



CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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**EVALUATION REPORT**

**STUDY FIELD of MUSIC**

at Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre

**Expert panel:**

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**Evaluation coordinator – Ms. Evelina Keturakyte**

Report language – English

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### Study Field Data\*

Title of the study programme	Music Performance	Music Studies	Music Performance	Composition
State code	6121PX010	6121PX005	6211PX004	6211PX001
Type of studies	University cycle studies	University cycle studies	University cycle studies	University cycle studies
Cycle of studies	First cycle	First cycle	Second cycle	Second cycle
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full-time studies, 4 years	Full-time studies, 4 years	Full-time studies, 2 years	Full-time studies, 2 years
Credit volume	240	240	120	120
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Bachelor of Arts	Bachelor of Arts	Master of Arts	Master of Arts
Language of instruction	English, Lithuanian	Lithuanian	English, Lithuanian	English, Lithuanian
Minimum education required	Secondary education	Secondary education	Higher university education (Bachelor's Degree)	Higher university education (Bachelor's Degree)
Registration date of the study programme	16 June 2000	28 July 2005	16 June 2000	19 July 1997

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation of study fields is based on the Methodology of External Evaluation of Study Fields approved by the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC) 31 December 2019 Order [No. V-149](#).

The evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions to constantly improve their study process and to inform the public about the quality of studies.

The evaluation process consists of the main following stages: 1) *self-evaluation and self-evaluation report prepared by Higher Education Institution (hereafter – HEI)*; 2) *site visit of the expert panel to the higher education institution*; 3) *production of the external evaluation report (EER) by the expert panel and its publication*; 4) *follow-up activities*.

On the basis of this external evaluation report of the study field SKVC takes a decision to accredit study field either for 7 years or for 3 years. If the field evaluation is negative then the study field is not accredited.

The study field and cycle are **accredited for 7 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as exceptional (5 points), very good (4 points) or good (3 points).

The study field and cycle are **accredited for 3 years** if one of the evaluation areas was evaluated as satisfactory (2 points).

The study field and cycle are **not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas was evaluated as unsatisfactory (1 point).

### 1.2. EXPERT PANEL

The expert panel was assigned according to the Experts Selection Procedure (hereinafter referred to as the Procedure) as approved by the Director of Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education on 31 December 2019 [Order No. V-149](#). The site visit to the HEI was conducted by the panel on *11 May, 2021*. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Review Visit was organised online using a video-conferencing tool (Zoom).

**Prof. Dr. Martin Harlow (panel chairperson)**, *Emeritus Professor formerly Vice Principal (Academic), Royal Northern College of Music, United Kingdom;*

**Ms. Gretchen Amussen**, *Independent consultant, France;*

**Prof. Dr. Habil. Mihály Duffek**, *Pianist, Head of Piano Department, University of Debrecen, Hungary;*

**Mr. Simonas Cepenas**, *CEO, Live music agency Rootslive, Lithuania;*

**Ms. Larisa-Mirela Matei**, *PhD student in Musical Education, National University of Music, Romania.*

### 1.3. GENERAL INFORMATION

The documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by SKVC. Along with the self-evaluation report and annexes, the following additional documents have been provided by the HEI before, during and/or after the site visit:

No.	Name of the document
1.	Strategy for Scientific Activity Development of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre
2.	Links to the webpage of LMTA about artistic activities, research, harps

### 1.4. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY FIELD/STUDY FIELD POSITION/STATUS AND SIGNIFICANCE IN THE HEI

The Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (hereafter – LMTA, the Academy) was founded in 1933 and is a specialised tertiary higher education institution that delivers studies in arts, as well as art history and theory, trains professional music, theatre, film and dance artists and researchers. It is an autonomous institution with responsibility for its academic, administrative, economic and finance management activities, and is based on the principle of self-governance, academic freedom and respect for human rights. The Faculty of Music consists of 19 departments and delivers 13 study programmes. Music field studies are delivered both in Vilnius and Klaipėda. Studies at LMTA are executed at bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree study levels. The vision of LMTA is to be an open and creative academic art and research community that inspires culture breakthroughs and creates values.

The last evaluation of the programmes in the study field of Music was undertaken in 2013. After the evaluation improvements of the study programmes have been carried out and all recommendations of the previous evaluation have been considered and implemented carefully.

The self-evaluation report (hereafter - SER) for the present evaluation was carried out by a team as follows: the Dean of the Faculty of Music, the Vice Dean of the Klaipėda Faculty, two associate professors, one graduate, one current student, two social partners and the Heads of the Quality Management and Study Programmes Offices.

## II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

Music study field and first cycle at Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre is given **positive** evaluation.

*Study field and cycle assessment in points by evaluation areas*

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an Area in points*
1.	Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	5
2.	Links between science (art) and studies	5
3.	Student admission and support	5
4.	Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	5
5.	Teaching staff	5
6.	Learning facilities and resources	4
7.	Study quality management and public information	4
	Total:	33

\*1 (unsatisfactory) - there are essential shortcomings that must be eliminated;

2 (satisfactory) - meets the established minimum requirements, needs improvement;

3 (good) - the field is being developed systematically, has distinctive features;

4 (very good) - the field is evaluated very well in the national and international context, without any deficiencies;

5 (excellent) - the field is exceptionally good in the national and international context/environment.

Music study field and second cycle at Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre is given **positive** evaluation.

*Study field and cycle assessment in points by evaluation areas*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Evaluation Area</b>	<b>Evaluation of an Area in points*</b>
1.	Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	5
2.	Links between science (art) and studies	5
3.	Student admission and support	5
4.	Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	5
5.	Teaching staff	5
6.	Learning facilities and resources	4
7.	Study quality management and public information	4
	Total:	33

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5 (excellent) - the field is exceptionally good in the national and international context/environment.

### III. STUDY FIELD ANALYSIS

#### 3.1. INTENDED AND ACHIEVED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

*Study aims, outcomes and content shall be assessed in accordance with the following indicators:*

*3.1.1. Evaluation of the conformity of the aims and outcomes of the field and cycle study programmes to the needs of the society and/or the labour market (not applicable to HEIs operating in exile conditions)*

*(1) Factual situation*

LMTA delivers four study programmes in the field of Music: two study programmes in the first cycle (*Music Performance* and *Music Studies*) and two in the second cycle (*Music Performance* and *Composition* [including an option for electronic music]). During 2018–2019 there was an optimisation of first cycle specialisms into a *Music Studies* programme. *Music Studies* offers a more broad-ranging and flexible interdisciplinary programme giving students the opportunity to pursue a balanced diet of vocational studies for the music profession (e.g. management, pedagogy, history and theory of art). These changes coincided with the integration of the Academy of Arts of Klaipėda University into LMTA from 1 September 2018. This integration permitted the introduction of 3 new specialisations in *Music Performance*, first cycle (Jazz and Popular Music; Choir Conducting and Organ Studies, Musical) and 2 new specialisations in *Music Performance*, second cycle (Jazz and Popular Music; Orchestral Music). A new music education specialisation was being planned for 2020. 3 further specialisations were added at the second cycle during the review period: Contemporary Music (2016), European Chamber Music Academy (ECMAster) (an advanced chamber music pathway, 2018) and Baroque Opera (2020).

It is clear that the programmes and specialisations offered in both cycles at LMTA respond to the changing needs of the creative industries in Lithuania and beyond in dynamic and imaginative ways: recent amendments to the composition specialisation (both cycles) to include digital expertise is indicative of the ongoing modifications to keep studies relevant and current. The LMTA *Career and Competence Centre* monitors graduate destinations.

LMTA enjoys collaboration with the most important professional music organisations in Lithuania: the Lithuanian National Opera and Ballet Theatre, the Lithuanian National Philharmonic Society, the Lithuanian State Symphony Orchestra, St. Christopher Chamber Orchestra, the Lithuanian Choral Union, the Lithuanian Accordionists Association, the Lithuanian Brass Band Association, the Lithuanian Musicians' Union, the Lithuanian Composers' Union and others. Graduates account for the largest share of staff in these organisations, as well as playing an important role in music education and other cultural sectors.

Graduates work in symphony, chamber, string, wind orchestras, opera and ballet, musical, drama theatres, chamber ensembles, jazz and pop music collectives, radio and television, as well as individually as freelance artists or in the creative industries sector. Minor studies in other fields or areas broaden the opportunities for professional career in scientific, managerial, pedagogical or other areas.

There is a logical rationale for the timing of periodic review of programmes (SER, p.84). There are transparent mechanisms for the interventions of LMTA's social partners, in encouraging updates to programmes of study, or content of study modules.

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

LMTA exerts a huge influence on the cultural fabric of Lithuania, with its programmes enjoying symbiotic relations with the Lithuanian music industry and cultural sector. The constant ambition to refine and develop the programmes offered – with new specialisations and options – reflects an institutional commitment to respond to and work with the fast-moving music and cultural industries. LMTA is exemplary both in its programme offer, but also in its willingness to enhance its offer to students through an encultured, self-critical ethos.

### *3.1.2. Evaluation of the conformity of the field and cycle study programme aims and outcomes with the mission, objectives of activities and strategy of the HEI*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

LMTA offers a rational and balanced range of music field study programmes which conform with its mission (to ensure sustainable development of art and art research; participate in the shaping of the national artistic education and cultural policy; foster spiritual harmony and national identity in society; educate the most artistically gifted young people into creative, proactive, entrepreneurial members of society who are open to Lithuania and the world) and vision (an open and creative academic art and research community that inspires culture breakthroughs and creates values) (SER, p.13).

The programme aims and learning outcomes across both first and second cycle music programmes are clearly shown to align with the mission, vision and strategic imperatives (SER, p.14–15).

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The aims and learning outcomes of the music study field programmes comply with the mission, vision and strategy of LMTA.

### *3.1.3. Evaluation of the compliance of the field and cycle study programme with legal requirements*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

The study programmes' curriculum designs seek to comply with the requirements set out in the *Description of General Requirements for the Provision of Studies* (Approved by Order No. V-1168 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 30 December 2016) delivery and improvement of the study programmes, the *Descriptor of Study Cycles* (Approved by Order No. V-1012 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 16 November 2016) is also observed as well as the *Descriptor of Full-Time and Part-Time Forms of Study* (Approved by Order No. ISAK-1026 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 15 May 2009) and the *Descriptor of the Study Field of Music* (Approved by Order No. V-794 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 23 July 2015).

First cycle study programmes and specialisations are listed in SER, Annex 1. They are 240 ECTS. Multiple specialisations are possible which lead to a range of credit allocations across the programmes, and a range of music study field contact hours. This is entirely in keeping with best practice in other HEIs across the EU. The music study field learning is as follows: *Music Performance* 165–216 ECTS; *Music Studies* 132–210 ECTS. The final thesis in *Music Performance* is 15–27 ECTS; *Music Studies* – 15 or 18 ECTS. Contact hours in *Music Performance* is 30–46% of learning hours; *Music Studies* is 31–39% of learning hours.

Individual learning in *Music Performance* is 54–70% of study; *Music Studies* is 61–69% of study.

Second cycle study programmes and specialisations are listed in SER, Annex 2. They are of 120 ECTS. Like first study programmes multiple specialisations are possible which lead to a range of credit allocations across the programmes, and a range of music study field contact hours. This is entirely in keeping with practice in other HEIs across the EU. The music study field learning is as follows: *Music Performance* 60–80 ECTS; *Composition* 60 or 65 ECTS. The final thesis in *Music Performance* is 15–27 ECTS; *Music Studies* 15 or 18 ECTS. Contact hours in *Music Performance* is 13–31% of learning hours; *Composition* is 16 or 18% of learning hours.

First and second cycle study programmes of the music study field are Level 6 and 7 qualifications and are in accordance with *Lithuanian Qualifications Framework*, the *European Qualifications Framework* and the *Framework of Qualification in the European HE Area*. Programmes' intended learning outcomes take into consideration the *Descriptor of Study Cycles* and the *Descriptor of the Study Field of Music*. Credit allocation is in accordance with contact hours and independent study. There is a logical distribution of credit (based on multiples of 3 ECTS at first cycle; 5 ECTS at second cycle).

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

First and second cycle study programmes of the music study field at LMTA fully comply with legal requirements. The SER, with its supporting annexes, offers an exemplary articulation of studies, and mapping of programmes against national requirements.

#### *3.1.4. Evaluation of compatibility of aims, learning outcomes, teaching/learning and assessment methods of the field and cycle study programmes*

##### *(1) Factual situation*

The aims of the four LMTA study programmes (first and second cycle) are clearly articulated (SER, pp.12–13). A wide range of teaching modes is deployed, from intensive individual lessons, to small- and large-ensemble teaching. Lectures, seminars and tutorials are used in the studies that support the teaching of the principal specialisation.

Learning outcomes of practice-based studies (for example, performance) are assessed by at least 3 teacher-artists. Practice-based studies are assessed using a variety of methods: a presentation of practical skills (through a performance), a pass/fail examination on performance technique, auditions, concerts, recitals, a presentation and/or performance of a creative project. Generic learning outcomes are assessed by means of testing, oral interviews and/or written quizzes, mind and concept mapping, case studies, essays, papers, presentations and other assessment methods. As is customary in other music conservatoires, teaching, learning and assessment are similar in different cycles/levels, but the expected outcomes differ.

The SER contains a number of clear and helpful examples in which a detailed alignment of programme learning outcomes, subject study outcomes, modes of study and assessment is displayed. Examples of this mapping at first and second cycle levels are given in the SER (pp.20–31).

##### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

There is a clear compatibility between the stated programme study aims and learning outcomes, and the intended learning outcomes at subject level. Modes of assessment support and enhance student learning. Throughout the four study programmes (first and second cycle) there is evidence of 'constructive alignment', (where all components in the teaching

system – the curriculum and its intended outcomes, the teaching methods used, the assessment tasks – are aligned to each other).

### *3.1.5. Evaluation of the totality of the field and cycle study programme subjects/modules, which ensures consistent development of competences of students*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

The *Music Performance* first-cycle programme offers a balanced programme of practice and theoretical study (aesthetics and philosophy, history, analytical studies, musicianship). There is within the programme a complementary balancing of training and education, of intensive practitioner training alongside supporting general and musical study. There are learning opportunities in applied music studies, creative and professional practice.

The *Music Studies* first-cycle programme permits more theoretical and business-related studies alongside chosen specialisation. This offers a balanced range of studies, with optionality, with an interdisciplinary focus.

There is in both first-cycle programmes a logical progression in terms of the expectations and challenges placed upon students, and in terms of the progressive development towards the completion of overall programme learning outcomes.

The *Music Performance* second-cycle programme has a specialist subject study supported by bespoke related studies. Electives in the specialist study plans are complemented by professional practice, and a cross-discipline study module *Politics of Culture and Development of Professional Arts* which situates study in the cultural theory. *Basics of Research* prepares students in analytical and research methods pertinent to their *Final Research Paper*.

The *Composition* second-cycle programme has two specialist pathways: composition and digital sound processing. Core modules are taken in cognitive psychology, with a cross-discipline study module (shared with *Music Performance* students) *Politics of Culture and Development of Professional Arts*. Elective studies are available for both specialisations, and from 2020, on the recommendation of graduates, elective subjects are available from Vilnius University and Vilnius Academy of Arts.

There is in both second-cycle programmes a logical progression in terms of the expectations and challenges placed upon students, and in terms of the progressive development towards the completion of overall programme learning outcomes. Both programmes offer appropriate training for doctoral level studies.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The first study cycle programmes have appropriate level and content. Through the 4 years of study students are able to develop an independent musical voice and breadth of musical repertoire. Specialisms offered are relevant to the labour market. The practical nature of the study, and the theoretical underpinning are sufficient either for direct entry to the music profession, or continuation at Masters' level. Both routes are achieved in practice.

The second study cycle programmes have an appropriate high level and content too. Through the 2 years of study students are encouraged to develop a unique artistic voice (whether as a performer or composer) and extend the depth and breadth of their musical repertoire. Specialisms offered are relevant to the labour market. The practical nature of the study, and the theoretical underpinning are sufficient either for entry to the music progression, or continuation at doctoral level. This is achieved in practice.

The consistency, coherence and quality of the first and second cycle study programmes offer students an outstanding environment to develop as musical artists.

### *3.1.6. Evaluation of opportunities for students to personalise the structure of field study programmes according to their personal learning objectives and intended learning outcomes*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

The essential feature of the LMTA programmes offered is the training of the aspirant music practitioner both as individual musicians and music collaborators. As all LMTA music study field students pursue an individual specialisation, this personalisation of the structure of the music study is intrinsic to the programmes. LMTA accommodates the different needs of its student body, and the multiple specialisations, through an imaginative and professionally relevant flexible range of course studies, built around the varying professional requirements of the musical disciplines.

Structurally there are opportunities for free elective studies in both first-cycle programmes (*Musical Performance*, 3–60 ECTS; *Music Studies*, 6–12 ECTS). Minor study of *-Arts Pedagogy* is possible. Free elective choices apply also in both second-cycle programmes (*Musical Performance*, 5–25 ECTS; *Composition*, 5–10 ECTS).

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Music study field students at LMTA have excellent possibilities to customize and personalise their individual studies. Through the close co-operation with their specialist teachers they have the opportunity to tailor their studies as their musical skills develop in their chosen field. This applies to both *Music Performance* programmes in both cycles, and the first-cycle *Music Studies* and second-cycle *Composition* programmes. The development of these unique learning packages is typical in vocational music higher education training. The approach is congruent with best practice.

### *3.1.7. Evaluation of compliance of final theses with the field and cycle requirements*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

The principles of final thesis preparation, commission formation and defence are governed by LMTA's comprehensive *Descriptor of the Procedure for Organisation of Assessment of Final Theses* (SER, p.37). A range of first- and second-cycle 'art projects' undertaken between 2017 and 2019 are listed in the SER, respectively in Annexes 3 and 4. These unique projects (solo and ensemble) with an accompanying portfolio are according to the student's specialisation (performers and composers). The SER (p.37) reports that 'In the analysis of first cycle study programme *Music Studies*, the final theses completed in the previously separate study programmes which later became the specialisations of the updated study programme are assessed. The final theses of the updated study programme will be defended in 2023.' The second-cycle projects are accompanied by a *Final Research Paper*, whose content is related to the art project. In the music study field there was no commissioned student project work from social partners of LMTA.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

A wide-range of challenging repertory is performed by students in the *Music Performance* programmes that is commensurate with the respective first and second-cycle levels. *Music Performance* students produce highly imaginative and distinctive art projects. The *Music Studies* and *Composition* programme produce individual and unique art projects, also commensurate with their respective first and second-cycle levels. Although it was not possible

to view supporting 'examinations' or final theses in English the subject matter for these appeared appropriate, meeting the demands of the level of study.

The final thesis requirements at LMTA (first and second cycle programmes) conform with the *Descriptor of the Study Field of Music*.

### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

#### ***(1) Strengths:***

1. The first and second cycle study programmes provide opportunities for choosing specialisations that match students' needs and the ever-changing field of musical culture.
2. Optimisation of the study programmes and update of their content is focussed on students' need to acquire additional competencies required in the culture and art labour market, as well as the provision of the platform for a more active mutual cooperation between students and teachers.
3. The integration of the Klaipėda faculty gives further opportunity for the training of professionals in that region, and the further enhancement the range of LMTA's specialist musical offer.
4. An impressive and thoughtful response to the challenges of blended learning caused by the pandemic.

***(2) Weaknesses:*** None.

## **3.2. LINKS BETWEEN SCIENCE (ART) AND STUDIES**

***Links between science (art) and study activities shall be assessed in accordance with the following indicators:***

***3.2.1. Evaluation of the sufficiency of the science (applied science, art) activities implemented by the HEI for the field of research (art) related to the field of study***

#### ***(1) Factual situation***

Music professors at LMTA are prominent, nationally and internationally recognized artists, composers and researchers, and their activities relate directly to LMTA first and second cycle curricula. These activities are consistently integrated into teaching (SER, p.41-42). Doctoral students serve as assistants, thereby sharing their research (Site visit, meeting with teachers).

The Lithuanian Research Council's formal and expert 2016-2018 evaluations gave maximum scores to works by LMTA teachers (SER, p.39-40). A third cycle programme initiated in 2010 was re-accredited from 2018 through 2024. Currently LMTA has 21 doctoral students, and 27 doctoral theses were successfully defended between 2015-2020.

LMTA cooperates with all the leading national professional cultural and educational institutions and these partnerships are directly integrated into first and second cycle studies, as for example, second cycle student composers performed by the Lithuanian National Philharmonic and first cycle student composers performed by the St Christopher Chamber Orchestra (SER, p.42).

Extensive international cooperation covers the full scope of LMTA music activities and includes bilateral and multilateral cooperation through exchange, joint projects, programmes, and research led with HEI institutions via Nordplus and Erasmus + in the areas of interactive environments, distance teaching and joint teaching modules, chamber music, improvised music, opera, folk music, opera, percussion, music pedagogy and jazz. LMTA's Nordplus activities make it a leader among Lithuanian universities, and these, along with pan-European

and international activities, benefit teachers as much as they do students (SER, p.43, Site visit, meetings with teachers and students). Strategic partnerships extend to leading HEI in Europe, Australia, and North America.

LMTA's 2017 research strategy, currently under review, links to the Strategic Plan 2020 through an expansion of "the scope of art creation, scientific research and their dissemination by fostering creativity and increasing the impact on national and cultural development." (*Strategy for Scientific Activity Development of the Lithuanian Academy of Music & Theatre*). Priorities include Lithuanian music, performing arts and folklore, contemporary art and interdisciplinary research methodologies and development of artistic research. Arts activities and performances in leading cultural venues are integrated into the LMTA Strategic Plan for 2020-2022. Objectives and goals approved in the Academy 2020-2030 long-term strategy indicators include the strengthening of interactions among studies, art, and research with a goal of fostering uniqueness through increased teacher participation in professional development and increased art and research results per teacher/researcher; LMTA's leadership role in society through 60 000 spectators at public events; and more active dissemination of culture and cultural values through an open access platform for publication of works created and performed at LMTA (SER, p.44).

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Teachers in first and second cycle music field studies are nationally and internationally active and recognized for their art activities and research, and in turn feed back into programme delivery, now extending to a comprehensive, recently re-accredited third cycle programme. To quote Lithuania's Vice-Minister for Culture, LMTA constitutes the "blood supply" of Lithuanian culture (site visit, meeting with social partners). The combined national and international cultural and educational networks in which LMTA participates further enhances the scope of LMTA's offer both for teachers and students; this is completed by significant in-house competitions and performance activities. LMTA's comprehensive research strategy and its various strands are clearly integrated into the curriculum and are responsive to and aligned with the overall institutional strategy. Artistic and applied science activities implemented at LMTA are strong and reflect the institution's active and integrated approach to all aspects of the music study field.

### *3.2.2. Evaluation of the link between the content of studies and the latest developments in science, art and technology*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

LMTA consistently integrates recent contemporary works in first and second cycle study programmes and considers technological advances in instrumental manufacture or interpretation. The extensive national and international projects in which LMTA participates coupled with conferences and presentations are all available to students; likewise, new data/interpretations revealed through doctoral projects enlarge study programmes as well (for example, wind and percussion instruments have supplemented literature lists relevant for the second cycle studies). LMTA also publishes notes to disseminate new works by Lithuanian composers (SER, p.45-46).

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

LMTA takes a broad and inclusive view of the latest developments in all aspects of the music sector, disseminating them both digitally and physically, and integrating research by both students and teachers into the curriculum. Publications relative to national and international projects are integrated into courses and made available for the LMTA community at large. In

conclusion, the Panel believes study content is fully aligned with contemporary artistic and technological developments.

### *3.2.3. Evaluation of conditions for students to get involved in scientific (applied science, art) activities consistent with their study cycle*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

Students perform in several public halls, while additional events are organised by departments and the Art Centre. Art events are increasingly steadily (from 355 in 2015 to 419 in 2019). Additionally, 111 events were organised regionally and 14 interdisciplinary performances involving theatre, film and dance took place (SER, p.46).

In 2019, 37 Students participated in short term international partnership projects (examples include Nordplus's chamber orchestra, NordOpera auditions in Helsinki, the *Harmos* project in Portugal, a Brass Academy in Finland, International Trumpet Days in Estonia) (SER, p.46).

8 international competitions are organised regularly at LMTA and include all music study field specialisations; 12 competitions are dedicated to LMTA students only. 77 workshops by leading foreign and Lithuanian artists were held in 2019. Students are given opportunities to perform with professional ensembles or theatres, and the required 9-credit course "Professional Practice" ensures student participation in public performances. Of significant note is the participation, from their first year of studies on, of LMTA students within leading professional organisations: orchestras, choirs, opera, song and dance ensembles, etc. (SER, p.47).

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Student involvement in science and art activities, fully integrated into the curriculum, is strong and takes place in a broad array of venues. Activities range from those initiated within departments to Academy-wide events; these activities are further strengthened by workshops given by leading artists in the field and opportunities to participate in regional and European-wide projects. Students are actively engaged with leading national cultural organisations, thereby ensuring a smooth entry into the profession. The Panel concludes that LMTA offers remarkable breadth and scope for students to engage in artistic and scientific activities throughout every cycle of study.

### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

#### ***(1) Strengths:***

1. LMTA constitutes a model of good practice in the first and second cycle music field studies. The outstanding ratings attributed by the Lithuanian Research Council to LMTA are recognition of the very high level of established artists teaching at the Academy; these teachers lead active professional lives and integrate their activity into their teaching.
2. LMTA's participation in diverse and extensive international networks, joint projects and programmes offer a wide array of discipline specific and interdisciplinary opportunities for teachers' continuing professional development and training for students.
3. Students' significant national and international artistic and scientific activities are further enhanced by their participation in professional ensembles/organisations throughout the country.
4. Scientific and artistic research strands, aligned with institutional goals, are fully integrated throughout the three cycles of study, and effectively extend knowledge in all areas of the music field.

#### ***(2) Weaknesses:*** None.

### 3.3. STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT

*Student admission and support shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:*

#### *3.3.1. Evaluation of the suitability and publicity of student selection and admission criteria and process*

##### *(1) Factual situation*

Admission to the first cycle studies in the field of Music in the Academy take place during the centralised admission which is organised by the Association of Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions for Centralised Admissions (LAMA BPO) in accordance with the centralised admission procedure approved every year. The admission to the second cycle field studies is carried out by the Academy. For both cycles, the admission is carried out to state-funded and non-state-funded study places.

Information about the admission is given on the website of the Academy at <https://lmta.lt/en/english-lmta-welcomes-foreign-students/english-studies/>, during education fairs held in different towns in Lithuania and abroad, during *Open Door Days* organised by LMTA every spring, as well as other events. Applicants to the first cycle and second cycle studies are provided with preparatory consultations.

The *Requirements for Entrance Examinations* and the *Timetable* are published on the website of the Academy and in the LAMA BPO information system at [https://bp.lamabpo.lt/bp2021/lama.is.main?p\\_lang=ENG](https://bp.lamabpo.lt/bp2021/lama.is.main?p_lang=ENG). The admission score of applicants to the study field programmes consists of the assessment of the entrance examination. The entrance examination is considered passed if the applicant completes all assignments and the assessment of each assignment is positive. The composition of the admission score is the same for all applicants to the state-funded and non-funded study places. The lowest admission score established is 5.4. The *minimum indicators* applicable to applicants to *state-funded study places* are different from the *minimum indicators* for applicants to *state non-funded study places*.

Admission to the second cycle studies in the field of Music is open for individuals having completed the first cycle studies in the field of Music. If the applicant has completed the first cycle studies in the field other than Music, they have to submit documents proving at least one year's professional experience (a professional portfolio) during the admission interview.

The admission score consists of the following: the evaluation of entrance examination \*0.6 + the evaluation of admission interview \*0.2 + the average score of learning outcomes achieved in the first cycle studies (grades specified in the Diploma Supplement/Annex) \*0.2.

Individuals who completed first cycle studies in respective study programmes and/or their specialisations in the field of Music in the year of admission do not take the entrance examination. The calculation of their admission score includes the evaluation of the first study cycle final thesis instead of the evaluation of the entrance examination (SER, pp. 48-50).

During the meetings with the panel, students expressed their appreciation for the selection's criteria which are based on standard of excellence. Also they gave positive feedback on the whole admission process: clear information on websites, timely feedback and good organization. Even if the second cycle's process of admission is similar with the one from the first cycle, admission in the second cycle study programme in the field of Music is much more individualized. Most teachers know students and discuss goals with them in advance. For second cycle study programme: if you study jazz, you can choose modern music. Different options are available to specialize and also learn from different fields. Everyone has the same

opportunities to apply for the second cycle study programme: admission requires that you demonstrate skills, and the exam includes competitive performance and motivational speech.

The number of students to the study programmes in the field of Music varies as follows: between 92 in 2017 and 107 in 2018 for *Music Performance* – first cycle, between 14 in 2017 and 29 in 2019 for *Music Studies* – first cycle, between 66 in 2018 and 71 in 2019 for *Music Performance* – second cycle, between 8 in 2017, 2018 and 9 in 2019 for *Composition* – second cycle (SER, p.50).

The admission score is high. In accordance with the overview of Centralised Admission to Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions in 2019 provided by the Association of Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions for Centralised Admissions (LAMA BPO), the Academy has been in the first place for eight consecutive years by the highest average of admission score of the admitted into the first cycle among Lithuanian higher education institutions (SER, p.53).

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The information about the admission procedure given on the websites is clear and accessible. The webpages for international applicants are very informative. The admission procedures are transparent and well-founded. It is a rigorous exam process. In general, the number of students enrolled in the first and second cycle is stable. The second cycle's students number is lower than the one of the first cycle, even if those who completed first cycle studies in respective study programmes and/or their specialisations in the field of Music in the year of admission do not take the entrance examination for the second cycle. *Composition* – second cycle has no state non-funded places occupied.

In order to increase the number of students' demand for state non-funded places, it is suggested that more efforts be made to popularize the excellent programmes.

### *3.3.2. Evaluation of the procedure of recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and informal learning and its application*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

The recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and informal learning has procedures regulated by the Guidelines listed in the SER (p.54). According to these, the subjects and learning outcomes achieved at other higher education institutions and via non-formal education and informal learning can be recognized and included in the study programmes in the field of Music. The examples given in the SER demonstrate that these procedures are applied and work. There were no cases of recognition of prior and other learning in the reporting period.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The procedure for recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and informal learning is fair. For the most part, these procedures are applied and followed. However, students should be better acquainted with them in order to be able to access certain procedures.

### *3.3.3. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring academic mobility of students.*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

Academy offers a lot of opportunities for students to participate in mobility programmes: *Erasmus+*, periods of study and internships abroad, intensive projects, creative camps, excellence courses held by foreign teachers, *Nordplus* programme and other activities. LMTA

has as a priority area of internationalisation of studies, international teacher and student mobility. It is among the most active Lithuanian higher education institutions in *Nordplus* higher education programme and participates in all music-related Nordplus networks: NordClassic, Nordpuls, NordOpera, Nordtrad, Percussion Pulse, and interdisciplinary networks NNME, Act-in-arts and Cape (SER, p.55).

Student mobility possibilities are announced by various channels: informative websites <https://lmta.lt/en/english-international-relations/>, <https://lmta.lt/en/english-international-relations/english-erasmus/>, <https://lmta.lt/en/english-international-relations/english-nordplus/>, at least two information meetings with students, individually students' consultation and other activities held by the staff of the International Relations Office (SER, p.55).

According to *LMTA 2030 Strategy*, greater internationalisation, attracting foreign students, teachers and researchers for studies and work at LMTA by adapting the Academy's study programmes and infrastructure for studies in foreign languages and LMTA targeted publicity in the international higher education area, is among the LMTA key strategic priorities.

Foreign nationals came to the Academy for full-time studies in the study programmes in the field of Music from the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Estonia, the Kingdom of Spain, the Republic of Italy, the United States of America, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Costa Rica, the Republic of Latvia, the Russian Federation, the Kingdom of Sweden and Ukraine. Number of students who came for full-time studies in the field concerned over the last three years is between 8 in 2017 and 15 in 2019 (in the first cycle) and between 12 in 2019 and 10 in 2019 (second cycle). Number of students who had periods of study or internships during their studies is between 12 in 2018 and 20 in 2017 (first cycle), between 13 in 2019 and 18 in 2018 (second cycle). The total number of students per year is around 400 (first cycle) and around 170 (second cycle) (SER, pp.55-56).

SER states that students' needs always exceed possibilities. International student mobility is directly dependent upon the funding allocated to the Academy for the implementation of respective programmes (SER, p.57).

During discussions, students said that they are feeling encouraged about taking advantage of international experiences/opportunities. LMTA is open to giving students mobility abroad. It is easy to get scholarships. Most students who applied for Erasmus funding got it. Almost every week, students get information regarding short term projects in summer. Students who accessed Erasmus programmes confirmed that the international department was very supportive not only regarding information, but also regarding financial issues.

Students' opinion was that only few students apply to go abroad because studying in Vilnius is so good and useful and they see no reason to go abroad. Also the pandemic has affected academic mobility.

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The institution provides clear and easily accessible information and very good support regarding academic mobility. The number of music field students involved in academic mobility is not very large. One of the factors that lead to this situation is the excellence of the education offered within the institution. Another factor is related to the funds allocated by the Academy for the implementation of certain programmes regarding international students. Solutions should be found for these funds to increase so that the possibilities offered are in line with students' demands.

### *3.3.4. Assessment of the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the academic, financial, social, psychological and personal support provided to the students of the field*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

Academic student support covers several aspects: good and timely information about the study modes and funding of the music study field programmes, the aim of studies, learning outcomes, assessment of achievements, elective subjects, timetables, opportunities for mobility etc, using various communication channels and means – websites, email addresses, Information Days, Open Door Days, the activity of the student representative as a member of the Programme Committee; students consultations and assistance in the Academy's library when searching for required information in different Lithuanian and international catalogues and databases; the activity of the Career and Competence Centre; financially support in different forms - reimbursement of the tuition fee, loans for the tuition fee, loans for subsistence, loans for studies abroad, social grants, support to Lithuanians abroad, targeted payments to the disabled. The Physical Education Centre ensures a possibility for students to exercise actively. Due to the phoniatic facility, students can receive the necessary vocal health aid. Students can access psychological counselling free of charge or they can attend a series of psychological self-help lectures. Also, students are offered a possibility to stay at the LMTA student residence (SER, pp. 57-59).

As students reported, during the pandemic they were lucky. The institution support made this period to be a positive one for the students' preparation.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The student support system is very well organized and it is functioning. This is confirmed and appreciated by the students in the site meeting. The Student's Union has an important role in it. A psychologist and a priest are on hand to give emotional, pastoral and spiritual support. Also, due to the fact that most lessons are individual ones and there is a need for close connection, most of the time, the best psychologist is the teacher. Regarding financial support, one of the students highlighted how quick and efficient the system is: he wanted to go to specific master classes and needed money. The institution provided support to do so.

A positive aspect is the institution's concern about music field students' health providing a very comprehensive support network.

### *3.3.5 Evaluation of the sufficiency of study information and student counselling*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

All students have an opportunity to consult programme teachers. The use of different forms of communication and their combination enables students to receive the required information and assistance in a timely manner: the cooperation between the administration of the Academy and the LMTA Student Representation, conducting student surveys, the possibility to provide consultations to each student whenever needed due to the teachers' individual work with students.

Students mentioned that in the beginning of studies (first week) they have information days, where they receive explanations about the way the Academy works, how to get answers to questions, and how to participate in the life of the Academy.

Regarding the feedback, students' opinion was that they get a lot of information about studies. Teachers of the specialist discipline give feedback every week. Also, during the exam, twice a year, there are as many as 10 teachers who express a broad range of different evaluations concerning the student's academic development.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Study information and student counselling are provided timely and to a sufficient level by the Academy and the students' associations. There is clear information about where students should be able to get answers to various questions and concerns, etc. The web pages contain good information for prospective students as well as enrolled students. As students appreciated during the meetings with the panel, the system is working. Changes were made at the initiative of the students.

***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

***(1) Strengths:***

1. According to the admission score (9), the quality of applicants and entrants to LMTA is very high.
2. The admission score is maintained at a high level in the second cycle music field studies, demonstrating that the quality of the educational process is at a high level.
3. LMTA has excellent systems to support students' physical and mental wellbeing.

***(2) Weaknesses:*** None.

### **3.4. TEACHING AND LEARNING, STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT**

***Studying, student performance and graduate employment shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:***

*3.4.1. Evaluation of the teaching and learning process that enables to take into account the needs of the students and enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes*

***(1) Factual situation***

The aim of LMTA field of Music studies is to prepare students for independent professional activities. Methods of teaching are developed with the concept of life-long learning according to which students' need for continuous improvement must be encouraged in the study process – students develop the skills of learning to learn, i.e., the skills to find and select required information, analyse it, constantly broaden cultural context, critically assess the development of their artistic improvement, and to be responsible for their course of studies and their results.

Both the first and second cycle studies in the field of music are based on individual and group learning, creative workshops and practices, excellence courses and forms of studying that develop artistic self-expression. To achieve the learning outcomes of professional studies in the field of music Academy uses active teaching methods, such as discussions, rehearsals, project activities; interactive methods as online courses, video lectures, virtual conferences; and passive teaching methods such as lectures, seminars and traditional study methods.

One of the main measures for improving learning is the permanent monitoring and assessment of study aims and learning outcomes with the input of students and teaching staff. The Academy aims to nurture students' performance professionalism and broaden cultural horizons: through the activity of the Art Centre students attend and organise the agenda of public concerts and cultural events. The SER states that 'In the first cycle study programme *Music Performance* in the field concerned, students' individual work accounts for 62 percent of the total scope of the programme, on average, and 65 percent in the study programme *Music Studies*. In the second cycle study programme *Music Performance* in the field concerned,

students' individual work accounts for 78 percent of the total scope of the programme, on average, and 82 percent in the study programme *Composition*'.

The site visit meeting with students revealed that they are happy with their rehearsal and performance facilities, centrally located in the city which is open for individual practice throughout the day. These are well developed and equipped which stands for the fact that the Academy nurtures students' professionalism in the field of stage performance. Students' individual work is related to the performance of the assignments provided by the teacher. After graduating, first cycle students can continue studies in the field of Music, as well as History and Theory of Art and other related fields at second cycle. Upon successful completion of the second cycle studies in the field of Music and acquisition of the Master's Qualification Degree in Arts, graduates may continue studying in doctoral research or art studies.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Study programmes in both first and second cycles of music study field at LMTA are perfectly developed for achieving the programme learning outcomes. Students are satisfied with the learning premises and equipment. Students and teaching staff are committed to improving studies to maintain the main goal – professionalism in stage performance and broadening cultural horizons.

### *3.4.2. Evaluation of conditions ensuring access to study for socially vulnerable groups and students with special needs*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

LMTA provides financial assistance for socially vulnerable groups and students with social needs. As it is stated in SER, the Academy ensures these financial services, provided by the State Studies Foundation: 'State-supported grants, i.e. the grants for paying the tuition fee, subsistence expenses, periods of study under international contracts; Social grants, i.e. the support for students who receive a social benefit or are limited in their working capacity or orphans or other persons were awarded custody/care; Support for Lithuanians abroad, i.e. the support for foreign nationals of Lithuanian origin who have come to study in Lithuania; Support for students with disability, i.e. the support for students who are established with 45 percent and lower working capacity; Reimbursement of the tuition fee, i.e. the reimbursement of the tuition fee for individuals with the best performance; Compensation for individuals who completed military service.' All the information about socially vulnerable groups is gathered by the Study Information and Data Office, which also provides consultations for concerned groups. The SER lacks detailed information about facilities and premises intended for students with special needs, but as it was noticed during interviews with students and teaching staff most of the buildings have specially prepared entrances, lifts and parking places.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

LMTA has a well-developed informational and financial support system for students with special needs and socially vulnerable groups. Financial support is provided by the State Studies Foundation. Also the Academy, as a partner, promotes increased accessibility for students with disabilities, which is improving the infrastructure for students with social needs.

### *3.4.3. Evaluation of the systematic nature of the monitoring of student study progress and feedback to students to promote self-assessment and subsequent planning of study progress*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

There are several processes in place for monitoring students' progress in their Music studies and to provide feedback to students. Each semester teachers discuss the level of achieved learning outcomes with their students. After each examination session heads of departments discuss results of learning achievements with every student. There are intermediate defences used during the preparation of students' final thesis, which helps to improve achievement of learning outcomes. Students are supported on the matters of developing effective individual learning skills, self-cognition, coping with examination fear and performance anxiety etc.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

LMTA is really focused on monitoring processes, which leads to the right and positive improvements of learning outcomes. The Academy has a well-developed policy of student monitoring by involving every student, teacher and head of the department in this process. Personalised focus on student learning achievements and goals is one of the main strengths in developing professionalism in the music field while studying in LMTA.

### *3.4.4 Evaluation of employability of graduates and graduate career tracking in the study field.*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

Statistical data in SER shows that during the period 2017-2019 LMTA graduated 209 students (first cycle) and 186 graduates (second cycle) in the music study field. According to Employment Service data there were 15 graduates registered with the employment services during the period and 8 out of them were employed according to the acquired qualification level. LMTA has a Career and Competence Centre, which is responsible for tracking graduates. The results of career tracking by the LMTA Career and Competence Centre for 2017, 2018 and 2019 show that the majority of graduates in the field of music work according to the acquired qualification level, are active in creative, artistic and concert activities, and teach at different music and art schools both in Lithuania and abroad. Site visit meetings revealed that LMTA students and graduates are in careers in the foremost Lithuanian music organisations or music education institutions. Many work in paid employment during their study period. After graduating from LMTA first and second cycle students work successfully in music and culture industries, artistic collectives, radio, television, press and in individual creative activities. Careers of graduates are still not officially tracked by LMTA, but according to the information gathered during interviews, there are a significant number of students who are continuing studies in prestigious schools in Europe and also pursuing their careers in prestigious European theatres. They also work in National Theatres and music organisations and pursue educational careers as teachers in Lithuanian schools.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The SER and the information gathered during interviewing students, graduates, employers and social partners gives evidence of the impressive employment background on LMTA graduates, who hold important positions in Lithuania's cultural sector. LMTA has exceptional relations with the best Lithuanian music and theatre organisations, which supports LMTA graduates' progression into a professional musical career.

### *3.4.5 Evaluation of the implementation of policies to ensure academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

The Academies Ethics Committee ensures compliance with the Code of Academic Ethics. As was evidenced in site visit meetings, any member of the University's community has a right to submit a report on the fact of academic violation to the Ethics Committee which investigates and eliminates violations by means of moral impact: criticism, condemnation, disassociation, termination of cooperation, or solves it by applying strict means. As the SER reports, over the last three years, there were no cases of violations of academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination principles.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

LMTA has a strong policy on academic ethics, which works well not only because of a strong Academic Ethics Committee, but especially because of a strong and honest community whose principles are being developed during every cycle of higher education.

### *3.4.6. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the application of procedures for the submission and examination of appeals and complaints regarding the study process within the field studies*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

As it is stated in SER, 'Students of the Academy may file appeals and complaints with regard to the study process in accordance with the Descriptor of the Procedure for Submission and Consideration of Appeals Regarding Learning Outcomes at LMTA.' All appeals must be submitted in a written form. Appeals can be submitted by the student to consider: the decision concerning the assessment of study subject learning outcomes during the examination session when the assessment was carried out by one teacher; a violation of the procedure for assessment of study subject learning outcomes; a violation of the procedure for thesis defence and assessment; the decision concerning recognition of learning outcomes. There are also exceptions when the appeals cannot be accepted: appeals concerning the assessment of study subject learning outcomes when during the session, the assessment commission was formed for the assessment of the study subject learning outcomes in accordance with the LMTA Regulations on Studies; Appeals concerning the assessment of the final thesis. As it is noticed in SER, students of the music study field have not submitted any appeals and complaints over the last three years.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The procedures for the submission and examination of appeals and complaints regarding the study environment and processes are in place, accessible and transparent.

#### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

##### ***(1) Strengths:***

1. An excellent graduate career monitoring system.
2. Exceptional relations with important Lithuanian musical and theatre organisations.
3. Excellent career opportunities for students, even whilst studying.

##### ***(2) Weaknesses:*** None.

### 3.5. TEACHING STAFF

*Study field teaching staff shall be evaluated in accordance with the following indicators:*

*3.5.1. Evaluation of the adequacy of the number, qualification and competence (scientific, didactic, professional) of teaching staff within a field study programme(s) at the HEI in order to achieve the learning outcomes*

*(1) Factual situation*

The teaching staff consists of music, theatre and film artists, who are well-known in Lithuania and abroad. 226 established artists worked in 2019 as creative artists and pedagogues. 31 of them are laureates of national scientific or artistic awards. Additionally 60 accompanists are also teaching staff of the Academy. The rate of student-teacher ratio in 2019 was 4.89, which is similar to music academies in other countries. A very informative table in the SER demonstrates the distribution of teaching staff by their pedagogical experiences. This information shows that the largest number of the teachers, 47% has pedagogical experience between 1 and 10 years, 27% between 11 and 20 years, 15% between 21 and 30 years, 12% between 31 and 40 years, and 3% between 41 and 50 years. 67% of first cycle music field studies subject teachers are established artists (the legal requirement is no less than 50%); 83% of second cycle music field studies teachers have scientific-artistic degrees (the legal requirement is no less than 80%). 35% of second cycle music study field teachers are professors (the legal requirement is 20%). Most of the teaching staff members have foreign language competencies at B2 level. The teachers are accredited every five years to secure their LMTA position.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The teaching staff of the first and second cycle music field studies is of a very high level of expertise and professional quality. This staffing quality is typical of exceptional national institutions. There is a good distribution of teachers' ages, and teaching experiences. The majority of teachers speak a foreign language at least at B2 level. The five-year re-accreditation of teachers is an effective system for motivating teachers in high-quality work, and in identifying areas for continuing professional development. The SER, Annex 5, lists an exceptional teaching workforce which guarantees the education of a very high quality.

*3.5.2. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring teaching staffs' academic mobility (not applicable to studies carried out by HEIs operating under the conditions of exile)*

*(1) Factual situation*

The LMTA has 171 contracts with higher education institutions all over the world (38 countries in 2019). There are 152 exchange agreements for teachers' and students' mobility under Erasmus+, and NordPlus schemes. The SER demonstrates the numbers of incoming and outgoing teachers, submitted by department. There were 68 incoming and 74 outgoing teachers in 2019. The teaching mobility in Erasmus+ was 57% in 2019, student mobility in Erasmus+ was 53% of the mobility, and there were other kinds of mobility: professional development in Lithuania - 4%, other business trips and internships - 29%.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The Academy supports a wide range of mobility possibilities through international agreements. A large proportion of LMTA teachers use these possibilities for travel abroad. The Academy also hosts many foreign teachers. The Erasmus+ programme is widely used for this mobility, as well as the NordPlus programme. The SER quantifies these professional

connections numerically: it is clear that LMTA has a very wide range of active connections and partnerships across the world, and that these frequently lead to inward and outward exchange and mobility.

### *3.5.3. Evaluation of the conditions to improve the competences of the teaching staff*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

The Academy has own legal acts for the improvement of the teachers' competences by research activities, didactic and other, professional competences: 'Descriptor of the Procedure for Professional Development of LMTA Staff'; Descriptor of Minimum Qualification Requirements for Positions of LMTA Teachers and Research Associates; Descriptor of the Procedure for Organisation of Public Competition to Positions of LMTA Teachers and Research Associates and their Accreditation; Descriptor of the Procedure for Formalisation of, Payment for and Reimbursement of Business Trips of LMTA Staff (SER, p.73).

The regulation of the teachers' five years accreditation is based on legal acts. The data for teachers' artistic, scientific, pedagogic activities are submitted. The teachers of first and second cycle music field studies must make a report each year about their different activities, and these results are discussed in department and faculty levels. This procedure is carried out by the Quality Management Office and the Research Centre. The Academy is providing the teachers to improve their research, creative and pedagogical qualifications by international mobility by the earlier mentioned programmes; different art and scientific events, organized by the Academy, the faculties, and departments; giving the infrastructure for self-studies, publishing their articles, library resources, databases, and all relevant infrastructure for artistic activities; possibility for participation in national and international artistic, scientific and study projects; short term creative leave for art and research activities.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The systematic, five-year accreditation system is a strong motivation for the teachers of first and second cycle music field studies, not only for keeping the position, but also to progress their careers. LMTA regulations to improve the competences of the teaching staff are clearly prepared and published. International mobility supports the developing competences of the teachers. Many teachers at LMTA are performing artists and composers, and their professional activities also support their career development. Enhancing the scientific and pedagogical research practice is supported, both financially and with short-term creative leave.

### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

#### ***(1) Strengths:***

1. The exceptional quality of the teaching staff of first and second cycle music field studies, many being well-known and established performing artists and composers or music scientists.
2. International mobility is widespread amongst the LMTA teaching community, helping to share and exchange knowledge with foreign partners, and offering personal teacher development.

#### ***(2) Weaknesses:*** None.

### 3.6. LEARNING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

*Study field learning facilities and resources should be evaluated according to the following criteria:*

*3.6.1. Evaluation of the suitability and adequacy of the physical, informational and financial resources of the field studies to ensure an effective learning process*

*(1) Factual situation*

LMTA is home to two campuses, the historic, larger one in Vilnius and the second, Klaipėda Campus, resulting from a merger in 2018, 300 km away. Students in first and second cycles of the music field study in 5 buildings in Vilnius and one in Klaipėda, offering 162 individual classrooms, 177 study rooms, 110 group lecture halls, and 67 premises for specialised studies. Examinations and public concerts are held in public recital halls and theatres as well as in a variety of cultural venues in both Vilnius and Klaipėda (SER, p.75-76). First and second cycle students of the music study field can use classrooms and music instruments for self-study, as well as 3 reading rooms in Vilnius and one in Klaipėda.

LMTA's instrument collection is regularly inspected and updated, and 15 piano tuners maintain their quality. During the recent pandemic, all venues were equipped with additional cameras and sound equipment needed for live streaming (Site visit meeting). Facilities appear to be adequate and are regularly updated, although jazz specialist students indicated that their facilities were situated in an old building and less fit for purpose than those offered to classical musicians (Site visit, meeting with students).

Students can access classrooms for 15 hours/day during the study year and 12 hours/day in summer. Improving accessibility of studies and conditions for disabled students or those with special needs is a major LMTA objective, supported through the national State Studies Foundation *Increasing Accessibility of Studies* initiative. At present a braille printer and mobile stair lift support these (SER, p.77).

An IT maintenance Office oversees LMTA's IT infrastructure, including administrative computers, reading room computers, library, audio and video repositories, classroom computers and sound and video editing workplaces. Annually, 20% of the workstations are upgraded; classrooms have video projectors and sound systems capable of reading varied digital formats (SER, p.77).

Of note is the Music Innovation Studies Centre, a unique infrastructure for music technology studies for both students and teachers, featuring internationally recognized digital music technologies in the arts, along with research and study programmes of first and second cycle music study field. It also promotes experimental art and research activities as well as spatial sound dispersion strategies for composers and performers (SER, p.77).

The list of venues offering opportunities to perform both in Vilnius and Klaipėda is an extensive one (SER, p.78); likewise, those wishing to develop their pedagogical skills can participate in LMTA's music school for children, as well as at other music and art schools. European internships supported by *Erasmus+* involved 4 to 6 students and alumni combined in each of the last three years.

In 2019, the LMTA Library counted 314,000 documents, of which 158,000 scores and 58,000 audio and video recordings. Each year, the library adds 1700 additional documents, integrating requests from the academic community, department recommendations and documents needed to support changes in curricula. Research carried out by LMTA staff is included in the Academy's database; additionally, final master's theses, doctoral theses and

their summaries are stored and accessible. 19 licensed databases are made available to LMTA staff and students of first and second cycle music study field.

### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The infrastructure for teaching and learning, including instruments, concert halls, rehearsal rooms and individual practice studios, audio and visual equipment, library, IT hardware and software, electronic and digital resources, are both extensive and fit for purpose. The Music Innovation Centre constitutes a model of its kind in its use of state-of-the-art digital music technologies.

Facilities are well managed and upgraded to serve the evolving needs of the music disciplines, and effectively support artistic activities, research, and experimental programmes.

The physical, technological, information and financial resources are suitable and sufficient to ensure effective learning processes.

### *3.6.2. Evaluation of the planning and upgrading of resources needed to carry out the field studies*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

Funding is allocated each year to upgrading learning facilities and methodological resources. The 2018 merger with Klaipėda led LMTA to allocate over 400 000 Euros for updating infrastructure and equipment; further, during the pandemic funding was made available to enhance audio and visual equipment to facilitate live streaming. Needs for learning facilities and resources are assessed twice yearly and met depending on priorities and financial capacity. Infrastructure improvement funds come from the State appropriations budget. IT acquisitions have steadily grown, from 0 in 2017 to 104,750 Euros in 2019 (SER, p.80).

The LMTA 2030 Strategy focuses on ensuring financial stability through diversification of funding sources by increasing revenue from scientific research, arts activities and services rendered, and development of new sources of funding from state foundations, international foundations and organisations, and individual donors (SER, p.80).

LMTA aims to make its infrastructure environmentally sustainable via an action plan for resources, digitisation of study and administrative processes, and an efficient and sustainable completion of the LMTA campus project (SER, p.80). Planned for 2024, the new campus should relieve the overcrowded theatre and film divisions while affording new opportunities for interdisciplinary work (site visit meeting).

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

LMTA is strategic and responsive in funding improvement of facilities and resources needed to maintain, develop, and enhance excellence in delivery of first and second cycle music field studies to meet evolving learning, performance, and research needs. The LMTA 2030 Strategy focus on financial stability integrates the diversification of funding sources as well as an action plan to maintain an environmentally sustainable infrastructure for all resources as well as building of a new campus.

LMTA finances are strategically managed and allow for responsive planning and upgrading of resources and infrastructure improvements as needed.

### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

#### ***Strengths:***

1. LMTA is strategic in its planning and responsive to needs as they arise, allowing improvements to be made steadily and quickly. This was demonstrated in the audio, visual

and IT improvements made swiftly in 2020, thus allowing for continued delivery of first and second cycle music field study programmes during the pandemic.

2 Diversifying funding sources, making facilities accessible for the disabled and an environmentally friendly infrastructure are recognized as key areas for future development and are addressed comprehensively in the 2030 Strategy.

**Weaknesses:** None.

### 3.7. STUDY QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

***Study quality management and publicity shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:***

#### *3.7.1. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system of the studies*

##### *(1) Factual situation*

The 'Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area' is the basis of the quality management of music field's organization in LMTA. The Academy's quality policy is articulated in the Quality Manual, and the Policy on Quality Assurance in Higher Education, Scientific and Art Activities. The main responsibilities for quality management rest with the Rector, the Vice Rector of Studies, the Vice Rector for Art, and the Vice Rector for Research. The Regulations of Study Programmes is also an important document for quality management. Another important document is the Student-Centred Learning/Teaching Strategy. The Senate is a responsible committee for the whole programmes, administration, teaching staff and further elements of the institution's structure (SER, p.82). The qualification requirements for the teaching staff are directed by certain documents, and are presented in the evaluation of teaching staff. The grant funds for the students, the grant awarding conditions, the grant payment procedure is directed by the Regulations for Grants. There are further rules: Descriptor of the Procedure for Student Support, the Rules on the Use of LMTA Classrooms. All these mentioned documents are clearly published on the Academy's website, in an accessible format.

A clearly organized system is helping Information Management in the following areas: 1. statistics on student admission 2. admission scores and study programme choice priorities 3. changes on the student number 4. reasons for student drop-out 5. statistics of graduates 6. graduate employability 7. survey of students, graduates, and employers' opinion 8. statistics of student and teacher international mobility 9. statistics on delivered study programmes 10. premises used for studies and number of workplaces there 11. equipment used for the delivery of studies 12. statistical data on the academic and administrative staff 13. data on the Academy financial resources management.

The Academy's annual reports contain detailed analysis of information. The website of the Academy provides information about the activities in Lithuanian and English; there is an Annual journal; event repertoire is published; and LMTA has a presence on Facebook and YouTube.

The 'Regulations of Study Programmes' describes the procedures for the monitoring and review of study programmes and their cyclical evaluation. The improvement directions, the proposals, the critics, the coordinating of modules (e.g. the design of new study subject or module) are directed by the Study Programme Committees, the student representation, the Dean of the Faculty and the Study Programs Office. Three committees are responsible for the learning outcomes of the study programmes concerned, the methods of studies and assessment evaluation and improvements: 1. The Committee for the Study Programme *Music*

*Performance* (first and second cycle) 2. The Committee for the Study Programme *Music Studies* (first cycle) 3. The Committee for the Study Programme *Composition* (second cycle).

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

The system at LMTA for quality management is clearly described in terms of rules, regulations and responsibilities. It is in line with the European standards of higher education. The management structure is clear at all levels, and the administration staff functions are logical. All necessary information is freely available. Data and analyses are systematically recorded and acted upon. The exemplary preparation and presentation of the SER demonstrates an HEI which takes quality assurance and enhancement seriously. This fact was evident in the site meetings with LMTA.

*3.7.2. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the involvement of stakeholders (students and other stakeholders) in internal quality assurance*

*(1) Factual situation*

Feedback from stakeholders is collected and analysed in several ways including surveys, round table discussions and through regular first and second cycle music field study programmes meetings. External stakeholders participate in quality assurance as members of the responsible committees and commissions. They also participate in surveys expressing their opinions of programme and study quality. Social partners are invited for the teaching of individual study subjects.

*(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

Site meetings revealed that LMTA fosters open and honest communication with students and other stakeholders, the HEI being responsive to legitimate proposals for changes (in subject study, assessment etc.), and taking a mature approach to the continuing enhancement of its unquestionably excellent first and second cycle study programmes of the music study field. Stakeholders (students and others) participate in all levels of the quality management structure, and their views are used to shape and improve the programmes of the music study field. They have plenty of opportunity, through surveys and more informal forums, to influence the development of the student experience in music field study programmes. The impact of views expressed by stakeholders affects change at LMTA.

*3.7.3. Evaluation of the collection, use and publication of information on studies, their evaluation and improvement processes and outcomes*

*(1) Factual situation*

The Academy makes public through its website: 1. information about the requirements of admission to its programmes, their learning outcomes, and the qualifications to be achieved. 2. summaries of learning outcomes attained by the students 3. survey results of the stakeholders' opinions about the quality of studies 4. data on the monitoring of the graduates' employment. This information is generated by faculty administrators and the LMTA Career Centre. The Descriptor of the Programme Profile and the Descriptor of the Procedure for Organisation of Surveys contain information about the necessary conditions of the education, and the stakeholders' opinions. There is detail on the website of possibilities for international mobility, learning facilities, career opportunities and key partners. At the site visit students' meeting participants affirmed the accessibility of precise information about their study needs.

## *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

LMTA publishes information on all aspects of study, evaluation reports and improvement processes and outcomes. These are logically organized and accessible. All necessary information for prospective students is provided in Lithuanian and in English. Students at the site visit meeting had only praise for the clarity and accessibility of information that supports their learning at the Academy.

### *3.7.4. Evaluation of the opinion of the field students (collected in the ways and by the means chosen by the SKVC or the HEI) about the quality of the studies at the HEI*

#### *(1) Factual situation*

Student feedback is collected systematically, and there are effective feedback 'loops' which ensure that all members of teaching staff are aware of matters raised and the actions that are taken. Survey outcomes are made available to subject teachers, the Study Programme Committee, the management of the faculty and then back to students. Student surveys are concerned with the first and second cycle study programmes of the music study field and its improvement, the refinement of the study subjects, the design of new programmes and subjects, and the assessment of performance of members of the academic community, including the teachers. The SER shows examples for the surveys, students' observations and expectations, and the changes realised (SER, p.87). A new *National Student Survey* was instigated in 2020.

#### *(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis*

There are clear procedures and processes to collect and analyse student feedback. Feedback from students from surveys or from their participation in committees, roundtables etc. results in changes (as examples in the SER confirm). Informal feedback from students (LMTA staff and students having strong working relationships) is also of vital importance, and – as in all music conservatoires – has the danger of undermining more formal student feedback. Students are made aware that their voices have been heard, through the student associations, and committee feedback.

#### ***Strengths and weaknesses of this evaluation area:***

##### ***(1) Strengths:***

The quality management of first and second cycle music field studies is very organized and there are many ways for stakeholders to register their opinions for development; LMTA reacts to these suggestions in a timely fashion.

##### ***(2) Weaknesses:*** None.

## IV. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE

1. LMTA is connected with the most significant cultural organisations within Lithuania. This ensures that its first and second cycle study programmes of the music study field remain current, and that its students and graduates progress into employment and make an important contribution to the musical life of the nation.
2. The teaching staff of music field studies is of exceptional quality, including many established performing artists, composers and musicologists. They are committed both to the further advancement of their own artistic work, but, equally, also to the development of LMTA's music students.
3. LMTA's participation in diverse and extensive international networks, joint projects and programmes offer a wide array of discipline-specific and interdisciplinary opportunities for teachers' continuing professional development and training for students of music field studies.
3. The Academy is dynamic, and has a commitment to diversify its musical study specialisms to retain its relevance and currency.
4. The Academy has a rich history but is not burdened by this: it has a refreshing self-critical ethos and a passionate desire to improve itself.
5. The Academy has an excellent and efficient quality management system. This is not overbearing, and permits focus on its core mission and vision.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS\*

Evaluation Area	Recommendations for the Evaluation Area (study cycle)
Intended and achieved learning outcomes and curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through a period of significant diversification of programmes and specialist areas of music study the panel advises that LMTA gives attention to the maintenance of its high academic standards in ‘new’ specialisms.</li> </ul>
Links between science (art) and studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An increased presence in online platforms and a greater emphasis on interdisciplinary activities will strengthen LMTA's already outstanding programmes.</li> </ul>
Student admission and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The panel recommends that the Academy develops better mechanisms to promote its first and second cycle study programmes of the music study field to prospective international students.</li> <li>• The panel recommends that LMTA reviews its approach to attracting state ‘non-funded’ students, and reviews the financial support for international students who wish to study at the Academy.</li> </ul>
Teaching and learning, student performance and graduate employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The comprehensive monitoring of music field studies student graduate destinations (including those who work abroad) is recommended.</li> </ul>
Teaching staff	<i>Not applicable.</i>
Learning facilities and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While facilities are extensive and appear largely fit for purpose, the panel recommends prioritising improvement of facilities in the jazz specialism.</li> <li>• The Panel recommends issues pinpointed in the 2030 Strategy – including diversification of funding sources and improving accessibility for the disabled and those with special needs – merit LMTA’s continued attention.</li> </ul>
Study quality management and public information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The panel recommends that the Academy considers mechanisms to incentivise students of the music study field programmes at first and second cycle to complete formal surveys.</li> <li>• It would be beneficial to improve collection of ‘informal’ feedback in order that this can feed into the quality committee structures.</li> </ul>

\*If the study field is going to be given negative evaluation (non-accreditation) instead of RECOMMENDATIONS main **arguments for negative evaluation** (non-accreditation) must be provided together with a **list of “must do” actions** in order to assure that students admitted before study field’s non-accreditation will gain knowledge and skills at least on minimum level.

## VI. SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the findings of the expert panel based on the Self-Evaluation Reports and the interviews with the Academy administration (senior management and faculty administration staff), staff responsible for the preparation of the SER, teaching staff and stakeholders (students, alumni, employers, social partners). The expert panel gives a positive evaluation to the implementation of the first cycle music field studies (*Music Performance* and *Music Studies*) and the second cycle music field studies (*Music Performance* and *Composition*) at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre with all areas assessed as very good or excellent.

The first and second cycle music field studies at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre are exciting, industry-relevant, and well-structured. The first and second cycle study programmes *Music Performance* and the second cycle study programme *Composition* are offered in the Lithuanian and English languages. The first cycle study programme *Music Studies* is offered in the Lithuanian language. LMTA recruits very good student numbers and contention rates to study at the Academy are high. Given the excellence of its traditions and the quality of its music field study programmes the Academy needs to promote itself better internationally, to secure a larger intake of non-Lithuanian students. The recent introduction of a faculty in Klaipėda gives opportunities for the training of professionals in that region, and the further enhancement the range of LMTA's outstanding specialist musical offer.

There are exemplary connections between the first and second cycle music field studies and the music industry in Lithuania and beyond. The employability of graduates is high. Many students commence work in the music industry during their studies and take important roles in Lithuanian cultural organisations as artists or music leaders. Alumni and employers recognise the essential role played by the first and second cycle music field studies and by graduates in supporting and developing Lithuanian cultural life.

The teaching staff of the first and second cycle music field studies is of an exceptional quality. Teachers are nationally and internationally recognised for their artistic activity and research, a recognition confirmed by the outstanding ratings from the Lithuanian Research Council. Staff share their expertise and professional connections with the students, which enhances employment prospects both during and after their studies. The intersection of academic training and professional practice ensures cutting-edge programmes which are responsive to the latest artistic and industry trends. There are many mechanisms to support teacher development, and international mobility is widespread across the Academy community.

The procedures around Final degree art projects in the first and second cycle work well. Students perform challenging repertoire in their final assessments and produce written theses which propose stimulating research challenges. The final theses are directly applicable and relevant to the contemporary music industry.

The management structure is very effective and efficient. It is clear where responsibilities lie for quality assurance and enhancement. Feedback from students, alumni and stakeholders are collected and used to improve all aspects of the first and second cycle music field study programmes. It is a feature of the Academy that the close connections with industry permit a swiftly evolving programme offer. The Academy's maturity and self-critical ethos is an exemplary aspect of its academic operation.

The infrastructure for teaching and learning includes a well-equipped library, concert and recording facilities, and extensive practice facilities. The Academy is strategic in its resource planning and responsive to needs as they arise, allowing improvements to be made quickly. This was demonstrated in the audio, visual and IT improvements made swiftly in 2020, thus

allowing for continued delivery of the first and second cycle music field studies during the pandemic. The physical, technological and financial resources currently allocated are sufficient to ensure effective learning on the Academy's music field studies.

Expert panel signature:

Prof. Dr. Martin Harlow (panel chairperson)