



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Vilniaus dailės akademijos (Kauno fakulteto)
STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS „TAKOMOJI TEKSTILĖ“ (*valstybinis*
kodas - 621W10009)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT
OF "APPLIED TEXTILE" (state code - 621W10009)
STUDY PROGRAMME
at Vilnius Art Academy (Kaunas Faculty)

Review team:

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
Report language – English

DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	Taikomoji tekstilė
Valstybinis kodas	621W10009
Studijų sritis	Menai
Studijų kryptis	Dailė
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Antroji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė, 2 metai
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	120 ECTS
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Dailės bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	1997 gegužės 16d., Įsak. Nr. 565

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	Applied Textile
State code	621W10009
Study area	Art
Study field	Fine Arts
Type of the study programme	University studies
Study cycle	Second
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (2 years)
Volume of the study programme in credits	120 ECTS
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Master of Fine Art
Date of registration of the study programme	1997 May 16. Order No. 565

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 The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. *Background of the evaluation process*

The evaluation of on-going study programmes is based on the **Methodology for evaluation of Higher Education study programmes**, approved by Order No 1-01-162 of 20 December 2010 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC).

The evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions to constantly improve their study programmes 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) *visit of the review team at the higher education institution*; 3) *production of the evaluation report by the review team and its publication*; 4) *follow-up activities*.

On the basis of external evaluation report of the study programme SKVC takes a decision to accredit study programme either for 6 years or for 3 years. If the programme evaluation is negative such a programme is not accredited.

The programme is **accredited for 6 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as “very good” (4 points) or “good” (3 points).

The programme is **accredited for 3 years** if none of the areas was evaluated as “unsatisfactory” (1 point) and at least one evaluation area was evaluated as “satisfactory” (2 points).

The programme is **not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas was evaluated as “unsatisfactory” (1 point).

1.2. *General*

The Application documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by the 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.	Examples of final Master’s graduation work / thesis of the second-cycle study

1.3. *Background of the HEI/Faculty/Study field/ Additional information*

Vilnius Academy of Arts (hereinafter – Academy, VAA) is a state institution of higher education of arts organising university first-cycle, master’s, special vocational, integrated, third-cycle, doctoral studies, performing research and developing high-level professional artistic

activities. The Academy was established by the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania and is an autonomous institution carrying out independent academic, administrative, economic and financial management activities based on the principle of self-government, academic freedom, and defined in the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, the Law on Higher Education and the Statute of the Academy.

The Academy consists of the following structural departments: the Council of VAA, the Rector's Office, the Senate of the Academy (Senate), Faculty of Postgraduate Studies (FPS), Vilnius, Kaunas, Telšiai, Klaipėda Faculties, science and arts departments, administrative units, internship and recreational bases, cultural and sports centres, Open School of Arts, Design and Architecture (OSADA) of VAA, Design Innovation Centre, etc.

Vilnius Faculty is an integral structural part of Vilnius Academy of Arts, thus it uses the Academy's facilities and methodological resources on equal terms with other structural departments. The Vilnius Faculty implements university study programmes in arts: bachelor's and master's.

The report is the outcome of the evaluation of the Applied Textile master's study programme at the Vilnius Academy of Arts, Kaunas Faculty, which has been registered on 16th May 1997.

The programme has previously been subject to an external evaluation in 2008. During the international audit the Applied Textile master's programme (62102 M 112) was accredited for six years.

The programme is being continuously developed and improved. The last renewal was made in 2016. The prepared self-evaluation report comprises of results from the past 5 year (5-year period from 2011 to 2016). The site visit included the following meetings:

- discussions with senior faculty administration staff,
- discussions with staff responsible for preparation of Self-Evaluation Report (SER),
- discussions with teaching staff,
- discussions with students,
- discussions with alumni and employers of recent graduates of the programme,
- inspection of student coursework including final work - Master thesis,
- inspection of teaching premises and equipment including library, laboratories, auditoria, and computing.

The two-year full-time *Applied Textile master's programme* is designed to develop highly qualified textile artists.

1.4. *The Review Team*

The review team was completed according *Description of experts' recruitment*, approved by order No. V-41 of Acting Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The Review Visit to HEI was conducted by the team on 26th April 2017.

1. **Robert Baker (team leader)**, Limerick School of Art & Design, Head of Fine Art Ireland. (until 2009) Chair of the Board of EQ-Arts Quality Enhancement Agency, Amsterdam
2. **Prof. Dr. Radu Andrei Pulbere**, Professor in University of Art and Design in Cluj-Napoca, Coordinator of the Master specialization in Textile Design UAD Cluj-Napoca, Romania.
3. **Prof. Lylian Meister**, Freelance artist and designer, Board member of Tori, Jaam MTÜ (Non-profit organization), Estonia.
4. **Jeffrey Dennis**, Senior Lecturer (0.5) Fine Art Programme, Chelsea College of Arts, University of the Arts London, United Kingdom.
5. **Prof. Dr. sc. Jelka Geršak**, Professor at University of Maribor, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Coordinator of the doctoral study programme Design and Textile Materials, Slovenia.
6. **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rimantas Plungė**, The Head of Contemporary Art Department Faculty of Arts at Vytautas Magnus university, Lithuania.
7. **Aneta Bačianskaitė**, student of the Šiauliai University study programme *Applied art and business, Lithuania*.

Based on the analysis of the Self Evaluation Report and on preparation of Preliminary Reports the Accreditation Team visited the Vilnius Academy of Arts, Kaunas Faculty, Department of Applied Textiles on Wednesday 26th April, 2017.

Site visits to the infrastructure resources (studios, teaching space, laboratory, computer rooms, the showroom, library etc.) were conducted during the day of the course the contribution of Master students were seen.

All the people involved in the accreditation process were very co-operative and engaged fully in the process. The Accreditation Team were provided with a professional and hospitable welcome. The Accreditation Team tried to encourage an open discussion with all concerned; the level of involvement by those they encountered during the visit greatly enhanced the efficiency of the work that was carried out.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

2.1 *Programme aims and learning outcomes*

The aims and learning outcomes of the *Applied Textile master's study programme* are documented and publicly available at:

http://www.vda.lt/en/study_programs/graduate-ma/applied-textile-graduate

Applied Textile master's study programme is oriented as an open educational model. The aim of study programme is to prepare highly qualified textile artists, who are able to (self-)critically analyse, evaluate, and explain the phenomenon of textile culture, interpret art processes in a wide cultural context, and independently implement creative idea. "Study programme promotes interactions of textile art and science, interdisciplinary and technological research, as well as application of creativity in the fields of contemporary art and textile industry" (SER, p.6).

Applied Textile master's study is unique in its openness to interdisciplinary study and projects, wide application of skill and knowledge, multitude of acquired abilities and knowledge, collaboration with specialists from other fields and international activity of the department, and this was evident during the visit.

Learning outcomes of *Applied Textile* master's study programme correspond and relate to the Academy mission, and its development strategy. The aim of learning outcomes is focused to prepare specialist for applied textile art with adequate theoretical and practical knowledge and skills. Applied textile specialists are prepared in such a way that they would be able to develop innovative projects, improve and change their qualification, i.e., adapting to the conditions of constantly changing global art, culture and industry markets, what was also evident during the visit.

Applied Textile master's study programme is consistent with the criteria for accreditation and external evaluation of study programs. Textile Department academic community and social partners are proactive in participation in the improvement of the study programme outcomes. Since the last accreditation the following changes were carried out: (a) continuous improvement of the study programme objectives (taking into account the local and international market demands); (b) the social aspect involvement, i.e. in general community and art discipline, and (c) active cooperation of the programme with the industrial, service companies, and social partners.

As a recommendation the evaluation team proposes that the objectives of programme could be strongly focused on the forms of textile art expression. The Expert team also recognise that the programmes' titles are traditional but it is concerned those in the SER the full rationale for the programmes' and their unique qualities were not communicated and that only during the visit were able to gain a full understanding. It would be recommended to aid marketing of the programmes' and for clarity of vision.

2.2. *Curriculum design*

The quantity and quality of the programme aims are of satisfactory standard according to the postgraduate requirements. The scope of studies is suitable in achieving learning outcomes and acquiring specialist skills and knowledge within the time necessary. From structural view the study subjects of Applied Textile master's study programme are classified into three main groups: (a) mandatory subject-specific subjects (60 ECTS), (b) optional theoretical and subject-specific subjects (30 ECTS), and (c) thesis/final project preparation (30 ECTS).

The ratio of contact hours and self-guided study in the study plan of *Applied Textile* master's study programme corresponds to provisions of Study Regulations of Vilnius Academy of Arts: 40 % of the scope of the study programme is dedicated to tutor contact (lectures, seminars, practical sessions and individual consultations), and 60 % to self-guided study.

The ratio in theoretical and other optional study subjects is distributed slightly differently (depends on the content of the subject taught during study), on average 50 % are allocated for tutor contact and 50 % for self-guided study.

Applied Textile master's study programme is concluded in IV semester with preparation and presentation of the thesis/final project.

Study programme comprises of 4 semesters over 2 years. In total the programme has 120 ECTS credits, of which the Thesis makes up 30 ECTS. The programme complies with national legal acts and regulations, and to the General Requirements for the postgraduate study programmes in Lithuania. In terms of compliance of the study content with legal acts, it can be seen that in Lithuania there are no regulations for applied textile field that would regulate the contents of university studies of art, therefore the studies are formed and conducted according to the objectives and learning outcome of the *Applied Textile* master's study programme, as well as to the documents that regulate the operation of higher education institutions.

Applied Textile master's study programme content is comprised on the basis of learning outcomes of the study programme and is suitable in acquiring skills and knowledge needed for master's level of study. The content of subjects corresponds to the type and cycle of study. The essence of the subjects' content within study programme is the comprehension of a distinctive culture of textile based on the concept of artist-researcher.

The programme aims and learning outcomes are well-defined and are oriented according to the open educational model (to prepare creative individual-textile artist and textile artist-practitioner).

The programme subject goals are consistent with learning outcomes of programme (it is clearly differentiated according to speciality fields). Recently study program has experienced some changes and improvements (The curriculum has been improved in terms of structure subjects; Studies of each study subject/module of the study programme are completed with an examination of students' knowledge and skills, or with a review of a final degree project; A part of summer school practice is made by inviting students of all study courses; The Students are active by forming an independent practice; Creation of socially oriented projects, mastering of social art knowledge).

Overall the course contents appear to be relevant and well balanced. It is based on innovation, and on selection of individual research field, that enables students to apply their broad knowledge in creative projects. However, the small number of students is a great concern, there is less dynamism, discourse and competition than in a larger group and this is constraining individual achievement.

During the interviews with the students and alumni it was expressed that courses of project writing, management, and self-management are missing in the programme. Students do not know how to introduce themselves - it is a big disadvantage.

The recommendation to include self-presentation and ability to communicate ideas and projects during the study to the public. The presentation of student's works should be more defined. The MA final work (Thesis) should be defined (specification of structure and form), and should include title, abstract (summary) and key words in English, and references.

2.3. Teaching staff

The teaching staffs involved in the study programme have the qualification required by law. The academic staff is formed by a way of public competition following the *Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania*, the *Description of the General Requirements for Master's Study Programmes*, and the description of the *Qualification requirements for scientists' and artists' positions* and the order of the *Organisation of assessment and competitions to hold positions* as well as the *Order of the awards of pedagogical titles at Vilnius Academy of Arts* approved by the Senate.

The open competition method is used to hire academic staff members for a period of 5 years. Individual lecturers are also hired under fixed-term employment contracts with the possibility of extension.

Qualification of lecturers teaching on the *Applied Textile* study programme meets the requirements of the aforementioned documents. As most of the lecturers involved in the programme have pedagogical titles or academic degrees, their competence as well as practical professional

activities are assessed during the certification procedures. The lecturers have the possibility to participate in various programmes according to the *Implementation Plan for the VAA Lifelong Learning Strategy for 2016–2020* (approved by the Senate in 2016), for the improvement of qualification through participation in the activities of various associations and unions, professional traineeships, courses and training organised by VAA, and the activities of the Lecturers' Club under the Educational Art Center established in 2016.

The Applied Textile master's study programme employs 10 teachers from Textile department: there are 5 full-time lecturers (1 professor, 4 associate professors), 3 additional lecturers from other departments (1 professor, 1 associate professor, 1 lecturer) and two invited (1 PhD associate professor and, 1 lecturer) lecturers working in Textile department. The field of academic and creative activity of lecturers teaching on the *Applied Textile* master's study programme corresponds to the subjects they teach. The number of the teaching staff is adequate to ensure learning outcomes. During the interviews with the students and alumni there was evidence of very close contact with the students (individual consultation, e-mail box for students). It would be very beneficial to provide a time-table of teacher's consultation.

In total there are 21 lecturers (5 of them visiting lecturers) who teach on the study programme: 3 professors (of whom 1 has a PhD), 13 associate professors (of whom 8 have PhD's), 4 lecturers (of whom 2 have PhD's). Out of all the lecturers teaching on the study programme 10 have PhD's (48 %), other have professor's (15 %) or associate professor's (62 %) academic degree. The teaching staff turnover is able to ensure an adequate provision of the study programme.

Mandatory subjects of the study programme are taught by 14 lecturers: 2 professors (14 %), 10 associate professors (72 %) and 2 lecturers (14 %). This information corresponds to the description of the General Requirements for master's study programmes (at least 60 % of lecturers of all study subjects are required to have an academic degree (be the established artists), of them at least 40 % of the field subject lecturers are required to be in the field of academic activity that corresponds to the subjects that they teach).

The qualifications and experience of the teaching team is satisfactory for the requirements of the MA programme and are adequate to ensure learning outcomes. Several of the teaching staff has a vast international collaboration experience in academic and art fields, which helps them to feel the pulse of contemporary art and transfer this knowledge to students. However, small number of visiting teachers from foreign countries is involved in the study programme. It would be very beneficial to improve the teaching staff mobility (in both directions), and integrate visiting teachers from foreign countries for short-term courses.

As a recommendation the evaluation team proposes more active cooperation with foreign higher education institutions (improvement of the teaching staff mobility and visiting teachers from foreign countries).

The research output was not evaluated specifically as this evaluation focused on the teaching. However, delivering a state-of-the-art teaching programme required support from a good research programme. However, a critical review of research work and increase an activity of teaching staff in the field of scientific publishing would increase the learning outcomes.

2.4. *Facilities and learning resources*

The premises for studies are adequate. Textile department has flexibility to adapt to the insufficient facilities dedicated for subject-specific studies. According to financial capabilities it is sought them to supplement and renew. The department has an exceptional library of specialty literature, which can be freely used by the department's staff and students. General facilities of the faculty only partly meet the needs of the study programme, and therefore the department is constantly submitting proposals for its improvement. Currently the Textile department uses these premises:

- Personnel room where Textile Department methodical library is located (32.86 m²). These premises are comprised of two parts: room for general use (meetings of lecturers, discussions with small groups of student, and the reception of guests), the other part of the premises is dedicated to the library-reading room of the department, which is used by lecturers and students,
 - three auditoriums and 1 auditorium-laboratory,
 - two laboratories (Printing laboratory and Digital weaving laboratory),
 - two rooms of methodical archive (9.65 m², 14.22 m²) Methodical funs-archive house TD bachelor's and master's students' final projects.
- Other lectures and activities for master's studies take place in specially equipped auditoriums that are located in buildings on Muitinès st. 2 and 4).
- Master's students can use all Textile Department and VAA KF available facilities.

Methodical resources: The main aim of VAA library is to satisfy the information needs of the students and academic community, and provide access to traditional and electronic sources of information. Electronic scientific databases are a source of knowledge that is important for the effective academic and study process.

The library also provides services of national and international interlibrary subscription in order to ensure high level of academic and artistic research. Information about library services and possibilities to use electronic resources is provided to students during the introductory session and during specialized lectures (based on the request of lecturers). New premises of VAA Kaunas Faculty library were opened: improved conditions of book keeping, reading room zone was expanded, working hours were extended.

Facilities and learning resources are suitable, but not sufficiently discipline oriented. The resources for practical training are also available (for example: computer room, weaving laboratory with modern Jacquard loom). *Applied Textile* Master's Study Programmes students are able to use all of the art, design and IT laboratories, and bases for creative practice and galleries that belong to VAA. There are also wide network of social partners and contact development and targeted involvement of the partner in the study process.

The recommendation that the equipment and learning resources, which support realistic professional training, should be more discipline oriented (on the area of applied textile).

2.5. Study process and students' performance assessment

The admissions requirements to the VAA are well-founded, consistent and transparent. Admission to VAA master's study programme is performed by way of competition (Rules for Admission to the Second-cycle (Master's) Studies of Vilnius Academy of Arts 2016, approved: in the Senate Minutes No. S-3 of 20-04-2016), by summing up the admission criteria (final grade of bachelor's thesis and final project; weighted average grade of 4-year bachelor's study programme (thesis and final project excluded); grade of applicant's creative work (applicants with grade that is below 5 (on a 10-point grading scale) are eliminated from the competition); and grade of suggested master's thesis), and the admission interview for the selected study programme. The information about the formula to calculate the competitive score is present on the VAA website. The admission interview is one of the main criteria.

The organisation of the study process ensures proper implementation of the programme and achievement of the learning outcomes. The study process is organised in a way that the students develop their conceptual, critical thinking, and originality skills through a combination of fundamental design logic, rationality and artistic sensual emotionality. The methodology for the entire study programme is problem-based: from a comprehensive analysis of the selected topic (first year of study) and academic-artistic generalisations (second year of study), generation of new ideas to the conceptuality of the chosen topic and its practical application in specific projects.

Students are encouraged to take part in scientific, artistic and applied science activities. Students are encouraged to actively discuss and formulate creative ideas, critically and self-critically evaluate contexts of textile culture and contemporary art.

The students are provided conditions to take part in mobility programmes. Mobility is implemented mainly through the Erasmus+ program (Vilnius Academy of Arts has signed 162 Erasmus+ agreements), but it is not active enough. The advantages and information gained from the existing mobility student is very high. The effect on staff and students has been very positive. The recommendation to increase the student's mobility (the student exchange should be more effectively), and to give students the opportunity to choose university study subjects from other higher education institutions.

Students are encouraged to independently participate in international and local conferences, seminars, creative workshops, competitions, and exhibitions, as well as exhibit their works in public spaces.

Academic support is on satisfactory level. Information about the study programme, its contents and results, evaluation of study subjects, optional study subjects, schedules and changes in them, requirements for individual works, as well as public lectures and seminars, creative workshops, exhibitions and possibilities to study in foreign universities is published on the notice-board, presented during regular meetings with students, online at (www.vda.lt) and on social networks (Facebook, etc.).

There is a good personal relationship which provides the opportunity for open communication in the faculty. A warm friendly atmosphere and close relations between staff, students and social partners was also evident during the visit.

The level of social support is satisfactory and is comparable with social support in other Lithuanian Universities. Students are entitled to receive social and promotional scholarships as well as one-time social payouts. Only students, who have the right to receive social benefits under the law of the financial social benefits for the indigent families of the Republic of Lithuania, can apply for the social scholarship. Promotional scholarships are granted only for the best students of the department. If a student is in a difficult financial situation, they have the right to apply to a one-time social payout.

Students are not assigned to any specific health care centre in Kaunas city, they choose health care institution on their own account.

Textile Department provides good conditions for individual creative activity of its students, for example, the ability to organise exhibitions in Lithuanian galleries. International art event "Kauno biennale" provides the conditions and includes into the programme projects by students and

young artists. By collaborating with various cultural, business and education institutions, TD organises presentations of student works throughout Lithuania. The participation of representatives from galleries, municipalities, associations, manufacturers and companies in the study process is extremely important. Social partners, such as galleries help master's students to enter the field of the contemporary art and begin the career as artists.

The system and procedure for student assessment is based on the principles of reliability, clarity, efficiency and impartiality. Student knowledge and skills in all programme study subjects/modules are marked on a 10-point grading scale.

Applied Textile study programme is also based on the Subject Benchmark Statement for Arts, which provides more details on the assessment system. The marking criteria are public and presented in the study programme. These measures are sufficient to make sure that the master's students understand the requirements and grading criteria of their work.

Feedback from the master's graduates is very important to the department and the study programme committee. Textile Department maintains close relationship with its graduates, invites them to events conduct, reviews, asks them to evaluate students' works and closely follow their professional careers. The graduates are the strong side of the study programme with majority of them successfully working in textile industry around the world, establishing their own businesses, working as freelancers and with a small part of them becoming independent contemporary artists and participating in international contemporary art exhibitions and textile projects. Graduates are invited to give seminars or creative workshops, or to read a brief series of lectures with very unique and professional competencies in a field of textile.

The topics of master thesis show that the students are given opportunities, and are encouraged to participate in research projects. Some of the final work indicated poor structure, missing references and English summary, and incomplete figure titles. Generally, all the thesis works reviewed had relatively undefined structure (short theoretical part, without methodology sections, incomplete figure titles, and poor discussion sections). As a general recommendation the evaluation team proposes that the presentation of student's works should be more defined. Writing skills should be improved. The MA final work (Thesis) should be defined (specification of structure and form), and should include title, abstract (summary) and key words in English, and references. To encourage master's study programme students to independently participate in creative-artistic activity, present themselves in exhibitions, participate in competitions that can help them find research idea/topic for their master's studies.

2.6. *Programme management*

Responsibilities for decisions and monitoring of the implementation of the programme are clearly allocated. Study programme administration processes are implemented based on the Republic of Lithuania Law on Higher Education and Research. Activities of the study programme committees are among the key integral parts of the system of quality assurance of studies of VAA.

The study programme committee discusses learning outcomes, organises surveys and collects information on the implemented programme in different ways, and makes proposals for the elimination of weaknesses and renewal of the programme to the department, methodological commission of the faculty, Council of the Faculty. They also evaluate the quality of the implemented study programmes prior to presenting them for external evaluation and certification.

During the work of the study programme committee, social partners and artists for special projects and exhibitions are involved in the process of the study programme. Meetings with students are organized, the results of the programme quality improvement and evaluation are discussed.

The internal system of quality assurance is prepared in accordance with international and national quality requirements and agreements: *European Higher Education Quality Assessment Guidelines* (ESG 2015), *Republic of Lithuania Law on Higher Education and Research*, *VAA Study Regulations*. This system guarantees a quality of artistic activity, art and scientific surveys and studies.

The Academy evaluates academic staff activities every five years. The Achievements of academic staff are published in a volume.

All lecturers are responsible for the implementation and quality of the programme. They participate in Faculty Committee and academic community meetings. The students actively participate in the evaluation of the programme quality (surveys, various meetings, including meetings of the department and the committee, and discussions). The students express their opinions and voice their requests, which are discussed by the Textile Department and the study programme committee as well as taken into account, when improving the quality of studies.

Assessment system is working; they get clear explanation about achieving study result, and learning outcomes. Students are informed how to appeal, re-sit, they can discuss results with the teachers. Assessment is accumulative, so students get all info. Criteria are on-line.

Graduates have also a great impact on the activity of the programme quality evaluation and improvement, by sharing the experience acquired during the studies and further occupational activity. Data and information regarding programme implementation are collected and analyzed periodically.

The outcomes of the international and external evaluations of the programme are used for the improvement of the programme. This directly affects the constant improvement of the programme.

In the evaluation and improvement process the stakeholders are involved. All information about the study programme are public relevant and easily accessible on the VAA website.

Textile Department tries to achieve a democratic and creative learning atmosphere and actively encourages students to participate in the global field of textile art (exhibitions, events, projects, exchanges, etc.), what was also evident during the visit.

Creative learning atmosphere affects the study process and further creative career of the graduates. There are opportunities in the department to freely express own opinion about the study process. Close relations are maintained with the graduates of the study programme, who also actively participate in the study programme and provide job opportunities for master's students.

The management has adequately followed up on the recommendations from previous evaluation from 2008. Since the last accreditation of the study programme carried out more improvements. There it can expose continuous improvement of the study programme objectives (taking into account the local and international market demands); the social aspect involvement, i.e. in general community and art discipline, active cooperation of the programme with the industrial, service companies, and social partners. The Description of the Procedure of Internal Quality Assessment of the Study Programmes of VAA was approved as well as the Code of Academic Ethics.

The information about the study programme is public, relevant and easily accessible. However, the study programme demonstrates small number of students. The recommendations to define and form the promotional strategy and financing of the Second Cycle VAA and VAA Kaunas Faculty studies should, as well as encourage visiting students in *Applied Textile* master's study programme.

2.7. *Examples of excellence*

The students of VAA Kaunas Faculty Applied Textile MA programme exhibited art projects, which were found to be interesting, experimental and visually articulated, both in making as well as in concept. Some of students' projects and creative work have received international recognition through competitions and this is to be commended.

The Evaluation Team were impressed, with the meetings with motivated, creative and highly qualified teachers, some of them are internationally well-known textile artist. The team value highly the personal connections and trust between students and teachers in the Department, the friendly and supportive atmosphere in Applied Textile MA programme. The engagement with stakeholders, employers, graduates and social partners and the extended textile family in Kaunas, that has been created by Department, is very valuable and supportive.

Students are given encouragement to take part in networks, projects and exhibitions nationally and internationally, this is to be commended. Staff facilitates students access to exhibitions and Kaunas Biennale.

Also to be commended is the cooperation and projects with industry, included to the study projects.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that the objectives of programme could be more related with the forms of textile art expression.
2. It is recommended to give students the opportunity to choose university study subjects from other higher education institutions.
3. To improve the teaching staff mobility (in both directions); visiting teachers from foreign countries for short-term courses.
4. It is recommended that equipment and learning resources, which support realistic professional training should be more discipline oriented (on the area of applied textile).
5. It is recommended to increase the student's mobility (the student exchange should be more effectively).
6. It is recommended to increase an activity of teaching staff in the field of scientific publishing.
7. Writing skills should be improved. The MA final work (Thesis format) should be defined (specification of structure and form), and should include title, abstract and key words in English, and references.

IV. SUMMARY

Based on the analysis of the Self Evaluation Report of the *Applied Textile master's study programme* by the Kaunas Faculty of Vilnius Art Academy, Preliminary Reports, the analysis of additional written documentation, visiting of teaching and learning facilities, and the structured meetings/interviews with key personnel of the study programme (teachers, administration, students, graduates and social partners) at the site visit, as well as findings in this report, we conclude:

The *Applied Textile master's study programme* meets the needs of the specific marked. Considering all the programme specific criteria for evaluation according to individual areas of assessment (the aims and learning, outcomes of the study programme, curriculum design, teaching staff, facilities and learning resources, study process and students' performance assessment and programme management), according the SKVC Criteria for the Accreditation and External Evaluation of Higher Education Study Programmes, we find that the *Applied Textile master's study programme* at the Kaunas Faculty of Vilnius Art Academy meets all minimum criteria regarding organisation and provision of the study programme, integration with the environment, functioning of the higher education institution, human resources, students, material conditions and quality assurance.

The *Applied Textile master's study programme* is provided according to the mission, vision and strategy of Kaunas Faculty of Vilnius Art Academy. The vision is based on combining art, design, social science, technical science and contemporary technologies for the purpose of creativity, competitiveness and responsibility of graduates for sustainable development of society. *Applied Textile master's study programme* is oriented at the open educational model: analytical and practical expression of textile are taught together in-line with the international context of contemporary textile, problem solving aspects of contemporary art, analysis of cultural and social current issues, and insights of conceptuality, thus creating a unique culture of textile. The master's study programme is integrated with the environment both in the narrow region, as well as in the broader Lithuania and international area by direct cooperation, and artistic projects. It has a developed team of higher education teachers which both in number and quality meet the expectations of quality research, artistic and professional work, connected with the study programme. Overall, the programme is well managed. It has a clear structure and measurable outcomes, and a clear division of responsibilities.

As a general note the study programme has a professional and scientific basis for successful implementation. The programme content is developed and updated depending on current topics and developments in the world. Master's students are encouraged to create and participate in contemporary art and social collaboration projects, and open new platforms for creative practice and

research. The lecturers have a vast international collaboration experience in academic and art fields, which helps them to transfer this knowledge to students. *The* students are able to use all of the art, design and IT laboratories, and bases for creative practice and galleries that belong to VAA.

Assessment system is working, they get clear explanation about achieving study results, learning outcomes. Students are informed how to appeal, re-sit, and they can discuss results with the teachers. Assessment is accumulative, so students get all info. Criteria are on-line.

The *Applied Textile master's study programme* meets the Criteria for the Accreditation and External Evaluation of Higher Education Study Programmes. It has demonstrated positive development and progress. Benefits and recommendations for improvement are presented for individual areas of assessment of this report.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Applied Textile* (state code – 621W10009) at Vilnius Art Academy is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	4
3.	Teaching staff	4
4.	Facilities and learning resources	3
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	4
	Total:	21

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

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

3 (good) - the field develops systematically, has distinctive features;

4 (very good) - the field is exceptionally good.

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