

The 'Critical Friend Approach'

An innovative model for external review

MUSIQU
QUALITY ENHANCEMENT



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme



What is MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement?

- An independent European-level subject-specific external evaluation body
- Institutional/programme review/accreditation
- Keywords: subject-specific, international, flexible and focused on enhancement
- Stakeholders model (education + profession)
- Registered on EQAR since June 2016

Some context...

Quality (assurance) in a conservatoire context:

- Eternal quest for excellence and improvement
- What is quality: artistic standards <-> educational quality
- Impact Bologna process: creating confusion?
- Formal/informal cultures: highly individualised education
- Low sense of ownership/interest by students and teachers
- Strong international context
- Internal <-> external: we are performing arts

New approach with the aim to:

1. Link artistic standards with educational quality
2. Balance formal and informal approaches
3. Balance quantitative and qualitative tools
4. Use international perspectives
5. Link internal and external perceptions of quality
6. **ESPECIALLY:** increase ownership and relevance for students and teachers

How to make QA more meaningful?

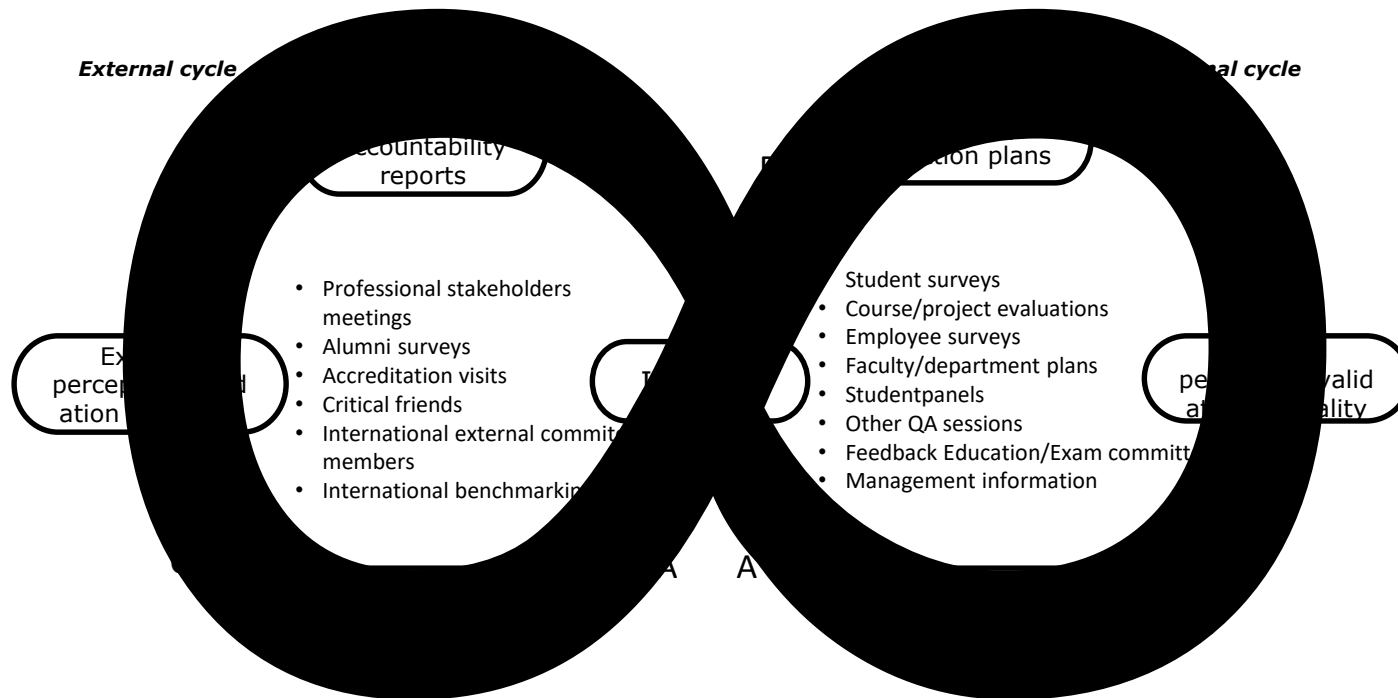
1. Be sensitive to disciplinary diversity (content vs. process, special features)
2. Speak the same language (peers, standards, procedures)
3. Think of new quality assurance tools that make sense to our students and teachers, and help them to engage with quality issues in a positive way

Looking for new review models

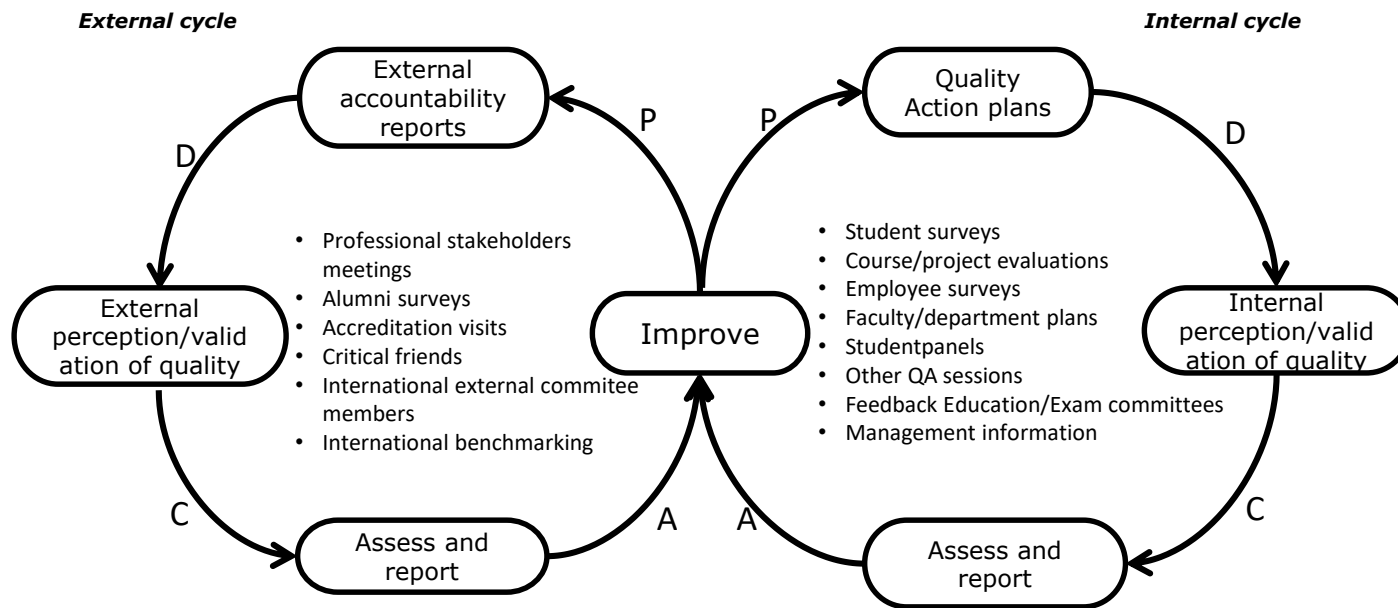
Challenging the 'Classic Review Model' – the 'Critical Friends Approach':

- Visit of 'Critical Friend' at department/section level + one follow-up visit within 6-year period
- Reports 'Critical Friends' + institutional responses form (part of) self-evaluation report
- Prepares and informs ('light weight') 'classic review' every 6 years

Quality Culture at the Royal Conservatoire 'Lemniscate of Continuous Improvement'



Quality Culture at the Royal Conservatoire 'Lemniscate of Continuous Improvement'



Planning Critical Friends						
	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2021/2022	2022/2023
Classical			x			x
Early Music	X			x		
Jazz		X			X	
Vocal		X			X	
Composition		X			X	
Music Teacher			x			x
Sonology	X			x		
Art of Sound	X			x		
Dance			x			x
Planning Semester evaluation						
	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2021/2022	2022/2023
Classical			x			x
Early Music	X			x		
Jazz		X			X	
Vocal		X			X	
Composition		X			X	
Music Teacher			x			x
Sonology	X			x		
Art of Sound	X			x		
Dance			x			x
Planning Professional stakeholders meeting						
	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2021/2022	2022/2023
Classical		x			x	
Early Music		x			x	
Jazz			x			x
Vocal	x			x		
Composition			x			x
Music Teacher				x		
Sonology					x	
Art of Sound			x			x
Dance				x		

The semester evaluation is always combined with and feeds into the visit of the Critical friend

A studentpanel is in place and actively involved in the process

Professional stakeholders meetings are never planned simultaneously with critical friends



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What happens with your feedback?

At various occasions you – students and staff – provide the conservatoire with valuable feedback concerning what goes well and what could be improved. To keep you informed we provide you with this (regularly updated) list showing the suggestions for improvement that have been followed up!

Curriculum

- ☐ The course Preparation for Professional Practice (PPA, Clinical department) has been expanded
- ☐ The Clinical department has increased its B2 3.0 module music program, with special date and live-off sessions, chamber music nights and a new chamber music minor plan.
- ☐ The Vocal Department has employed a new methodical piano teacher for its students on the provision advice of students who have worked with her outside the UK. Other new very successful workshops for the PPT course focusing on PR, finance, administration and marketing for musicians, this teacher has been worked back again this year.
- ☐ The Composition department has restructured the theory course in the Bachelor curriculum.

Education Service Centre

- ☐ At the beginning of this academic year students can generate, monitor and print a report of feedback on their. Students need the kind of treatment for arranging practical offers, such as insurance and housing.

Facilities

- ☐ New storage facilities for cello have been created on the 1st floor.

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**Koninklijk
Conservatorium**

**Royal
Conservatoire**

Hogeschool der Kunsten
Den Haag
University of the Arts
The Hague

What happens with your feedback?

At various occasions you – students and staff – provide the conservatoire with valuable feedback concerning what goes well and what could be improved. To keep you informed we provide you with this (regularly updated) list showing the suggestions for improvement that have been followed up.¹

Curriculum

- ∞ The course Preparation for Professional Practice (B4, Classical department) has been expanded
- ∞ The Classical department has revamped its B2-3 chamber music program, with speed date and kick-off sessions, chamber music nights and a new chamber music minor pilot.
- ∞ The Vocal Department has employed a new methodical drama teacher for B1 students on the positive advice of students who have worked with him outside the KC. After two very successful workshops for the PPP course focussing on PR, finance, administration and marketing for musicians, the teacher has been invited back again this year.
- ∞ The Composition department has restructured the theory courses in the Bachelor curriculum.

Education Service Centre

- ∞ As from the beginning of this academic year students can generate, download and print a Proof of Enrolment on Osiris. Students need this Proof of Enrolment for arranging practical affairs, such as insurance and housing.

Facilities

- ∞ New storage facilities for cellos have been created on the sixth floor.

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If you have any questions or if you want to know more, please contact us! (qualityculture@koncon.nl)

Benefits...

- Personal contact to students and teachers
- Speaks the language of students and teachers
- Looks at both dimensions of quality
- Strongly focused on quality enhancement because of qualified recommendations
- A positive and vibrant dynamic within the department: increased level of ownership
- QA workload evenly divided and QA office takes a central position in the institution
- Links internal and external QA
- International benchmarking possible

So a shift...

- From Quality Assurance -> SHARED QUALITY CULTURE
- From a technocratic approach to Quality Assurance -> A DISCOURSE ON THE CONTENT OF OUR EDUCATION

MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement

Website : www.musique-qe.eu

More information about MusiQuE? Contact us!

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