the following qualifications:
 - Bachelor of Music
 - Master of Music
 - Bachelor of Theatre and Film
 - Master of Theatre and Film
 - Bachelor of Art Studies
 - Master of Art Studies
 - Bachelor of Art Pedagogy (teaching qualification – verified with the official register)
 - Master of Art Pedagogy (teaching qualification – verified with the official register)
 - PhD in Humanities - (This is a joint third cycle study programme in Ethnology organised with Vilnius University and the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore. It is jointly awarded by Vilnius University and LMTA.)
 - Doctor of Arts in Theatre and Film
 - Doctor of Arts in Music

A non-degree programme, of one year duration, is also offered in Music Pedagogy where teaching qualification (verified with the official register) is awarded.

The study of these programmes lead to awards at Level 6 of the Lithuanian Framework of Qualifications for Bachelor Programmes, Level 7 for Master Programmes and Level 8 for Doctoral programmes. The Lithuanian Framework was referenced in 2012 to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

12. LMTA’s vision, as stated in *Academy 2020*, is to “*be an open and dynamic space for studies, art and science that shapes the future of music, theatre, dance and film*”.
13. The Statute of Academy approved by Seimas in 2012 led to adoption of a new mission: “*to ensure a sustainable development of arts and artistic research, participate in shaping the policy of the national artistic education and culture, foster the spiritual harmony and the national identity, and educate the most artistically gifted young people as creative, initiative, entrepreneurial members of the society who would be open to Lithuania and the entire world*”.

III. STRATEGIC PLANNING & MANAGEMENT

Some Strengths

- The review panel *commended* the action of the Academy in the creation of a unit, Study Quality Centre, dedicated to institutional quality assurance
- The work undertaken on the consolidation of the Academy and realignment of Faculties subsequent to the Kaunas changes, is worthwhile and represents an *excellent* beginning for the Academy's next phase
- The work on the development of *Academy 2020* is *laudable*
- The close monitoring of and willingness to change annual plans in line with circumstances which arise is *positive*
- The review panel was impressed with the innovations in respect of doctoral education (see Academic Studies section and Research and Art Activities section) which arose in part due to the exposure of staff to international developments and their participation in international forums
- The Academy's active engagement with the European Higher Education Area, with sectoral standards in respect of music, the work of the Association Européenne des Conservatoires (AEC), and that of European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA) is *commendable*
- The energy and commitment of some of the younger Academy staff was very impressive and the support and encouragement given by the senior management *laudable*
- There are particular strengths evident in the institutional culture manifesting themselves in the areas of performance and assessment
- The scheme to enable staff to take a 'creative' year's leave, every five years is *commendable*, and an innovation reflective of the nature of an arts institute
- A code of ethics is in place
- The high level of graduate employment is impressive

Some Areas for development, it is recommended that:

- the new strategic plan (2015-2017), which is required for presentation to the Ministry of Education and Science, could be undertaken with a less utilitarian/bureaucratic focus
- in the completion of the next strategic plan that sets of key actions and targets with timelines, dates and responsible parties be identified to enable more effective monitoring and review
- in revising the *Academy 2020* there be a direct mapping of actions to the challenges identified in the SWOT
- in revising the mission proposed in *Academy 2020* due consideration be given to the use of realistic language and targets
- further and deeper involvement of students, on the Rectorate, in future SAR exercises, and in the strategic planning processes be encouraged and pursued
- the current quality assurance (QA) elements distributed across the institute, be brought together swiftly in an integrated QA system
- the academic and educational leadership of the Study Quality Centre be strengthened and made more visible to ensure that QA is motivated by core educational values relevant to an arts institute
- on completion of its phase one implementation, the Academy conduct a self-initiated mid-term external review of its effectiveness, using a review panel with experts in quality assurance, and an understanding of an arts institute
- actions are adopted which will encourage more students to engage in feedback activities
- the Academy be more creative in the use and publication of the quantitative data it collects
- an immediate review of the data base for student records and programmes be conducted
- in the establishment of the formal QA system the process for establishing the resource implications of new programmes be more transparently documented

- the Academy make better use of branding/signage in respect of buildings to ensure that is evident that all the buildings at various locations belong to one holistic Academy which has a consistent corporate identity
- the Academy engages with local business and social stakeholders on potential shared projects and/or synergistic business opportunities
- in the development of its management systems that the Academy ensures transparency and fairness of process in the monitoring of staff performance, as well as clarity around the expectations of standards
- the Academy works to attract more international members of staff to contribute to the institutional standing and breadth of cultural perspective at the Academy
- a more sophisticated risk assessment tool be developed along with a more inclusive understanding of the concept of risk

Strategic planning

14. The work undertaken on the consolidation of the Academy and realignment of Faculties subsequent to the Kaunas campus changes is worthwhile and represents an excellent beginning for the Academy's next phase.
15. As required, LMTA's 2012-2014 strategic plan was submitted to the Ministry of Education and Science. This fulfilled statutory requirements. In light of the maturity of the Academy and its reflection on the exercise, it was perceived as limited in functionality, due to its required regulatory focus on financial matters. Accordingly the Academy has developed an overarching draft strategy, *Academy 2020*. This is a *laudable* exercise and the Academy is encouraged to bring it to swift completion. In this context the panel **recommends (R1)** that the new strategic plan (2015-2017), which is required for presentation to the Ministry of Finance, could be undertaken with a less utilitarian/bureaucratic focus. If approached in a more holistic manner it does not have to be perceived or constructed as mainly a response to a legislative requirement. Rather the Academy is *encouraged* to work imaginatively and creatively within the national framework of the higher education system to which it belongs.
16. There should be a coherent alignment between the new strategic plan and *Academy 2020*. The review panel strongly **recommends (R2)** the identification of the owners of strategic priorities and problems, which should lead to the documentation of required actions in a time-delineated plan. Sets of key actions and targets with timelines, dates and responsible parties identified, will enable more effective monitoring and review.
17. In undertaking this exercise the Academy should also consider that the Strategic Plan required for submission to the Ministry of Education and Science is of three years duration, and elements are required to be review annually. The close monitoring and willingness to change in line with circumstances which arise is *positive*, but caution is required. The *Academy 2020* document was set for a seven year period. It is not evident that the durations are appropriate or that the review model enables effective planning and coordination: during the meetings with the review panel no evidence was offered in this regard. The introduction of the idea of *Academy 2020* suggests that the Academy is insightful in recognising some of the limitations of its strategic tools, however the current suite of documents are not sufficiently integrated, or consistent in vision and objectives. This may reflect the period of change that the institute has recently experienced, but it is imperative that the current planning phase be crystallised quickly in a clearly focussed plan with a clear overarching vision. The Academy is *encouraged* to consider that there must be a forward-looking approach in order to form society and that the overarching goals need to be tighter. A better balance between specificity and generality is required.
18. The use of the SWOT analysis in determining the vision and strategic plan is helpful, but it was not evident that proposed actions directly addressed some of the challenges identified in the SWOT, e.g. falling student numbers in Lithuania. In revising *Academy 2020* the panel

recommends (R3) that there be a direct mapping of actions to the challenges identified. With regard to the student numbers the Rector advised that people are still choosing art studies and that currently there is no drop in numbers here notwithstanding the demographic down-turn. This was not adequately covered in the SAR and the review panel were glad of the clarifications received.

19. Notwithstanding some weaknesses in the conduct of the SWOT it is evident that initiatives such as the restructuring of the Faculties, the introduction of Study Quality Centre, and the development of the Incubator reflect the adoption of strategic actions, aligned with the stated mission. The review panel *recommends (R4)* revising the mission proposed in the *Academy 2020* document, giving due consideration to the use of realistic language and targets. The 'world-wide' reach proposed seems somewhat hyperbolic.
20. The review panel concurred that one of the *Academy's strengths* is the high rate of employment of its graduates.
21. The 2012-2014 plan identifies actions consonant with aims of integration of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), and during the meetings it was evident that the staff were aware of and committed to measures of mobility. Tools such as the allocation of ECTS (see section on Study Programmes) and the issue of the Diploma Supplement (EDS) are standard practice at the Academy and samples were viewed during the visit. It was further explained in the meeting with the self-evaluation group, that consideration is being made of sectoral standards in respect of music, and that the Academy is aware of and utilising the Dublin/Polyphonia descriptors as well as being engaged in the work of the Association Européenne des Conservatoires (AEC). The team also indicated that they are cooperating in the work of the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA) on the development of similar descriptors for film and theatre. The review panel *commended* these actions.
22. From meetings with the stakeholders, students and staff it was evident that all parties were familiar with the *Academy 2020* document and its potential importance for the organisation. Whilst the SAR stated its creation was prompted by the legislative changes in 2011, the meetings with the various groups suggest that this genesis also arose from the opportunities arising from the refocusing of LMTA subsequent to the move of the Kaunas branch to VMU. The commitment of the various groups to the Academy was evident, particularly from amongst some excellent young staff members. The leadership of the Academy is to be *commended* for the allocation of responsibility to these staff and encouraged to build on their commitment to the implementation of the strategic plan of the institute. However the review panel *recommends (R5)* further and deeper involvement of students, on the Rectorate, in future SAR exercises and in the strategic planning processes. The students offered many innovative suggestions in the meetings with the review panel and the Academy is *encouraged* to capitalise on their interest and their ideas.
23. In considering all of the elements above in respect of strategic planning, it was evident to the review panel that the Academy is acting responsibly in respect of its strategic planning process, identifying current weaknesses and prioritising their amendment to ensure the plan is fit for purpose and future proofed. The review panel reaffirms its recommendation that the next iteration have greater coherency and establishes clear goals with the assignment of resources timelines and responsible parties. The Academy should become a more integrated institution with a holistic view of itself.

Quality Assurance

24. With regard to the Academy's internal quality assurance system the review panel *commended* the action of the institute to create a unit, Study Quality Centre, dedicated to this function. It is *recommended (R6)* that the academic and educational leadership of the Centre be strengthened and made more visible to ensure that QA is motivated by core educational values relevant to an arts institute.
25. In 2008 a Commission on the Quality of Studies of the Senate was founded. The Study Quality Centre was founded in 2011 and the Commission passed most of its functions to

- Study Quality Centre. The internal restructuring arising from the changes in respect of the Kaunas campus has led to revisions of quality processes, and the reassignment of responsibilities for these processes. These actions appear to be generating improvements and providing for a greater organisational coherence which the review panel *commends*.
26. Whilst the review panel *appreciates* the level of change and the challenges involved in the introduction of a new quality system, aligned to the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG), as referenced by the Academy in both its SAR and during meetings, the panel *strongly recommends* (R7) that the current quality assurance (QA) elements distributed across the institute, be brought together swiftly in an integrated QA system. It is clear that all the elements of the QA system are in place, but that their full implementation has not yet occurred. This should be a matter of priority for the Academy and should be completed in 2013. Its completion and implementation will contribute to a stronger institutional identity. In this exercise, it *may assist* the Academy to frame the QA system around the seven elements of internal quality assurance in the ESG (pp.16-19). The EU funded project *Developing internal quality management system for studies at LMTA* based on the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) as well as the ISO 9001/IWA2 standard is the vehicle for delivering the institution's bespoke QA system. In considering carefully the tools of institutional evaluation and review, and reflecting on the unique position of an arts institute, the Academy is encouraged to develop bespoke quality assurance mechanisms which reflect the nature of the institute, and incorporating the *strengths* in the present culture around performance and assessment.
 27. The review panel further *recommends* (R8) that on completion of its phase one implementation, the Academy conduct a self-initiated, mid-term, external review of its effectiveness, using a review panel with experts in quality assurance, and an understanding of an arts institute. Such a review may be a useful mid-term evaluation, prior to the next SKVC institutional review.
 28. Current QA processes in use by the Academy include amongst other elements programme review mechanisms, participation of students in institutional structures (e.g. Council, Senate, programme committees), access to assessment appeals mechanisms and the presence of an Ethics Policy. During meetings, students attested to an awareness of channels of communication to raise issues, and where necessary to instigate a formal appeal of an assessment result. However the review panel noted that this does not happen very frequently and this seems to be for a number of reasons: firstly it seems students have little interest as they referred to the standard good practice of the recording of performance assessment and having access to the recording frequently mitigating a student's desire to appeal. A second factor appeared to be that when a case is taken students are generally not happy with the results. As indicated above it is important that students have access to the written report prepared by examiners following a performance. The review panel affirms that it viewed student feedback questionnaires, but notes that students are not very engaged in their completion or in making representations on matters of concern to them. The review panel *recommends* (R9) the adoption of actions which will encourage more students to engage more fully in these feedback activities. The Academy should stimulate engagement by students in communication mechanisms when necessary.
 29. Student feedback is an important element used to inform programme review and development. The major review of programmes 2006-2011, involved participation by students in surveys. Through this process for example modules were merged arising from student requests. In addition modules which introduced subject matter in year four for the first time, were amended to take account of a need to learn about certain fields earlier in the course. This example referred to Musicology and Theory and Criticism and a need for an understanding of contemporary music which was raised by the students. This use of feedback is *good practice*.

30. The review panel further *noted* that the current QA model requires ongoing review of programmes, but that that review does not result in a formal document. The Academy is *encouraged* to reflect on this approach and consider if it is most effective in capturing feedback transparently and ensuring clear decisions on future approaches and improvements.
31. In December 2011, Senate approved a new policy establishing the *Minimum Requirements for Qualifications of the LMTA Teachers and Research Fellows*. It is very comprehensive and provides for a variety of categories of staff as relevant to an arts institute. It utilises definitions recently provided in legislation.
32. Staff members are supported in the attendance at conferences, seminars, lectures and other events that could support their professional development. Funding is available for attendance at events, and support is given for participation in national and international competitions as well as educational events. The review panel were *impressed with* some of the innovations in respect of doctoral education (see Studies section) which arose in part due to the exposure of staff to international developments and their participation in international forums. The scheme to enable staff to take a ‘creative’ year’s leave, every five years is *commendable* and an innovation reflective of the nature of an arts institute.
33. In addition staff members are supported through the provision of professional development programmes at the Academy. For example English language courses, computer literacy courses, as well some with a pedagogic focus such as those on the design of distance learning programmes and the development of learning outcomes and professional competencies were provided.
34. A draft working document on QA metrics, which includes sections dedicated to students, graduates, staff with associated targets, was presented at a meeting with the staff of the Study Quality Centre. This document, currently in draft format, evidences the Academy’s commitment to QA, and on completion should assist the Academy in the monitoring and evaluation of its QA system on an ongoing basis. Its inclusion of measures such as student drop-out, which is currently low at 5-6% on the four-year degree programmes, is viewed as one indicator of success. This is a *useful development*.
35. As also discussed in the Section on Studies, the Academy’s programmes are mapped to the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework and also to the EQF. The programmatic review referred to above was a comprehensive exercise ensuring the clear articulation of learning outcomes and the allocation of appropriate assessments, consistent with outcomes-based learning.
36. Whilst the SAR provided considerable amounts of quantitative data, the review panel **recommends (R10)** its more creative use and publication. For example the course catalogue on the website (<http://LMTA.lt/en/course-catalogue>) may include reference to the LQF and the EQF and greater module detail. The review panel also **recommends (R11)** an immediate review of the data base for student records and programmes, and its upgrading/replacement if necessary to ensure the integrity of student records and the accuracy of programme information. This is an important tool in the maintenance of a quality system.

Governance

37. The recent organisational changes arising from the Kaunas campus change, legislation and associated internal restructuring influence the model of governance in operation at the Academy. The model of academic governance is structured around a Council, Senate and a Rector, and is viewed by the Academy as collegial, as presented in the SAR and communicated in various senior management meetings. This is a useful and important perspective in an educational environment, but the review panel *cautions* the respective bodies *to maintain* clarity around their various responsibilities and any fiduciary responsibilities. Three areas in particular require clarification: the Academy must be clear where is the appropriate forum for the respective activities of ‘opinion development’ and ‘dialogue’; ‘advisory communications’ and ‘decision-making’. Good governance is predicated on clarity of roles and the appropriate exercise of associated authority.

38. At the time of the review, the panel *noted* that the Council membership is currently incomplete, due to various ongoing formalities, thus the panel did not meet a full Council during the 2013 site visit. One meeting of the new Council, with its external members only (two LMTA members, the Dean of the Music Faculty and the Director of the Director of Lithuanian National Philharmonic Society, were out of the country), had taken place since its establishment in March 2013. The *review panel, cognisant of the context in which these changes are taking place, is of the view* that the parties working in this interim period (current Council members, Rector, Senior Management) are doing so in good faith, with commitment to LMTA and are acting appropriately to address the requisite formalities around the establishment of the Council.
39. The review panel further *notes* that whilst the appointment of the new Council in full may have taken longer than might be expected, there has been every attempt by the Academy to ensure that the persons in place are competent, committed and willing to undertake their responsibilities in full. The members of the Council with whom the review panel met demonstrated an understanding of their roles and an eagerness to advance the vision and mission of the Academy. They wished to enable a greater participation of the Academy, its staff and students, in informing society and contributing to its social, cultural and economic development. The review panel *regards* the current situation as one which may occur in any normally functioning organisation and that the response of the Academy in ensuring the legitimate conduct of internal elections whilst continuing to manage the interim situation has been one of integrity, responsibility and appropriate to the circumstances.

Resources

40. The review panel met with representatives from all the different sections of the Academy to learn how it functions, how decisions are made and what information is used in the making of decisions around resources. Resources are allocated to programmes arising from a formal evaluation in which the Directorate of Economic and Finance has direct input, assessing the financial viability of proposals received from the academic departments or programme committees. It is **recommended (R12)** that in the implementation of the formal QA system this process be more transparently documented.
41. Currently the Academy is undertaking a series of infrastructure refurbishment projects, including the purchase of new instruments, with funding from EU Structural funds. The Theatre Faculty has recently had buildings refurbished utilising this funding. The review panel **recommends (R13)** the use of better branding/signage in respect of these buildings to ensure that is evident that all the buildings belong to one holistic Academy which has a consistent corporate identity. This will contribute to further development of an institutional identity.
42. 85% of the Academy's budget is provided by the State. The institute seeks funding from multiple other sources through the conduct of projects, the application for EU funds, etc.. The review panel *encourages* the Academy in its identification of alternative funding sources and **recommends (R14)** it engages with local business and social stakeholders on potential projects and/or synergistic business opportunities.
43. In the meeting about Strategic Management in which administrative staff, heads of department and heads of units, teaching staff and researchers participated, it was stated that staff needs were being reviewed in light of the strategic plan and that it may result in some staff contracts not being renewed. The Rector also advised that since taking up office in late 2011 a significant number of staff members had not had contracts renewed. This process of monitoring and evaluating staff contributions in light of the new strategy, vision and mission, is viewed by the senior management as essential to the restructuring of the organization to enable its future success and further development. The review panel **recommends (R15)** that in the development of its management systems the Academy ensures transparency and fairness of process in the monitoring of staff performance, as well as clarity around the expectations of standards.

44. Currently the Academy has a wide and experienced cohort of staff which is an organisational *strength*. The review panel *recommends* (R16) the institute works to attract more international members of staff to enhance the Academy's standing and the breadth of cultural perspective at the Academy, but *acknowledges* the challenges to make employment at LMTA financially attractive for persons coming from various parts of the world.
45. The major infrastructure renewal projects being undertaken by the Academy are warranted and the review panel *encourages* the Academy to make use of these exercises to consider the best location of various departments so as to contribute to the integration of the institute as a whole. Whilst there has been a recent short-fall in the allocation of EU monies to certain projects, the Directorate of Economics and Finance was clear on the current situation and its managerial responsibilities in respect of resources and ensuring full information is available to the relevant governance bodies.
46. The review panel discussed the report of the Research and Studies Monitoring and Analysis Centre (MOSTA) August 2012, *Findings Regarding the Compliance of LMTA Learning Resources with the Minimum Quality Requirements for the Infrastructure and Organisation of Higher Education Studies*. Overall LMTA satisfied these requirements, but three areas required investigation. The wireless penetration across all the building is limited by the age of the building and the protective orders on it, which is an understandable challenge. The ratio of third-cycle students to second-cycle students as presented in the document was skewed due to the exclusion of *Aspirantura* students. It is understood that Academy is liaising with MOSTA to have these included retrospectively. The narrative provided by LMTA in respect of the 'non-compliant' areas was rational and clear. Overall the panel is happy to concur with MOSTA "that resources were appropriate and adequate for the activities being conducted". Nevertheless, the review panel *encourages* the Academy in seeking further funding for its refurbishments and development. The Academy is providing a good standard of education and training in a high-cost field of education where they have limited means. They are doing *an excellent job*, but access to more resources would help them to meet higher standards.

Risk Analysis

47. With regard to risk analysis, the SWOT exercise conducted by the Academy offers some opportunity to identify risks, which the SAR suggests are mostly internal, and implement strategies to address them. The review team *recommends* (R17) the establishment of a more sophisticated risk assessment tool and a more inclusive understanding of the concept of risk. The findings of such a tool should be systematically and periodically reviewed by the various organs of governance, according to their respective roles and authority. This should assist the Academy in maintaining a clear focus on its vision and its implementation.
48. As indicated above, the review panel *confirmed* that a **Code of Ethics** is in place.
49. **Judgement on the area: Strategic Management is given positive evaluation**

IV. ACADEMIC STUDIES AND LIFE-LONG LEARNING

Some Strengths

- The review panel *commends* the Academy on the development of a joint degree
- The programme committee structure recently introduced as part of the Quality System with the participation of both students and external experts is *good practice* and should lead to the enhancement of the programmes of study
- Active participation in the various professional communities of practice by academic staff is *very positive*.
- The review panel *commends* the work of the Academy in establishing local collaborative partnerships with other HEIs where LMTA students can participate on their programmes
- Seeking Erasmus placement opportunities where the teaching model is one-to-one in a discipline such as music performance is challenging and the Academy is *commended* on its commitment to this activity, and its promotion
- LMTA has identified, that given the particular range of programmes, students may find it easier to participate in one form of mobility over another and has established relationships accordingly, for example for placements in the fields of theatre and film. This is a *commendable* practice.
- The review panel *commends* the Academy on the utilisation of incentives to support and encourage staff in their continuous professional development and the introduction of the LMTA Honorary Medal
- The review panel *commends* the participation of over 350 artists and teachers in visits to LMTA outside of the Erasmus scheme during the period 2006-2011
- The very extensive selection of European projects presented as evidence of the Academy's engagement in international development is *laudable*
- The review panel *commends* the Academy on the successful introduction of e-learning

Some Areas for Development, it is recommended that:

- the Academy gains a deeper understanding of ECTS and how it can drive change in a programme or a better configuration of a new programme
- greater use of feedback mechanisms be established and that the Academy advises those who provide feedback on any actions taken
- the Academy considers its assessment processes and ensures that there is a written as well as a taped/videoed record of the examinations and performances
- the Academy develops its own distinct approach to lifelong learning
- greater support for Academy staff working on e-learning models be provided
- the development and introduction of an institute policy and procedure on the recognition of prior learning (formal and informal) be pursued
- the Academy consider further opportunities for collaboration with other higher education institutions, and that in doing so consideration be given to lifelong learning possibilities for non-degree students
- the Academy pays closer attention to the National Framework of Qualifications as well as the European Qualifications Framework and considers more deeply standards articulated around 'contribution to society'
- the Academy continue its efforts to make the institute more attractive to foreign teachers, in order to further benefit from their participation
- the Academy develop appropriate projects across the full range of its subject disciplines

Programmes, Institutional Strategy and the National Environment

50. LMTA has adopted a model of provision of programmes of study and life-long learning which aligns with its strategic plan. It is also focussed on the needs of the national economy

as well as social and cultural development. The Academy aims that its programmes align to the State's 2010 *Guidelines on the Lithuanian Cultural Policy Development*. It takes as a specific focus the objective to educate for cultural competencies and the creativity of people throughout their lives and to improve the accessibility to culture in Lithuania.

Qualifications Frameworks and Standards

51. As referred to in Section III programmes are developed and reviewed in line with qualifications frameworks (national and European), sectoral standards (AEC/ELIA) and learning outcomes-based approaches. Some of the Academy's academic staff members are active participants in professional associations focussed on sectoral standards and professional competences within the European Higher Education Area. A number are also publishing on the area of learning outcomes in various practice fields, e.g. Rimšaitė and Umbrasienė, 2011. This active participation in the various professional communities of practice is *very positive*. It leads to enhancement in study programmes and in the quality of teaching and learning at the Academy. It assists in the development of new programmes and in the review of current programmes. In the context of the development of new programmes the panel *noted* that work in the area of music is very developed, but less so in the other the fields of study, theatre, dance and film. This may be something for the consideration of the Academy.
52. With regard to the use of ECTS, all study programmes indicate clearly in the website the credit points awarded. Equally these are indicated on the Diploma Supplements. In discussions with administrative staff, heads of department, heads of units, teaching staff and researchers about academic studies and lifelong learning, the usefulness of ECTS as a tool for programme development was discussed. The perspective presented seemed somewhat artificial and the review panel *recommends (R18)* that the Academy gains a deeper understanding of ECTS and how it can drive change in a programme or a better configuration of a new programme. An understanding that one can use ECTS in different ways, rebalancing a programme between contact time and self-directed study, as well as through diverse teaching and learning methods, including e-learning, is helpful in programme development. One can easily make changes in a curriculum by dividing credit in different ways.
53. The review panel *commends* the Academy on the development of joint degree in **Ethnology**, a PhD in humanities, with Vilnius University and the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore which is formally awarded by VU and LMTA. The legal agreement between the awarding parties was presented, as well as a clear schedule of courses indicating what Vilnius University is to teach and the credit to be allocated. In the monitoring and review of this programme, or in the future development of similar programmes with Lithuanian or transnational partners the Academy *may wish to* consult the following documents *Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher education in the European region*, Lisbon (1997); the Committee of the Convention on the recognition of qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, *Recommendation the Recognition of Joint Degrees*, Strasbourg (2004); the OECD/UNESCO *Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education* (2005); and the UNESCO/COUNCIL OF EUROPE *Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education* (2007). In addition with regard to this specific programme the Academy *it is suggested* that the paragraph 6.1 on the Diploma Supplement be agreed with VU well in advance of students graduating from the programme.

Stakeholder Involvement

54. The Quality Assurance system, discussed in Section III, is the framework by which the study programmes are monitored and reviewed and by which stakeholder involvement is achieved. The programme committee structure recently introduced as part of the Quality System with the participation of both students and external experts is *good practice* and should lead to the

enhancement of the programmes of study. This process also includes the consultation of graduates during the review of programmes. This is a welcome measure. In meetings with **graduates** they indicated that they had participated in general surveys on their experience at LMTA and some indicated they had been invited to provide specific feedback on a programme in light of an ongoing review. LMTA was anxious to consider the relevance of programmes provided for the employment options of graduates. The review panel **recommends (R19)** greater use of feedback mechanisms and suggests the Academy also advises those who provide feedback on any actions taken.

Alignment with National and International Policy

55. The programmes are measured against indicators identified in the Strategic Plan 2012-14, e.g. ratio of students enrolled for studies against graduate numbers, international mobility, updating of resources, qualifications of teachers, projects and publications; evidencing that the Academy has a teaching and learning strategy which *corresponds to* the provisions of Lithuanian Laws and the policy of the EHEA.
56. With regard to the programmatic review conducted in 2010, evidence was provided that the recommendations of the panel were addressed. Nevertheless the review panel *encourages* the Academy to consider the introduction of cross-institutional electives which provide opportunities for students to be exposed to diverse fields of learning. One particular discussion which arose during a number of meetings related to the introduction of modules on entrepreneurship. External members of Council, students, graduates, and business stakeholders were supportive of this initiative. The review panel **commends** the work of the Academy in establishing local collaborative partnerships with other HEIs to facilitate access to these sorts of modules by students. The panel cautions the Academy to be aware of the dangers of over-loading a curriculum also. It is possible to change by a curriculum by changing the teaching and learning model and thus ensuring certain learning outcomes can be integrated into current modules. Constant expansion or growth of a curriculum may lead to an inappropriate workload and/or programme configuration.
57. As discussed in Section III the Academy is committed to the implementation of the ESG, and the review panel recommends particular engagement with seven elements of internal quality assurance (see paragraph 26). One of these elements is assessment, and the review panel has referred to in it the overarching comments in Section I. The Academy by virtue of its disciplines employs significant components of performance-based assessment. The review panel **recommends (R20)** that the Academy reflects on these processes and ensures that there is a written, as well as a taped/videoed record, of the examinations and performances. The strength of practice-based assessment lies in the demonstrability of outcomes, but it can be undermined by the failure to adequately capture these and make them evident to others.

Lifelong Learning

58. The Academy is engaged in developing Lifelong Learning opportunities. Its particular frames of reference are EU and Lithuanian policy documents. Whilst these provide important context and support, the review panel **recommends (R21)** the Academy's development of its own approach to this area.
59. The introduction of e-learning elements in 2008 has been successful with a 300% growth in student participants between 2008-09 and 2011-12 (SAR, paragraph 135) and is **commended** by the review panel. Greater support for staff engaging in these types of initiatives is **recommended (R22)**. The review panel further **recommends (R23)** the development and introduction of an institute policy and procedure on the recognition of prior learning (formal and informal). As well as contributing to greater access to the Academy's programmes, it may also be a useful project on which to engage social partners and stakeholders such as music schools, drama groups, dance companies, etc.. The institute-led, mid-term review recommended by the panel in paragraph 27 *may wish to* incorporate specific objectives on lifelong learning and distance learning, if this is appropriate at the time.

Community Engagement

60. LMTA has extensive involvement in the community in the area of music schools, arts schools, dance and theatre companies. It also has partnerships with other HEIs to enable their students participate on some LMTA courses as electives, and where LMTA students can participate on their programmes. These are *excellent initiatives* and it is *recommended (R24)* that the Academy consider further similar opportunities for collaboration, and that in doing so consideration be given to lifelong learning possibilities for non-degree students.

Cooperation with Academic, Social and Business Partners

61. The Academy's SAR advised that its cooperation with academic, social and business partners had four focuses: (1) academic cooperation in provision of methodological assistance and consultations to institutions of art education as well as delivering art projects and educational event (2) academic, cultural cooperation and project partnerships with HEIs; (3) cultural cooperation with professional art groups and institutions in delivery of art projects and educational events (4) cooperation with representatives of the business world for the purpose to get the sponsorship for professional art and young artists. In the meetings with the external stakeholders, the social and cultural partners affirmed their close involvement with the Academy, for example the *Lithuanian National Drama Theatre*. offers work placements to students, or students are given access to the facilities of the new business Incubator. A further example presented in the SAR of cultural cooperation with professional art groups and institutions running art projects and educational events, is where students and teachers present concerts in different parts of the country and in cooperation with music schools and/or community groups.
62. Current higher education provision of non-degree studies is somewhat limited, with the Academy's focus on a particular programme in Music Pedagogy. The review team *supports* the Academy's plans to develop further programmes of this nature.
63. In fulfilling its commitment to society, which the Academy clearly takes very seriously, the review team *recommends (R25)* that the Academy pays closer attention to the National Framework of Qualifications as well as the European Qualifications Framework and considers more deeply standards articulated around 'contribution to society'.

International Mobility

64. The Academy is committed to promotion of international (incoming and outgoing) mobility of institutional staff and students and is cognisant of its significant impact on the activities of the institute. A *note-worthy example* of the engagement of students in mobility and their commitment to LMTA is where students on Erasmus mobility have brought their teachers back to the Academy also on Erasmus. Currently the Academy has 113 bilateral agreements in place in the EHEA. The agreements are with arts academies, conservatoire and other HEIs specialising in Dance, Music, Theatre and Film all appropriate for an institute such as LMTA.
65. The international dimension of studies conducted at the Academy *is further demonstrated* through the teaching of various courses through the medium of English and the invitation of foreign teachers to teach at the institute. Whilst significantly more staff of the Academy go out on Erasmus, than foreign teachers come to LMTA under the scheme, students indicated they were familiar with visiting lecturers and found it beneficial. The review panel *recommends (R26)* that the Academy continues its efforts to make the institute more attractive to foreign teachers, in order to further benefit from their participation. In this context the review panel *commends* the participation of over 350 artists and teacher in visits to LMTA outside of the Erasmus scheme during the period 2006-2011.
66. Both staff and students *indicated* there was ample opportunity to participate in an Erasmus programme. Each group brought significant learning back to the Academy and sought opportunities to engage with their receiving institutes for the benefit of LMTA. Given the challenges which can be associated with seeking Erasmus mobility where the teaching model is one-to-one in a discipline such as music performance, the Academy is *commended* on its

commitment to this activity, and its promotion. Diploma Supplements, considered by the review panel, also *included* details on Erasmus mobility undertaken by students, which may assist students in their search for work. In future strategic developments of this area the Academy *may wish to consult* the 2012 document *Mobility strategy 2020 for the European Higher Education Area*¹. Currently 4%-5% of LMTA students participate in mobility programmes. The EHEA 2012 proposes what will be an ambitious target for many countries and institutes of 20%.

67. The Academy participates in both Erasmus study and placement programmes. The benefit to students from both schemes may be invaluable. Given the range of programmes, students may find it easier to participate in one form of mobility over another. LMTA has identified this and has established relationships for example for placements in the fields of theatre and film. This is a *commendable* practice.
68. A very extensive selection of European projects was presented as evidence of the Academy's engagement in international development. These are *laudable* projects. However the review panel *recommends (R27)* that the Academy develops appropriate projects across the full range of its subject disciplines. Many of the excellent examples are in the field of music and the other fields of study, theatre, dance and film seem less represented.

Enhancing Teaching and Learning

69. As indicated in Section III LMTA has support in place to ensure the continuous professional development of staff leading to the enhancement of Teaching and Learning (see paragraphs 31-33). The review panel *commends* the Academy on the utilisation of incentives to support and encourage staff in their continuous development and the introduction of the LMTA Honorary Medal is a useful initiative.
70. **Judgement on the area: Academic Studies and Lifelong Learning is given positive evaluation.**

¹ <http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/%281%29/2012%20EHEA%20Mobility%20Strategy.pdf>

V. RESEARCH AND/OR ART ACTIVITIES

Some Strengths

- In light of the fact that the artistic activities undertaken by the Academy, its academic staff and arts practitioners, in the fields of music, theatre, film and dance, have no comparators in Lithuania from the perspective of level and depth of professional practice the panel *commends* the Academy's role in research and art activities
- The Academy has significant international partnerships which *reflect well* on the Academy and demonstrate a clear commitment to the development of international relations and international cooperation
- The Academy staff offered the example of their participation in an EU-funded project examining art institutions in Europe, e.g. Prince Claus Conservatoire, Groningen; Tours Conservatoire, Regional Academy of Music, etc. in order to benchmark their activities and learn from them. The review panel *commends* the Academy on this benchmarking work.
- The research team in Musicology has been *particularly successful* in its development of relationships with foreign researchers
- There is a *very solid* range of mission-relevant research fields
- The doctoral programmes are *impressive and commendable*

Some Areas for Development, it is recommended that:

- the Academy considers the opportunities for interdisciplinary research and synergies available
- the Academy develop a clear research and arts development strategy in which all staff are included
- in addition to monitoring quantitative outputs the Academy develop methods where by evaluation and monitoring activities are related to the relevance of the research
- the Academy seeks to grow the numbers of international practitioners and researchers visiting the institute to contribute to the enhancement of the academic and professional reputation of LMTA

Mission-Appropriate Research

71. The research fields in which the Academy is active are:

- Research on Lithuanian music, theatre and art
- History of Lithuanian music, theatre and film: sources, personalities, cultural context
- Lithuanian ethnomusicology: fundamental and applied research
- Interdisciplinary art research
- Art education: history, theory and methodology
- Theories and discourses of the contemporary art
- Art interpretation: theory and practice

The review panel *is of the view* that these are relevant and appropriate to the Academy's mission and nature. The panel *recommends (R28)* that the Academy considers the opportunities for interdisciplinary research and synergies available, but does caution the institute to do so with care and due consideration for the unique fields and the nature of the respective disciplines.

72. Notwithstanding comments on the mission in Section III it is evident to the panel that the research activities of the Academy *are based on* the mission of the Academy and strategic objectives. As indicated in the SAR and substantiated in meetings with staff, LMTA undertakes both theoretical (referred to as scientific in the documentation) and practice-based research leading to social and cultural development, relevant to the specialist nature of the Academy and also its presence as a university-type, higher education institution. The mission of the Academy aims to ensure sustainable development of the arts and of artistic research.

This is directly related to the research activity of LMTA, the greatest part of which is focused on practice-based art research – 44 researchers of the Academy focus predominantly on research in the fields of history and theory of arts (theoretical/scientific research in music, theatre, dance and film studies).

73. In light of the fact the artistic activities undertaken by the Academy, its academic staff and arts practitioners, in the fields of music, theatre, film and dance, have no comparators in Lithuania from the perspective of the level and depth of professional practice the panel **commends** the Academy's role in research and art activities. These actions are a significant contribution to the social and cultural development of society. The review panel *noted* that by 1 December 2012, 131 established artists were employed by LMTA, 26 of whom were laureates of the National Culture and Art Award. The draft strategy document *Academy 2020* aims to bring together the most talented artists, develop artistic activities in Lithuania and abroad, and more actively engage in cultural life across the various Lithuanian regions.
74. In considering its particular and unique national role the Academy takes cognisance of the national *Guidelines on the Lithuanian Cultural Policy Development* and also the draft national strategy *Lithuania 2030*. The examples of research and art activities undertaken demonstrate considerable engagement with national entities such as the *Lithuanian National Drama Theatre*, the *Lithuanian National Philharmonic Society* and the meetings with the external stakeholders verified the level of interaction of these groups with the Academy. Also evident were the very significant art activities undertaken within the Academy itself.
75. With regard to the unique role of the Academy and its recent restructuring it is currently creating an environment where all teachers in engage in research. In monitoring progress on this goal the Academy evaluates staff outputs using a universal assessment system. List of research outputs, theses, etc. is submitted to the Research Council of Lithuania. Annual reports are presented to the Senate every year ensuring oversight and appropriate management is maintained. The review panel notes the usefulness of these recording exercises, and **recommends (R29)** that the Academy complements such monitoring activities with a clear research and arts development strategy in which all staff are included. In addition to monitoring quantitative outputs the review panel **recommends (R30)** the development of methods where by evaluation and monitoring activities are related to the relevance of the research.

International Standards

76. The review panel *was very impressed* with the development of new doctoral programmes and that the Academy is embracing field-relevant approaches by engaging in AEC and ELIA, amongst other professional associations. The practice-based doctoral programmes are **commendable** and the Academy is *encouraged to* continue the development of these programmes with rigour and continued consideration of international good practice.
77. The review panel noted that the research team in Musicology has been **particularly successful** in its development of relationships with foreign researchers.
78. There is significant evidence of interaction with the transnational communities of practice for different disciplines. The review panel **recommends (R31)** that the Academy seeks to grow the numbers of international practitioners and researchers visiting the institute to contribute to the enhancement of the academic and professional reputation of LMTA.

European Research Area (ERA)

79. The European Research Area (ERA) objectives under Europe 2020 are the following:
 - Maximising investment in Research
 - Strengthening cross-border links
 - Open market for researchers
 - Gender equality
 - Accessing scientific knowledge
 - Joint Programming

The Academy is conscious of engaging with the ERA and has useful examples of specific research projects. In the academic year 2011/12 35 researchers travelled abroad participating in the international research projects, contributing to both the “strengthening of cross-border links” and also contributing to the enhancement of the quality of research at LMTA and the student research environment. The review panel *encourages* LMTA in these endeavours and *suggests that* in the next strategic plan particular consideration be given to the ERA priorities and how the Academy can relevantly address them.

Benchmarking

80. In a discussion with the group responsible for the SAR and institutional quality assurance the EU project on arts institutions’ profiles and the associated criteria were raised. The Academy advised that it is not particularly engaged with ‘ranking’ exercises and that given the diversity of institutions each HEI needs to find its own way and work out what are appropriate indicators for its own context. The Academy staff offered the example of their participation in an EU-funded project examining art institutions in Europe, e.g. Prince Claus Conservatoire, Groningen; Norwegian Academy of Music; etc. in order to benchmark their activities and learn from them. The review panel *commends* the Academy on this work and encourages it continues to engage in the various forums on the nature of arts institutions, and whilst working on its own approach *remains cognisant* of European and international developments.
81. **Judgement on the area: Research and Art Activities is given positive evaluation.**

VI. IMPACT ON REGIONAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Some Strengths

- The review panel *commends* the Academy on the development of its relationship with the very many artistic and community groups
- The investment of time and resources in its interactions with society is *commendable*
- The very significant interaction with music schools is *excellent*
- The recent opening of the Incubator is a *commendable* initiative, offering opportunities to establish innovative collaborative initiatives with industry
- The distribution of the Academy's graduates in organisations across the country with whom the Academy has synergy is a *strength*
- The "electronic book" that is used in schools across the country on music history is a good and *commendable* example of the type of successful initiatives possible
- Summer projects such as the camp on film in Nida are *commendable*
- The development of collaborative programmes such as the 2012 project on contemporary dance and jazz which toured the country and was well-received is *commendable*

Some Areas for Development, it is recommended that:

- the Academy adopt a more coordinated approach to its interactions with various artistic and social groups, ensuring a coherent and integrated presence of LMTA in society
- the Academy establish a deeper awareness of the purpose of social engagement and its role in not simply promoting the arts in society but in forming society's expectations and knowledge of the arts
- relationships be established with all the relevant national groups working in the fields in which the Academy offers programmes
- greater liaison with other Lithuanian arts institutions such as other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and conservatoires, as well as amateur schools for drama, music, dance, etc. be undertaken
- in the next iteration of the strategic plan greater thought be put into the precise purpose and nature of community engagement activities and how best to contribute to the social and cultural environment of Lithuania
- the Academy consider other opportunities of relating to non-degree programmes and further ways they can contribute to the promotion and development of arts and culture
- the Academy consider how to work with graduates more systematically and to both harness their potential contribution to the Academy and society, and also to further support them in their careers and ongoing professional development

Engaging with the Community

82. During the site visit to LMTA the review panel had the opportunity to meet with external stakeholders as well as with LMTA staff members, students and graduates. From all the meetings it was very evident that the Academy is well-known in the community and indeed some organisations source their employees from the Academy's graduates as a matter of routine, e.g. the *Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra*. These are good indicators of the Academy's effectiveness in engaging with the community and the review panel *commends* the institute on the development of its relationship with many parties.
83. The review panel had opportunities to discuss with various members of the Academy their approach to working across Lithuania and in Vilnius in particular and to establish the rationale for the level and type of engagement. A number of both students and staff detailed community projects in which they are engaged, but whilst they participated in them arising from their LMTA background and experience, the Academy was not always aware of the

- projects and the review panel *suggests* that this is a lost opportunity. It is **recommended (R32)** that the Academy adopt a more coordinated approach to their interactions with various artistic and social groups, ensuring a coherent and integrated presence of LMTA in society.
84. The review panel also *noted* that whilst there is very significant interaction with music schools which is **excellent**, there was less evidence of engagement with other Academy-discipline-related projects, theatre excepted. It was *noted* that working with music schools or community groups is related to the recruitment of students, and is **very well coordinated** by the schools liaison staff, nevertheless from an institutional perspective the objectives of community engagement, associated targets, and an understanding of what can be regarded as ‘effective’ is not developed. The review panel **recommends (R33)** the establishment of a deeper awareness of the purpose of social engagement and the Academy’s role in not simply promoting the arts in society but forming society’s expectations and knowledge of the arts. Consideration to what actions would contribute to this and how they can be evaluated as being effective should be given. It is further **recommended (R34)** that relationships be established with all the relevant national groups working in the fields which the Academy offers.
85. With regard to the Academy’s work with music schools the review panel noted that the institute cooperates with the Ministry of Education and Science on projects and work to regulate music schools. This should help strengthen the Academy’s relationship with this community.
86. The review panel is also conscious of the significant potential which may exist for the Academy through the development of its relationships with institutes and companies working in the field of digital media. The recent opening of the Incubator, which is a **commendable** initiative, may offer opportunities to capitalise on this potential and establish innovative collaborative initiatives with such companies through the Incubator.
87. The review team further **recommends (R35)** greater liaison with other Lithuanian arts institutions such as other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and conservatoires, as well as amateur schools for drama, music, dance, etc.. Engaging with the education and training providers at all levels and for all age groups will help to contribute to a deepening of the social and cultural base for the arts in the wider community, as well as offering greater opportunities for learners through distance education and the development of a suite of lifelong learning programmes.

Mission and Strategic Plan

88. The review panel was confident that the Academy’s actions in engaging with the community are linked to and driven by the mission and strategic plan. The volume of work being conducted was clearly documented and attested to by various groups. The Academy invests a lot of time and resources in its interactions with society which is **commendable**. Nevertheless the review panel **recommends (R36)** that in the next iteration of the strategic plan greater thought be put into the precise purpose and nature of these activities and how best to contribute to the social and cultural development of Lithuania. There should be a clearer understanding of the Academy’s role and benefits accruing both to the Academy and to the country.
89. In the review panel’s discussion on community participation, a **strength and opportunity** for the Academy was evident in the presence of the institute’s graduates across the country in entities which have a natural relationship to the Academy – e.g. theatres, music schools, orchestra, etc. The development of a non-degree, advanced course for music teachers arose from this context and is very successful. The review panel **recommends (R37)** that the Academy considers other opportunities of this nature and further ways they can contribute to the promotion and development of arts and culture in society. Distance education and lifelong learning as mentioned in Section IV may contribute to this. The “electronic book” on music history that is used in schools across the country is a good and **commendable** example of the types of actions possible.

90. As indicated the graduates of the Academy are a significant asset and are important contributors to the arts in Lithuania. The review panel **recommends (R38)** that the Academy consider how to work with them more systematically and to both harness their potential contribution to the Academy and society, and also to further support them in their careers and ongoing professional development. A formal alumni organisation, or similar body, may assist in this.
91. The summer projects such as the camp on film in Nida are **commendable** and further activities such as these may be possible. The liaison with the Ministry of Culture on the issuing of invitations to regional organisations to Academy organised events is useful.
92. The Academy's work on the development of collaborative programmes was also *noted* by the review panel, such as the 2012 project on contemporary dance and jazz which toured the country and was well-received. These are **commendable** actions, but as recommended above need to be clearly integrated into a focussed strategy for these type of activity. The motivation and manner of evaluation of these activities needs to be clear.

Voluntary Work

93. The voluntary participation of LMTA staff and students in various social projects such as concerts in hospitals was positively *noted* by the review panel.
94. **Judgement on the area: Impact on Regional and National Development is given positive evaluation.**

VII. GOOD PRACTICE AND ENHANCEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- The work on the development of a vision, *Academy 2020* is **laudable** (paragraph 15)
- The close monitoring of and willingness to change annual plans in line with circumstances which arise is **positive** (paragraph 17)
- The high level of graduate employment is impressive (paragraph 20)
- The Academy's active engagement with the European Higher Education Area, with sectoral standards in respect of music, the work of the Association Européenne des Conservatoires (AEC), and that of European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA) is **commendable** (paragraph 21)
- The energy and commitment of some of the younger Academy staff was very impressive and the support and encouragement given by the senior management **laudable** (paragraph 22)
- The review panel **commended** the action of the Academy in the creation of a unit, Study Quality Centre, dedicated to institutional quality assurance (paragraph 24)
- The work undertaken on the consolidation of the Academy and realignment of Faculties subsequent to the Kaunas changes, is worthwhile and represents an **excellent** beginning for the Academy's next phase (paragraph 25)
- There are particular strengths evident in the institutional culture manifesting themselves in the areas of performance and assessment (paragraph 26)
- The review panel was impressed with the innovations in respect of doctoral education (see Academic Studies section and Research and Art Activities section) which arose in part due to the exposure of staff to international developments and their participation in international forums (paragraph 32)
- The scheme to enable staff to take a 'creative' year's leave, every five years is **commendable**, and an innovation reflective of the nature of an arts institute (paragraph 32)
- A code of ethics is in place (paragraph 48)
- Active participation in the various professional communities of practice by academic staff is **very positive** (paragraph 51)
- The review panel **commends** the Academy on the development of a joint degree (paragraph 53)
- The programme committee structure recently introduced as part of the Quality System with the participation of both students and external experts is **good practice** and should lead to the enhancement of the programmes of study (paragraph 54)
- The review panel **commends** the work of the Academy in establishing local collaborative partnerships with other HEIs where LMTA students can participate on their programmes (paragraph 56)
- The review panel **commends** the Academy on the successful introduction of e-learning (paragraph 59)
- Seeking Erasmus mobility opportunities where the teaching model is one-to-one in a discipline such as music performance is challenging and the Academy is **commended** on its commitment to this activity, and its promotion (paragraph 66)
- The review panel **commends** the participation of over 350 artists and teachers in visits to LMTA outside of the Erasmus scheme during the period 2006-2011 (paragraph 65)
- LMTA has identified, that given the particular range of programmes, students may find it easier to participate in one form of mobility over another and has established relationships accordingly, for example for placements in the fields of theatre and film. This is a **commendable** practice (paragraph 67).
- The very extensive selection of European projects presented as evidence of the Academy's engagement in international development is **laudable** (paragraphs 64 and 68)

- The review panel *commends* the Academy on the utilisation of incentives to support and encourage staff in their continuous professional development and the introduction of the LMTA Honorary Medal (paragraph 69)
- There is a *very solid* range of mission-relevant research fields (paragraph 71)
- In light of the fact that the artistic activities undertaken by the Academy, its academic staff and arts practitioners, in the fields of music, theatre, film and dance, have no comparators in Lithuania from the perspective of level and depth of professional practice the panel *commends* the Academy's role in research and art activities (paragraph 73)
- The practice-based doctoral programmes are *impressive and commendable* (paragraph 76)
- The research team in Musicology has been *particularly successful* in its development of relationships with foreign researchers (paragraph 77)
- The Academy has significant international partnerships which *reflect well* on the Academy and demonstrate a clear commitment to the development of international relations and international cooperation (paragraph 79)
- The Academy staff offered the example of their participation in an EU-funded project examining art institutions in Europe, e.g. Prince Claus Conservatoire, Groningen; Norwegian Academy of Music etc. in order to benchmark their activities and learn from them. The review panel *commends* the Academy on this benchmarking work (paragraph 80).
- The review panel *commends* the Academy on the development of its relationship with the very many artistic and community groups (paragraph 82)
- The investment of time and resources in its interactions with society is *commendable* (paragraph 88)
- The very significant interaction with music schools *is excellent* (paragraph 84)
- The recent opening of the Incubator is a *commendable* initiative, offering opportunities to establish innovative collaborative initiatives with industry (paragraph 86)
- The distribution of the Academy's graduates in organisations across the country with whom the Academy has synergy is a *strength* (paragraph 89)
- The "electronic book" that is used in schools across the country on music history is a good and *commendable* example of the type of successful initiatives possible (paragraph 89)
- Summer projects such as the camp on film in Nida are *commendable* (paragraph 91)
- The development of collaborative programmes such as the 2012 project on contemporary dance and jazz which toured the country and was well-received is *commendable* (paragraph 92)

The following is a summary of the review panel's recommendations:

1. Strategic Planning and Management

It is recommended:

- that the new strategic plan (2015-2017), which is required for presentation to the Ministry of Education and Science, could be undertaken with a less utilitarian/bureaucratic focus (**R1**) (paragraph 15)
- that in the completion of the next strategic plan sets of key actions and targets with timelines, dates and responsible parties be identified to enable more effective monitoring and review (**R2**) (paragraph 16)
- that in revising the *Academy 2020* there be a direct mapping of actions to the challenges identified in the SWOT (**R3**) (paragraph 18)
- that in revising the mission proposed in *Academy 2020* due consideration be given to the use of realistic language and targets (**R4**) (paragraph 19)
- that further and deeper involvement of students, on the Rectorate, in future SAR exercises, and in the strategic planning processes be encouraged and pursued (**R5**) (paragraph 27)

- that the academic and educational leadership of the Study Quality Centre be strengthened and made more visible to ensure that quality assurance (QA) is motivated by core educational values relevant to an arts institute **(R6)** (paragraph 24)
- that the current QA elements distributed across the institute, be brought together swiftly in an integrated QA system **(R7)** (paragraph 26)
- that on completion of its phase one implementation, the Academy conduct a self-initiated mid-term external review of its effectiveness, using a review panel with experts in quality assurance, and an understanding of an arts institute **(R8)** (paragraph 27)
- that actions are adopted which will encourage more students to engage in feedback activities **(R9)** (paragraph 28)
- that the Academy be more creative in the use and publication of the quantitative data it collects **(R10)** (paragraph 36)
- that an immediate review of the data base for student records and programmes be conducted **(R11)** (paragraph 36)
- that in the establishment of the formal QA system the process for establishing the resource implications of new programmes be more transparently documented **(R12)** (paragraph 40)
- that the Academy make better use of branding/signage in respect of its buildings at all locations to ensure that is evident that all the buildings belong to one holistic Academy which has a consistent corporate identity **(R13)** (paragraph 41)
- that the Academy engages with local business and social stakeholders on potential shared projects and/or synergistic business opportunities **(R14)** (paragraph 42)
- that in the development of its management systems that the Academy ensures transparency and fairness of process in the monitoring of staff performance, as well as clarity around the expectations of standards **(R15)** (paragraph 43)
- that the Academy works to attract more international members of staff to contribute to the institutional standing and breadth of cultural perspective at the Academy **(R16)** (paragraph 44)
- that a more sophisticated risk assessment tool be developed along with a more inclusive understanding of the concept of risk **(R17)** (paragraph 47)

2. Academic Studies & Lifelong Learning

It is recommended:

- that the Academy gains a deeper understanding of ECTS and how it can drive change in a programme or a better configuration of a new programme **(R18)** (paragraph 52)
- that greater use of feedback mechanisms be established and that the Academy advises those who provide feedback on any actions taken **(R19)** (paragraph 54)
- that the Academy considers its assessment processes and ensures that there is a written as well as a taped/videoed record of the examinations and performances **(R20)** (paragraph 57)
- that the Academy develops its own distinct approach to lifelong learning **(R21)** (paragraph 58)
- that greater support for Academy staff working on e-learning models be provided **(R22)** (paragraph 59)
- that the development and introduction of an institute policy and procedure on the recognition of prior learning (formal and informal) be pursued **(R23)** (paragraph 59)
- that the Academy consider further opportunities for collaboration with other higher education institutions, and that in doing so consideration be given to lifelong learning possibilities for non-degree students **(R24)** (paragraph 60)
- that the Academy pays closer attention to the National Framework of Qualifications as well as the European Qualifications Framework and considers more deeply standards articulated around ‘contribution to society’ **(R25)** (paragraph 63)
- that the Academy continue its efforts to make the institute more attractive to foreign teachers, in order to further benefit from their participation **(R26)** (paragraph 65)

- that the Academy develop appropriate projects across the full range of its subject disciplines **(R27)** (paragraph 68)

3. Research and Art Activities

It is recommended:

- that the Academy considers the opportunities for interdisciplinary research and synergies available **(R28)** (paragraph 71)
- that the Academy develop a clear research and arts development strategy in which all staff are included **(R29)** (paragraph 75)
- that in addition to monitoring quantitative outputs the Academy develop methods where by evaluation and monitoring activities are related to the relevance of the research **(R30)** (paragraph 75)
- that the Academy seeks to grow the numbers of international practitioners and researchers visiting the institute to contribute to the enhancement of the academic and professional reputation of LMTA **(R31)** (paragraph 78)

4. Regional

It is recommended:

- that the Academy adopt a more coordinated approach to its interactions with various artistic and social groups, ensuring a coherent and integrated presence of LMTA in society **(R32)** (paragraph 83)
- that the Academy establish a deeper awareness of the purpose of social engagement and its role in not simply promoting the arts in society but in forming society's expectations and knowledge of the arts **(R33)** (paragraph 84)
- that relationships be established with all the relevant national groups working in the fields in which the Academy offers programmes **(R34)** (paragraph 84)
- that greater liaison with other Lithuanian arts institutions such as other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and conservatoires, as well as amateur schools for drama, music, dance, etc. be undertaken **(R35)** (paragraph 87)
- that in the next iteration of the strategic plan greater thought be put into the precise purpose and nature of community engagement activities and how best to contribute to the social and cultural environment of Lithuania **(R36)** (paragraph 88)
- that the Academy consider other opportunities of relating to non-degree programmes and further ways they can contribute to the promotion and development of arts and culture **(R37)** (paragraph 89)
- that the Academy consider how to work with graduates more systematically and to both harness their potential contribution to the Academy and society, and also to further support them in their careers and ongoing professional development **(R38)** (paragraph 90)

The review panel was significantly impressed with the work and standards being pursued by the Academy. In offering comprehensive advice and making detailed recommendations in this evaluation the review panel is cognisant of the strength of the Academy, its maturity and potential. The recommendations herein are made to assist the Academy in reinforcing and releasing its potential. The Academy has the maturity and capacity to respond in ways which may lead to its greater enhancement.

For consideration by the Ministry of Education

The following are some observations that the review panel offers for consideration by the Ministry of Education:

- The criteria utilised may limit a HEI's ability to act in creative and imaginative ways and may impose unnecessary bureaucracy in the operation of a university-level institute.
- The evaluation criteria are somewhat too narrow. They limiting a panel's ability to fully reflect on the nature or standing of a particular institution and thus offer effective support for its development.
- The model of evaluation where a positive decision results in approval for six years is potentially disadvantageous to institutions and to national higher education. Many good institutions with potential for growth and improvement may benefit from a review at a three year period, an option not available to review panels. The review panel questions such a model as being unnecessarily negative and restrictive. This accords with paragraph 27 where the advantages of a three-year, mid-term review are proposed.

VIII. JUDGEMENT

Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre is given a **positive evaluation**.

Grupės vadovas:

Team leader:

Prof. Frans De Ruiter

Grupės nariai:

Team members:

Prof. Airi Rovio-Johansson

Prof. Philippe Dinkel

Prof. Grzegorz Kurzyński

Lina Puodžiukaitė

Vytautas Karoblis

Vertinimo sekretorius:

Review secretary:

Tara Ryan

ANNEX. LITHUANIAN ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND THEATRE RESPONSE TO REVIEW REPORT

Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (LMTA, Academy) received institutional review report (Report) and would like to point out few mistakes made in the Report.

1) In the paragraph 2 it is stated that review team visited LMTA from 15-18 April 2013. Actually visit in the Academy took from 15-17 April 2013 (three days, not four).

2) In the paragraph 8 it is written that Academy operates under Statute of Seimas, No. XI-2152. Academy operates under Statute of LMTA, approved by Resolution No. XI-1322 of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania.

3) We want to clarify the confusion mentioned in paragraph 9: 425.6 posts are mentioned in 2012-2014 Strategic plan of LMTA. There never was mentioned number 695 but it is assumed that experts summed up too many numbers mentioned in the SAR Annex 12. Here is the clarification:

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Number of academic posts	283,4	279,8	270	256	244	227
<i>Of it: number of academic posts of holders of doctoral degree and/or recognised artists (full-time posts)</i>	167,3	173,4	187,1	172,35	178	139
<i>Of it: number of staff taking secondary academic posts (part-time posts)</i>	97	100,95	90	87	88	75

Table 1

So 227 is the total number of academic posts, and 8 research fellows should be added to this number of posts (Annex 12, Table 4) and other personnel – 246.2 (Annex 12, Table 8). Thus the final number of posts at the Academy in the year 2011 was 481.2. Number 425.6 was the number of target posts for the year 2012 when the reorganisation and reduction of some personnel of Academy was planned.

In the same paragraph 9 it is mentioned that the Academy has 833 employees of whom 200 academic practitioners hold doctoral degrees. In fact, in the year 2011 the Academy had 643 employees in total; 60 members of the academic staff hold doctoral degrees and 138 were recognised artists.

4) In the paragraph 11 Joint PhD with Vilnius University in Ethnomusicology should be crossed out since qualification of graduates of this programme is PhD in Humanities.

Some clarifications should be made to the whole list as well:

- Bachelor of Music
- Master of Music
- Bachelor of Theatre and Film
- Master of Theatre and Film
- Bachelor of Art Studies
- Master of Art Studies
- Bachelor of Art Pedagogy (teaching qualification – verified with the official register)
- Master of Art Pedagogy (teaching qualification – verified with the official register)
- PhD in Humanities
- Doctor of Arts in Theatre and Film
- Doctor of Arts in Music

A non-degree programme, of one year duration, is also offered in Music Pedagogy where teaching qualification (verified with the official register) is awarded.

5) In the paragraph 13 the old version of mission is quoted. Since 2012 when new Statute of Academy was approved by Seimas, the new version of the mission was approved: “to ensure a sustainable development of arts and artistic research, participate in shaping the policy of the national artistic education and culture, foster the spiritual harmony and the national identity, and educate the most artistically gifted young people as creative, initiative, entrepreneurial members of the society who would be open to Lithuania and the entire world” (Annex 1, paragraph 3 of Preamble).

6) In the paragraph 15 the terms *Ministry of Education* and *Ministry* should be changed to the *Ministry of Education and Science* and the *Ministry of Finance*. This remark should be applied in the paragraphs 17 as well as the 1st recommendation in the section III.

7) In the paragraph 17 the suggestion is given that strategic plan could be revised not so often. It is the statutory requirement that strategic plan has to be reviewed annually.

8) In the paragraphs 24, 25, 34, as well as in 1st strength and 7th recommendation of section III and 6th example of good practice and 6th recommendation of section VII the *Centre for Quality Studies* or *Centre* should be change to the term *Study Quality Centre* as it refers to wider concept of functions it fulfils.

9) In the paragraph 25 the confusion of dates was mentioned. In 2008 the Commission on the Quality of Studies of the Senate was founded (reorganised from working group). Study Quality Centre was founded in 2011. The Commission passed most of its functions to Study Quality Centre.

10) In the paragraph 29 it is mentioned that students were involved in major review of programmed in 2006-2011 by answering surveys and taking part in committees. Study programme committees were founded in 2012. By that time reviews were made by workgroups approved by order of Rector.

11) In the paragraph 32 it is referred that *staff members are supported in the attendance at conferences (...)*, actually staff is supported in the attendance not only in conferences but in seminars, lectures and other events that could be useful for their professional development.

12) In the paragraph 37 the second sentence should be corrected to “*The model of academic governance is structured around a Council, Senate and a **Rector** (...)*”.

13) In the paragraph 38 two corrections should be made: (1) *Director of Lithuanian National Philharmonic Society* (www.filharmonija.lt/en/about-us) not National Philharmonic Orchestra; (2) Elections of the rest Council members failed only once due to lack of quorum, second time quorum was reached, but not all candidates received sufficient number of votes, so only the Dean of Music Faculty was elected. In addition, abovementioned elections of the LMTA council were organised in 2012 therefore it does not refer to the period negotiable by experts (2006-2011), thus it is recommended to exclude this remark (2) from the report.

14) In the paragraph 41 *The Theatre and Film Studies and also the Dance department* could be changed into *Theatre Faculty*.

15) In the 3rd strength of III section *medium term vision* should be changed into *long term vision*. This comment as well refers to 1st example of good practice in section VII.

16) We have some doubts about information given in paragraph 43, were it is stated that staff contracts may be or are not *renewed*. If it refers to administration or other non-academic staff members, then the contracts may be or are *terminated*. If it is referred to academic staff then information is not correct.

17) In the paragraph 53 it is mentioned that joint third cycle study programme in Ethnomusicology is organised together with Vilnius University, but actually there is also the third institution – **Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore** (three institutions organise joint study programme: Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, Vilnius University, and Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore).

18) Some terms should be clarified in the Report: in the paragraph 61 term *National Theatre* should be changed into *Lithuanian National Drama Theatre*. This comment as well refers to paragraph 74. In the same paragraph term *National Philharmonic Orchestra* should be changed into *Lithuanian National Philharmonic Society*. In the paragraph 82 term *national orchestra* should be changed into *Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra*.

19) In the paragraph 64 it is written that Erasmus placements are organised for teaching staff and students. In fact it should refer not only to Erasmus placement activity (activity which refers to work placement in Erasmus), but also to Erasmus studies (for students) and Erasmus teaching, and Erasmus training activities (for staff), therefore it is better to rename ‘placement’ activity and use more general term ‘mobility’. In addition, the Academy offers Erasmus staff training opportunities not only to teachers but also to non-academic staff members. In the last sentence of the same paragraph *Dance* study field could be added to Music, Theatre and Film.

20) Information in the paragraph 75 is incorrect. It should be as follows: *List of research outputs, theses, etc. is submitted to the **Research Council of Lithuania**. Annual reports are presented to the Senate every year ensuring that appropriate information management is maintained.*

21) Information in the paragraph 80 should be corrected, because staff of LMTA has not visited neither Tours Conservatoire nor Regional Academy of Music through EU-funded project for developing

study quality system. By the time of experts visit only two institutions were visited: *Prince Claus Conservatoire* (Groningen, Netherlands) and *Norwegian Academy of Music* (Oslo, Norway). If it is referred to other visits, not under EU-funded project, than the project shouldn't be mentioned. Same comment refers to 27th example of good practice in section VII.

22) In the paragraph 85 it is not clear which Ministry is referred to. Maybe it would be better to write full title *Ministry of Education and Science*.

These are all comments that we found to be corrected or clarified.