



# **Report**

**Quality Enhancement Review of the Bachelor and Master of  
Arts in Music Programmes delivered by the**

**Royal Conservatoire Antwerp**

**(Antwerp, Belgium)**



**Site-visit: 13-15 May 2018**

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## Introduction

The Royal Flemish Music Conservatoire Antwerp was founded in 1898 by the Flemish composer and music pedagogue, Peter Benoit. In 1968, the institution moved its premises to the then brand-new deSingel campus, where it is situated to this day. In 1993, the classical music training programme was expanded to encompass jazz and popular music. In 1995, fifteen university colleges in the province of Antwerp were merged, creating the Antwerp University College. The Royal Flemish Music Conservatoire Antwerp (now the Royal Conservatoire, Antwerp or RCA) was included within one department for the dramatic arts, music and dance, together with the Higher Education Institute for Dance and the Herman Teirlinck Institute. After the Structural Decree of 2003, the music programme of RCA was re-formed into a three-year academic bachelor's degree, consisting of 180 study points, and a two-year academic master's degree consisting of 120 study points (Source: *Self-evaluation Report (SER)*, p. 17).

Between 2008 and 2013, RCA also worked under the auspices of RCA Department within the Artesis University College, Antwerp. The arts campus was extended in 2010 with a new building, allowing the drama, dance, music and associated Teaching Qualification programmes to be drawn together in the one location. In 2013, the Artesis University College fused with the Plantijn University College, forming the Artesis Plantijn University College, or "AP". RCA and the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp (KA) became two Schools of Arts within the new AP University College (Source: *SER*, p. 17).

Since 2003, Flanders has developed an (external) quality assurance system of programme evaluations for its University Colleges. Each programme was monitored by an external independent panel. Since 2005, an accreditation was added to the external quality assurance system of programme evaluation. Until 2015, all study programmes of Flemish higher education institutions were evaluated each eight years.

Due to the decree of June 10, 2015, institutions undergo a so called 'extensive institutional review' which is an institutional review extended with an additional assessment that focuses on the conduct exercised on programme evaluation by the institution rather than assessing the actual quality of the programmes.

Since the changes to the quality assurance and accreditation scheme within the Flemish higher education system in 2015, AP University College has been responsible for ensuring the quality of its own study programmes. The College has seized this opportunity to develop a methodology to evaluate the quality of its education, which is in line with its vision and strategy, and is also customised to its programmes (Source: *SER*, p. 17). In consultation with the Quality, Planning and Organisation Service (KPO) and the Board of Education and Research, RCA chose a specific approach in terms of evaluating their study programmes. For the evaluation of these (multi-lingual) artistic courses, the decision was taken to call on external assessors who have international experience of reviewing comparable artistic education programmes (Source: *SER*, p. 17).

RCA took the decision to commission MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement (MusiQuE) to organise a procedure for a Quality Enhancement Review of its Bachelor and Master of Arts in Music. In Flemish higher education it is

customary for students with an academic Bachelor's degree to follow a subsequent Master's programme. MusiQuE coordinated the organisation of the quality enhancement review and carried out the review of the music programmes.

The procedure for the review of the music programmes followed a three-stage process:

- RCA prepared a *Self-evaluation Report (SER)* and supporting documents, based on the *MusiQuE Standards for Programme Review*;
- an international review team composed by MusiQuE studied the *SER* and carried out a site-visit at RCA on 13-14 May 2018. The site-visit comprised of meetings with representatives of RCA management team, teaching and support staff, students, alumni, employers and external stakeholders; and visits to classes and performances. The review team used the *MusiQuE Standards for Programme Review* as the basis of its investigations;
- the review team produced the review report that follows, structured along the *Standards* mentioned above.

The review team consisted of:

- Georg Schulz (Chair), Associate professor at, and former rector of, the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz, Austria
- Jacques Moreau, Director of the Cefedem Auvergne Rhône-Alpes, Centre de formation des enseignants de la musique, Lyon, France
- Hannie Van Veldhoven, Head of jazz and pop at HKU University of the Arts Utrecht, The Netherlands
- Ankna Arockiam (Student member), Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow, Scotland, United Kingdom
- Patrick Van den Bosch (Secretary), Advisor quality assurance at VLUHR KZ, Brussels, Belgium

The review team would like to express its sincere gratitude to the staff of RCA for the excellent organisation of the site-visit and for welcoming the review team as peers in such a hospitable way. The review team hopes that the present report will be beneficial for the continued high quality performance. The review team would like to encourage RCA to make the report available to all stakeholders by circulating it among its staff members and students and by publishing it in an appropriate place on the RCA website.

## Key data on RCA

<b>Name of the institution</b>	Royal Conservatoire Antwerp (RCA)
<b>Legal status</b>	Public institution
<b>Date of creation</b>	1898  In 2013, the Artesis University College merged with the Plantijn University College, forming the Artesis Plantijn University College, or “AP”. RCA became ‘School of Arts’ within the AP University College. (Source: <i>SER</i> , p. 17)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.ap.be/en/royal-conservatoire-antwerp">https://www.ap.be/en/royal-conservatoire-antwerp</a>
<b>Number of students</b>	Numbers for academic year 2016-2017: <sup>1</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Number of students enrolled in the bachelor programme (BA): 202</li><li>· Number of students enrolled in the master programme (MA): 175</li></ul>

## List of reviewed programmes

1. Bachelor of Arts in Music, including: instrumental/vocal studies, theory of music (with 2 options: harmony or composition) and jazz and popular music
2. Master of Arts in Music, including: instrumental/vocal studies, conducting, composition, jazz and popular music

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<sup>1</sup> A detailed overview of the number of students enrolled in each programme was provided to the review team in the annexes of the *SER*.

## **A note on the context and scope of the review report**

The Royal Conservatory of Brussels and RCA jointly commissioned MusiQuE to organise a programme quality enhancement review, and both institutions requested to be reviewed in the same week by the same review team. The objective of the quality enhancement review was to provide both institutions and their programmes with an opportunity to engage in a process of internal reflection on the quality of their educational services and, where relevant, to offer the institutions suggestions for improvement. Moreover, the review aimed to bring fresh ideas and wider perspectives to the Royal Conservatory of Brussels and RCA, encouraging the principle of 'many correct answers' to questions concerning the pursuit of quality in higher music education.

Given the broad scope of the institutional reviews in 2016-2017, MusiQuE agreed that the Royal Conservatory of Brussels and RCA could focus their programme review on the artistic education and not so much on the underlying policy processes. Therefore, not all standards in the present report have the same emphasis.<sup>2</sup> However, since RCA provided the review team with a detailed SER which included sufficient information in relation to each of the standards, the review team was able to make an elaborate analysis for each standard.

The findings of the review team articulated in this report are based on the information provided by RCA in its *SER* and its online appendixes and the information collected in meetings during the site-visit. The review team wishes to express its gratefulness to RCA for the high quality of the documentation and for providing the requested materials to the review team.

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<sup>2</sup> The review team has put more emphasis on standards 1, 2, 3 and 8.

## 1. Programme's goals and context

### Standard 1. The programme goals are clearly stated and reflect the institutional mission.

RCA subscribes to the mission and vision of AP University College under the motto of “unity in diversity”. In consultation with the departments and the Schools of Arts, AP has identified the following policy focus points as priorities: (1) growth of people and the organisation, (2) the institution as the “gateway to the world”, (3) groundbreaking programmes customised to the student, (4) expertise and sharing of information, and (5) partnerships with the profession (Source: *SER*, p. 20).

The School of Arts RCA has adopted the following as its mission: “to train talented students to become professional, creative musicians and performing artists, with a large degree of autonomy and individuality, who are equipped with the professional excellence, know-how and sense of entrepreneurship to take their place in today’s international socio-cultural and artistic framework” (Sources: *SER*, p. 20; *Appendix Beleidsnota Muziek 2016*).

The *SER* informed the review team that the AP focus points are translated into four strategic goals for the music programmes.<sup>3</sup> These strategic goals are realised in operational goals. Each of these is paired with concrete action points, which also deal with timing, responsibility and expected results (Source: *Meeting with the institutional management and programme leaders*). The review team learned that “the didactic concept of the programme is based on four cornerstones, which are strongly interconnected and form the basis of the bachelors and masters courses” (Source: <https://ap-arts.be/en/didactic-concept-music>).

In the meeting with the institutional management and programme leaders, the following seven strong points of the Bachelor (BA) and master (MA) programmes were mentioned, summarising the ambition model:

1. Attracting talented students;
2. Dedicated and specialised artistic team;
3. Present-day programme and highly customised coaching;
4. International focus, standards and network;

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<sup>3</sup> Source: *Appendix Strategic Plan Music*:

- Strategic goal 1: We are known both nationally and abroad as a unique institution for higher arts education, artistic practice, and artistic research, which prioritises artistic achievement and excellence.
- Strategic goal 2: We produce artists/teachers who can take an active role in the current international socio-cultural and artistic frame of reference by creating a stimulating, international environment within the context of a major city.
- Strategic goal 3: We produce excellent bachelor’s, master’s and teaching graduates in the arts by offering programmes which are up-to-the-minute and which focus on the individual development of talent, interdisciplinarity, research and a sense of entrepreneurship, and which meet international standards of quality.
- Strategic goal 4: Our management organisation is highly-functioning, transparent and tailored to the specific circumstances of higher arts education as decreed by the government. It meets the needs of both students and staff.

5. Development of distinct artistic personalities;
6. Unique interdisciplinary campus setting;
7. Strong connection with the artistic profession (Source: *Meeting with institution management and programme leaders*).

Apart from these, the institutional management and programme leaders identified four points where the music programmes are yet to develop to the highest potential:

1. Present day: from transition to consolidation;
2. Anchoring the metropolitan context;
3. Vision on research in the arts;
4. Framework conditions (Source: *Meeting with institution management and programme leaders*).

The adoption of the Decree relating to the re-structuring of Higher Education in Flanders (Structural Decree 2003) marked the start of the Flemish implementation of the Bologna agreement. The old form of the diploma awarded to graduates, candidates and licentiates was replaced by the BA and MA degrees. The uniform educational structure for both university colleges and universities entails a BA study consisting of 180 study points (ECTS) for the awarding of a BA degree. The three-year long professional BA programme culminates in the awarding of a BA degree, while students taking academic BA courses (higher arts education and university courses) can transfer primarily to an academic MA programme consisting of at least 60 study points (ECTS) or one year of study. For music, a MA programme consisting of 120 study points was chosen (Source: *SER*; p. 16).

The programmes' approach to equal opportunities is not part of the institutional vision. The "promotion of adequate attitudes among students and teaching staff in dealing with diversity and in the development of a socio-cultural consciousness" is one of the music programmes' operational goals (Source: *Appendix Beleidsnota Muziek 2016*, p. 18 and <https://www.ap.be/en/ap-dna>). The review team did not find awareness about diversity among staff.

The meetings with different stakeholders, in particular the institutional management and programme leaders, convinced the review team that they are eager to achieve the goals and reach their ambitions. The institutional management and programme leaders are also aware of the extent to which the objectives have been achieved or not. The review team considers the achievement of the ambitions as an ongoing process which is encouraged by the highly committed leadership that the review team witnessed. The review team also came to the conclusion that RCA has a very approachable leadership. While the institutional management is acknowledging the need to change to improve, the review team has found a high capacity for change within the conservatoire.

The stated goals for the BA and MA programmes are relevant and reflect the institutional mission. One of the programme goals, to attract top talent, was discussed with several stakeholders (Source: meeting with students; meeting with teachers; meeting with research coordinators). The review team advises having a programme-wide



discussion on what is meant by 'top talent' to come to a common conclusion. At the moment, stakeholders share a different vision of what top talent is. While some are looking for "potential winners of competitions", others define top talent as broad-minded students. The admission policy should fit to this shared understanding.

One of the current pathways of the BA and MA is 'jazz and popular music'. The review team and the stakeholders agreed that this name does not reflect the content of the curriculum. This pathway clearly focusses on jazz. Therefore, the review team recommends changing the name of this pathway as it currently misleads potential students. Nevertheless, it would be good to consider for the future whether to focus solely on jazz (as a specific genre), or on a more broad perspective of improvised, non-classical-composed music (as a way of teaching and learning).

The review team was surprised that there was no mention of the several other Belgian Conservatoires in the *SER*. It would be beneficial for the conservatoire to benchmark its profile and goals with the other conservatoires. It can further strengthen the profile of the BA and Ma programme and eventually it can even lead to collaborations with the other conservatoires. The latter is rarely the case today.

RCA has a long tradition in music education. In the opinion of the review team, RCA has made a lot of efforts to be qualified for having such an ambitious mission. The review team noted that RCA has formulated an institutional mission, relevant to its context, which is also properly reflected in the goals of the programmes.

When it comes to dealing with diversity, including gender and disabilities, additional steps should be taken to embed these themes in the conservatoire culture.

### Compliance with Standard 1

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 1 as follows:

Programme	Compliance level
Bachelor	Fully compliant
Master	Fully compliant

## 2. Educational processes

### 2.1 The curriculum and its methods of delivery

#### **Standard 2.1. The goals of the programme are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its methods of delivery.**

The Music course is divided into the academic BA and MA programmes. The BA and MA of Arts in Music have both have specialisations / pathways.<sup>4</sup> They follow on from each other immediately, or follow the successful passing of an audition in the case of the MA in conducting. There are other options available to those wanting to enrol in the MA without passing the BA in Music. In that case, the candidate takes the preliminary audition and certain additional conditions have to be fulfilled. Students with a professional BA degree can enter the MA programme by taking a transfer programme. Music transfer programmes count for 45 to 57 study points, and focus on general cultural competencies and teach academic skills. International applicants who have an academic BA degree, but who are deemed at the time of the audition or after comparing study programmes to be lacking in additional competencies which are considered necessary to successfully complete a Flemish MA degree in Music, must take a customised preparatory programme. Within the various MA programmes of study, several options and several forms of MA exam are possible in instrumental/vocal studies and jazz/popular music (Source, *SER*, p. 31).

The review team received detailed descriptions of the curricula of the programmes. Examples of curriculum overviews were provided to the review team in the *SER* and are publicly available on the website (Source: *SER*, p. 32; <https://ap-arts.be/en/royal-conservatoire-antwerp> )

In 2017, the four university colleges for music within Flanders made a new Flemish domain-specific learning results framework for all BA and MA of music programmes. In addition, the programme-specific learning results were adjusted. This was done to make the focus on the international profile of the programme and on the student population, on the close connection with the profession, and on the international artistic and pedagogical level more explicit. (Source: *SER*, p. 35).

In the meeting with the institutional management and programme leaders and in the meeting with teachers, it was explained that all learning objectives from the fixed courses in the programme were examined in detail, rewritten if necessary and linked to the programme-specific learning results. The review team found evidence that the ECTS files are available on the website for all elective courses and that they contain a description of the learning outcomes of each course.

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<sup>4</sup> Bachelor of Arts in Music, (Dutch programme) including: instrumental/vocal studies, theory of music (with 2 options: harmony or composition), and jazz and popular music;  
Master of Arts in Music, (Dutch programme and English programme) including: instrumental/vocal studies, conducting, composition, jazz and popular music

Each study programme is divided into fixed disciplines, which promotes coherence and transparency: the principal subject discipline, the general music training courses, the general cultural training courses, physical awareness and optional courses. The *SER* states that “the implementation of each study programme uses as the point of departure the four cornerstones of the didactic concept, which are devised in symbiosis across the bachelor’s and master’s programmes” (Source: *SER*, p. 40). Students are offered the flexibility to define their own educational path by selecting those elective courses which they believe to be the most relevant for their personal development as young artists. Overall, students expressed to be satisfied with the programme, the content of the courses and the current educational offer (Source: *Meeting with students*).

The programmes offer diversity in its working methods, customised to the nature of higher education in the arts, and dependent on group-size: lectures, seminars, artistic practice, professional placements/learning in the workplace and work outside of lessons consisting of independent study, rehearsals and practice. Artistic practice is the largest part of the study programme, ranging from individual lessons in the student’s principal discipline to group lessons in chamber music, practical harmony and improvisation, combo, choir, and big band, etc. The principal subject study is delivered on a one-to-one basis by a specialised teacher who acts rather as a guide, placing emphasis on the acquisition of musical expertise and the development of the student’s artistic individuality (Sources: *SER*, p. 43; *Meeting with students*, *Meeting with teachers*).

Teachers meet each other every two or three months. They share insights. In the meeting of the review team with teachers, it was said that for example teachers in composition meet more or less every week. Nevertheless, insights on pedagogical issues are not often discussed among the teachers and assessment training is not given (Source: *Meeting with teachers*).

As a good practice in this area, the review team mentions the ‘introduction week’. Holding the joint introduction week for all new RCA students strengthens the co-operation between all programmes in the School of Arts. One week per academic year is designated as a lesson-free week. During this ‘Common Ground’ week, students are coached and helped to realise their own interdisciplinary projects. Both the students and the teachers met by the review team were very positive about this interdisciplinary project (Source: *Meeting with students*, *Meeting with teaching staff*). In addition to establishing artistic collaborative projects, the institution invests in joint theoretical courses. Cultural courses and entrepreneurship are jointly offered to students of music, drama and dance. As well as providing an active means of introducing students from various disciplines to these topics, they offer broad insight into the history and practice of the other disciplines (Source: *SER*, p. 38, *Meeting with students*).

Students met by the review team indicated that they have several performance opportunities to show their artistic progress throughout the year. Students also perform outside RCA, although, this happens rarely (Source: *meeting with students*).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> This will be elaborated under standard 8.

Research is one of the focal points of the BA and MA programme and is given a strong focus in the strategic and operational goals. In the meeting with institutional management and programme leaders, it became very clear to the review team that there is an ambition to embed research in the BA and MA programmes. The establishment of the Antwerp Research Institute for the Arts (ARIA) in 2014-2015 enabled academic co-operation between the University of Antwerp and the Schools of Arts of the Association of Antwerp to become closer. It was specifically empowered to award doctoral degrees in the arts and it forms the bridge between the University, the Schools of Arts and the artistic world. (Source: *SER*, p. 17)

The review team welcomes that learning outcomes statements are properly expressed in the syllabi, and that the Polifonia Dublin Descriptors have been taken into account in their development. The students met by the review team did not convincingly confirm the consistent use of learning outcomes in teaching and assessing of courses by teachers. Therefore, the review team recommends that the programme leaders can guarantee, with the support of the teachers, that the learning outcomes for each course are used as a clear guideline to teach and assess the course.

Students are offered the flexibility to define their own educational path by selecting those elective courses which they believe to be the most relevant for their personal development as young artists. The review team commends the flexibility of the curriculum.

It was clear to the review team that the programme leaders want to encourage interdisciplinarity. The examples above show that the first steps were clearly taken. Yet, this interdisciplinarity can be further enhanced by an increased cooperation between the pathways and their teachers.

Sharing good practices of teaching and learning methods between staff is highly recommended. Teaching staff can learn from each other to bring pedagogical education, entrepreneurial skills and education for research across all courses. As mentioned, there are already different methods of teaching used by the teachers, but these are not shared. These new insights in learning methods can be used in both the BA and MA. This can enhance the creativity of the students especially in the BA programme, which is now still primarily focused on attaining high levels of artistic practice.

The review team commends the work that is already done to bring research into the programme (Source: *Notes on Education - Research in the Music programme*). The review team saw an extensive overview of current research projects.<sup>6</sup> This shows a high level of commitment to research. The review panel can only stimulate the institution to continue and consolidate the steps that are already taken.

As a comment to these important realisations, the review team recommends that programme leaders and research coordinators should better communicate the goals of research in the BA and MA. It is recommended to raise an

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<sup>6</sup> <https://ap-arts.be/en/researchprojects>

increasing awareness about research amongst the teaching staff. Not all students and teachers met by the review team are currently aware that research can be really useful for them. The message that this research 'is not harmful', is currently not communicated enough. The review team suggests that the instrumental teachers should be convinced first. If they understand the added value of incorporating research in the courses, they can encourage their students to embrace research better.

### Compliance with Standard 2.1

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 2.1 as follows:

Programme	Compliance level
Bachelor	Substantially compliant
Master	Substantially compliant

### 2.2 International perspectives

**Standard 2.2. The programme offers a range of opportunities for students to gain an international perspective.**

The international focus of the programme is set out in the mission statement, the vision, the final competencies, and the didactic concept of the institution. All learning objectives and final competencies are drafted with a global focus. They take into account the international nature of the profession, in line with the learning outcomes as defined by the Polifonia working group of the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC) (Source: *SER*, p. 47).

According to the BA and Ma programmes goals, RCA has a high commitment to internationalisation. They want to strengthen their profile by strong incoming and outgoing mobility of teachers and students, and within the context of internationally-focussed collaborations. Recently, RCA has clearly become very active on the international level with its international collaborations.

The RCA mission<sup>7</sup> shows the aim for a strong international orientation. This was emphasised by the institutional management and programme leaders in their meeting with the review team. The *SER* states that the programme creates conscious and critical musicians who can work in an international profession as instrumentalists, singers, teachers, composers, arrangers, conductors or creators, amongst other things. Students strengthen their international competencies in various ways: via internationalisation@home, by incoming and outgoing mobility of teachers and students, and within the context of internationally-focussed collaborations (Source: *SER*, p. 46).

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<sup>7</sup> The mission of the institution is discussed under standard 1.1.

Since the 2017-2018 academic year, RCA has offered a MA of Music taught in English, which reduces the language barrier for non-Dutch speaking incoming students. (Source: *SER*, p. 47). The review team learned from its meeting with the teachers that those teachers who are responsible for the MA of Music taught in English have certified language skills.

Students that were met by the review team acknowledged that all courses of the programmes have a substantial international focus. In addition, the internal jury for public exams is always supplemented by a minimum of one external expert in the principal subject discipline who has professional experience on an international level (Source: *SER*, p. 47).

The institution focuses on a broad offering of masterclasses by top international performers. In the 2014-2017 period, approximately 150 renowned and specialist artists from across the whole world were invited to lead masterclasses. To illustrate this, the review team received a document with an extensive list of partnerships. (Source: *SER*, p. 48; *Overzicht partnerinstellingen*).

The institution's rootedness within, and its partnership with, the International Arts Campus deSingel<sup>8</sup> strengthens the integration of education, research and artistic practice in the international and interdisciplinary artistic landscape. The amenities offered by the infrastructure and the presence of hundreds of international guest-artists and professional ensembles give students and teachers the opportunity to share expertise and collaborate (Sources: *SER*, p. 48; *meeting with teachers*; *meeting with representatives of the profession and alumni*).

Artistic collaborations with international partner institutions and international podia represent special added value in every student's education programme. Students are thus offered a number of international performance opportunities: e.g. BAM-project, Porgy and Bess Terneuzen with Ambrose Akinmusire, Jaffa Jazz Festival Tel Aviv with Adam Nussbaum and Billy Cobham, Academia Belgica Rome, and the Harnos Plural Festival Porto. The institution works together with festivals and privileged partner programmes in music university colleges and universities. In addition, talented students are encouraged to take part in international professional placements and competitions (Source: *SER*, p. 49).

On an international level, the programme is also committed to a number of education development projects within the Erasmus+ programme: METRIC<sup>9</sup>, the European Opera Academy and MUSAE (Source: *SER*, p. 49-50).

In 2017 – 2018 267 students from Belgium, 119 students from EEA member states and 36 students from non- EEA member states are enrolled in the BA and Ma programme (Source: *AP Sharepoint folder on Internationalisation*). In 2012-2013, around 20% of the students in the programme were international and this number grew to almost 40% in 2017-2018 (Source: *SER*, p. 47).

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<sup>8</sup> <https://desingel.be/en>

<sup>9</sup> METRIC: a strategic partnership with a focus on improvisation, in which twelve European education institutions work together with AEC.

Within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme, students can take a part of their study abroad. Likewise, teachers may give lessons or gain training or experience in partner institutions. It is an operational goal of the music programme to focus on stimulating and facilitating the gaining of international experiences.<sup>10</sup> The students met by the review team are satisfied by the way Flemish students and students from abroad coexist with each other. Incoming students are satisfied by the support given to them by RCA: they receive all information needed from the International Office, including information on housing facilities and student life in Antwerp (Source: *Meeting with students*).

The desire to do part of their study abroad is rather low amongst the Flemish students (Source: *Meeting with students*). In the jazz programme, exchanges in Paris, Berlin and Amsterdam are popular amongst students. The teachers met by the review team argued that students do not want to go abroad because the level of their BA and MA programme is so good. There are a lot of possibilities, but the students do not always take them. Although some teachers talk about Erasmus exchanges with their students, teachers acknowledge that they might stimulate students more to go abroad (Source: *meeting with teachers*).

Incoming and outgoing mobility of teachers is currently very limited<sup>11</sup> (Sources: *SER*, p. 49, *meeting with teachers*). Also the teacher's awareness of what happens on the international research level can be strengthened. They might benefit from knowing better what happens on the international level (Source: *meeting with research coordinators*). Recently some initiatives were taken by the institution: together with other European institutions for higher music education and within the framework of the AEC, RCA established the European Platform for Artistic Research in Music (EPARM), and the RCA research co-ordinator is part of the team which leads EPARM. RCA took part in the seventh European research programme<sup>12</sup> and has joined the docARTES doctoral programme. In 2017, RCA hosted the annual EPARM conference (Source: *SER*, p. 50, *meeting with research coordinators*).

The review team recommends that RCA should provide structural support for developing language skills. Teachers are very creative in finding the best solution when they are confronted with language barriers and translations. But more structural support: e.g. providing standardised English musical vocabulary or specialised support for teaching vocabulary would be beneficial.

The review team encourages the programmes to actively explore new approaches to increase the mobility of their students. International students find their way to the BA and MA programme. The Flemish students are more hesitant to go abroad. The review team recommends to increase the amount of outgoing students. The programme leaders and teachers must encourage their students more to participate in international projects. Much more action has to be done in this field. Nevertheless, the review team commends that first efforts have been undertaken. Next to the students, also the teaching staff can be encouraged more to take part in international projects abroad.

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<sup>10</sup> Operational Goal for Music 2.3

<sup>11</sup> Formal outgoing mobility of teachers in 2016-2017: 10; outgoing in 2017-now: 7; incoming in 2016-2017: 4; incoming in 2017-now: 5 (Source, *SER*, p. 49)

<sup>12</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/index\\_en.cfm](https://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/index_en.cfm)

Recently RCA became clearly very active on the international level with its international collaborations. The review team was impressed by the international networks and collaborations that the BA and MA programmes have been able to establish.

## Compliance with Standard 2.2

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 2.2 as follows:

Programme	Compliance level
Bachelor	Substantially compliant
Master	Substantially compliant

## 2.3 Assessment

### Standard 2.3. Assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes.

The review team has seen evidence of appropriate and clearly expressed assessment methods for courses in the programmes' ECTS files. The assessment methods are expressed in the curriculum descriptions in the ECTS files which are publicly available on the institution's website. Students met by the review team were well aware of the forms of assessments used for each course. Some teachers remind students of the assessment methods at the beginning of the course (Source: *Meeting with students*). There is a grading system in place, which expresses results on a scale on 20 points and as percentage points.

Validity, reliability, and transparency are the key values of the institution assessment policy. The review team received the education and exam regulations and the protocol for practical exams. Together with the institution's administrative procedures, they support the institution in its role of ensuring that assessment procedures can be valid, reliable and transparent (Source: *SER*, p. 51, *meeting with teachers*; *meeting with students*). Nevertheless, the students met by the review team find it difficult to determine if the score they receive is objective or not. At times, it is felt by the students that there is a sense of favouritism and that their final score is unfair. This is mostly the case when there is no external jury. Students have the right to appeal if they believe they have been marked unfairly (Source: *meeting with students*).

The BA and MA programme work with several assessors, including external assessors for MA exams. For a growing number of assessments, all public exams and yearly principal subject exams, the assessors make use of a fixed assessment form. These forms are based on clear criteria with a connection to the stipulated learning objectives of the subject. For certain criteria, an additional rubric is drafted, such as for the assessment of research skills in the MA exam (Source: *SER*, p. 53). For this academic year, the section leaders and course leaders are developing



additional feedback templates. Teachers can modify and incorporate these templates into their lessons (Source: *SER*, p. 54).

At the end of the degree, students take a public exam in the principal subject (in the BA course) or a public integrated MA exam (in the MA course). These take place on professional podia within or external to the institution. The integrated MA exam consists of an artistic exam and a paper relating to the student's artistic practice. This allows the student's research competencies to be tested as well. The institution calls on external jury members who are active and hold key positions in the profession for the assessment of public exams. The institution's staff assures the levels achieved in the programme, and each year they draw up a list of jury chairpersons and suitable external jury members, which is subsequently ratified by the Board of the School of Arts. Video recordings are made of all public exams (Source: *SER*, p. 53).

Within the programme, various assessment formats are used, which are complementary and are customised to the learning objectives that are being tested (Source: *SER*, p. 52). The review team learned from the teachers they met that they are convinced that learning outcomes are useful for the assessments. They informed the review team that the institution is constantly reviewing the learning outcomes to keep them up to date. They are convinced that there is always a very logical link between what they teach and assess and the learning outcomes. When teaching and assessment methods change, the learning outcomes will change. (Source: *meeting with teachers*).

The institution ear-marks fixed days for inspection and feedback after each exam period and after the announcement of the results. Students are then given the option to look through their exam documents and evaluation forms or to make an appointment with the relevant teacher or section leader with a view to getting individual feedback. (Source, *SER*, p. 54) Feedback is most of the time informal. Some teachers give a lot of feedback, others do not. Overall, the majority of the students met by the review team are not satisfied with the feedback. It has to be mentioned that the jazz students receive more feedback than other students. They are convinced that this feedback is useful for them and helps a lot to improve (Source: *meeting with students*).

The above elements show that the program leaders are aware that a valid, reliable and transparent assessment system is required. Likewise, these elements show that they have started working on this. However, the meetings of the review team showed that there are still many steps to take.

In general, the review team noticed a lack of awareness on how students perceive subjectivity of (individual) assessments and a lack of structural feedback. There is a gap between the description of assessments in the *SER* and the perceived reality by students and teachers met by the review team. The review team detected an unconscious bias: programme leaders and teachers seem to be not really aware of the problems felt by the students. The latter find things such as assessment policy, transparency and feedback depend on the teachers, but are not part of a uniform policy of the school, whereas programme leaders and the *SER* showed that the institution already did a lot of efforts to guarantee the validity, reliability and transparency of the assessments. The review team recommends engaging students more as partners in the assessment. As an example, the programmes

can focus more on peer assessments by students (Sources: *SER*, p. 51-54; *Meeting with institutional management and programme leaders*, *meeting with teachers*, *meeting with students*).

The review team commends the fact that the learning outcomes of each course are publicly available on the institution's website. The review team recommends that teachers should regularly discuss, and make more use of, learning outcomes. Currently, there is still a lack of communication between teachers. It is important that teaching staff understands what is behind every learning outcome. The review team heard examples of courses taught by different teachers in a different way. The assessments of these courses are the same, but they are corrected by different assessors. The students met by the review team fear that the assessors are not aware of the content taught by the different teachers and complained that this does not work well (Source: *meeting with students*).

The students met by the review team feel that their grades do not always reflect their work and that they are subjected to subjectivity. In this regard, the review team welcomes the fact that the programmes offer external experts the opportunity to take part in assessment panels. It can increase the transparency. In addition, it is the review team's opinion that an external perspective would be beneficial for the assessments of all courses in the BA and MA programme.

The feedback given by teachers is not consistent through all departments. The review team learned that teachers give written feedback upon students' request. The review team recommends that all students receive feedback without explicitly asking for it. A feedback form can be sent to each student.

### **Compliance with Standard 2.3**

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 2.3 as follows:

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Compliance level</b>
Bachelor	Partially compliant
Master	Partially compliant

### 3. Student profiles

#### 3.1 Admission/Entrance qualifications

**Standard 3.1. There are clear criteria for student admission, based on an assessment of their artistic/academic suitability for the programme.**

The review team noticed that the programmes have developed a clear and relevant admission procedure that takes into account governmental regulations and verifies the students' suitability for the programmes in an appropriate manner. This is supported by the student and teachers met by the review team.

The institution uses formal registration, selection and admissions procedures. These are set out in the Education and Exam Regulation and further elaborated on and refined in the Entrance Exam Protocol. Artistic level and quality are key criteria in the selection of candidates/students. The potential for further development of talent is also considered. The programmes operate on a pluralistic basis, which means that the age, background, religion, gender, and disabilities of candidates do not influence the selection procedure. Applications from Flemish as well as foreign students are judged alike. Potential students can appear for an entrance exam for BA or, in case they already have a BA diploma, they can do an entrance exam to start the MA studies (Source, *SER*, p. 58, *meeting with students*).

The review team was informed that in the past, between 80 and 90% of candidates taking the entrance exams were successful. In 2017-2018, the programme became stricter in its demands due to the limited number of places; only 78% of presenting candidates were successful. The review team was provided evidence that there is a growth in the number of foreign students. In 2012-2013, foreign students accounted for a little more than 20% whereas in 2017-2018, almost 40% of the programme's population were international students coming from 43 different countries, with most coming from the European Economic Area (EEA) (Source: *SER*, p.58-60, *appendix Analysis of admission exams 2011 – 2017*).

Candidates can meet their potential teachers talk about taking an audition for RCA. This is done by personal appointment. The candidates can observe some lessons, play pieces for the teacher or, if relevant, take an individual lesson from the teacher.

The review team learned in its meeting with institutional management and programme leaders that they want to attract top talented students by the admission test. Therefore, the programme leaders started with 'young conservatoires'.<sup>13</sup> This year approximately twenty students are enrolled in this programme (Source: *meeting with institutional management and programme leaders*). It has resulted in the creation of a preparatory programme consisting of chamber music, ensemble playing and continuous music theory. On top of that, young, promising musicians who have not yet attained their secondary diploma but who have already achieved the final level offered

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<sup>13</sup> Young conservatoires is a collaborative partnership between RCA, the de!Kunsthumaniora Antwerp and a number of academies for music, word and dance.

by Flemish music schools and academies (DKO) may be admitted to RCA via its procedure for entrance conditions under exceptional circumstance (Source: *SER*, p. 57).

When the admission panel has concerns, the student gets a chance during one year. Students that aren't of the required standard do not often pass. As an example, one of the teachers met by the review team mentioned that also the students who cannot sight read well but have a wonderful voice, can enter RCA. There is always a thorough discussion with the candidate about his or her motivation. The teachers met by the review team admit that they have sometimes candidates who they doubted about, but who became excellent students (Source: *meeting with teachers*).

Candidates have the possibility of meeting the professors with a view to taking an audition for RCA. They can observe some lessons and play some pieces for the teacher. The review team considers this as a good practice.

The review team noticed that teachers have a different vision on what top talent is. The panel recommends that the admission policy would fit to a shared understanding as elaborated under standard 1.

### Compliance with Standard 3.1

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 3.1 as follows:

Programme	Compliance level
Bachelor	Fully compliant
Master	Fully compliant

### 3.2 Student progression, achievement and employability

**Standard 3.2. The programme has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students.**

Each year, the BA and MA programme receive a report from the Quality, Planning and Organisation Service of AP University College. This report contains Flemish benchmark indicators separately for the BA and MA study programmes over the eight previous academic years. The results are analysed and discussed by the teachers. The analyses are then gone through by the Programme Committee Music and with the departmental chairpersons in order to make modifications, if necessary (Sources, *SER*, p. 60; *meeting with teachers*).

The average completion rate for the BA course is approximately 85%. For the MA course, this is 90%. These figures satisfy the pre-determined targets. The completion rate for the BA course is lower than the MA course, because students in BA 1 are given a clear indication of their potential to successfully complete their principal study

programme. This indication gives MA students the confidence that with the required effort and projected evolution, they will reach the academic “finish line” (Source: *SER*, p. 60).

Almost all music graduates of RCA over the last five years have found suitable employment. RCA conducted in October 2017 a survey with high response rate. None of the respondents was at the time of taking the survey totally unemployed. 14% reported that they were looking for part-time work. 34% indicated that they were in full-time employment and 58% were in part-time employment (Sources: *SER*, p. 66).

The survey demonstrated that a significant number of former students had a hybrid career. 38% of respondents reported that they had three or more employment statuses in combination. This means that they are employed in various sectors and, for example, combine a job in (part-time) education with artistic projects. 86% were, on average, active in the artistic sector for more than half of their time, 71% were engaged in teaching and 65% had work experience from abroad (Sources: *SER*, p. 65, *Appendix: Application form for special consideration; Appendix: Complete first-year questionnaire from January 2018; Appendix Complete survey and summary of results from the 2017 alumni survey; Appendix complete survey and summary of results from the 2017 professional survey*).

Over the last years, RCA took initiatives to involve its alumni and the professional field e.g. by participating in juries. These alumni and the professional field can contribute in opening the (international) job market for the students after graduation (Source: *meeting with teachers, meeting with representatives of the profession and alumni*).

Currently, RCA has only an implicit career guidance policy for its alumni. The review team recommends establishing a more explicit career guidance policy: alumni indicated that the programme could prepare them more strongly for the job market (Source: *meeting with students, meeting with representatives of the profession and alumni*). This can be done with, for example, information sessions on self-employed status.

Added to that, it is the review team’s opinion that the programme leaders, together with the representatives of the professional field are recommended to think about broader job possibilities for the graduates. In their meeting with the review team, representatives of the professional field emphasised that programme leaders have to make students aware of new and creative job possibilities. For example, the review team suggests projects like making music for children or the elderly. This requires for teachers to create awareness during the BA and MA programme for these other creative job opportunities.

The review team has been able to verify that programmes have proper mechanisms in place to monitor the progression of students throughout their studies and after their graduation. The review team is very satisfied with the degree to which the programme analyses its results. The programme leaders have a good overview on the progression and achievements of all of their students. The results are used as a tool in the BA and MA internal quality system.

### **Compliance with Standard 3.2**

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 3.2. as follows:

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Compliance level</b>
Bachelor	Fully compliant
Master	Fully compliant

## 4. Teaching staff

### 4.1 Staff qualifications and professional activity

**Standard 4.1. Members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/pedagogues/researchers.**

For the selection of the principal course teachers for classical music, an international screening process is held. New teachers are appointed on short-term, two-year contracts, which makes mutual evaluation and modifications possible (Source: *SER*, p. 69).

The review team learned from the *SER* that candidates who are interested in a vacancy must write a dossier which demonstrates their pedagogical and artistic practice, explains their motivation, specifies their artistic network and their link to the Belgian music profession, and which explains their individual vision towards artistic-pedagogical work. The selected candidates are required to give a public lesson to two students at different levels with different repertoire. This takes place before a broad panel of internal and external (international) artistic and education experts. The principal course teachers for jazz are selected based on their teaching qualities and their artistic personalities, looking also at the complementarity of the teaching team. This aims to ensure a plurality of artistic influences and approaches within the programme. Because there are relatively few jazz musicians who can teach within higher arts education, the formal screening procedure is less relevant, according to the *SER* (Source: *SER*, p. 69).

Every year, AP University College offers an updated package of training possibilities relating to developments in teaching, injury prevention, and social questions. These training packages are not that often used by the BA and MA teaching staff (Sources: *SER*, p. 69; *meeting with teachers*). Since 2017, there is a training package of the School of Arts: an Education Inspiration Day has been held, specifically for teachers and educational support staff within the artistic programmes of AP University College. In 2017, the emphasis was on “Teaching Art with Heart”, and in 2018, the focus is on interdisciplinarity and intercultural issues (Sources: *SER*, p. 70; *Programmes from the 2017 and 2018 Education Inspiration Days*).

As a part of the operational goal to strengthen the nexus between teaching and research (Operational Goal for Music 3.1), research carried out by teachers from the basic Music programme is also a point of focus. This has resulted in an increase in the number of research projects, in which teachers act as an inspiration, a researcher, and supervisor. In 2018, there are 28 research projects in Music running. A number of teachers are currently pursuing or have completed their doctoral studies. Most of the teachers are involved in research groups. The teachers met by the review team expressed that they want to focus on reflective practice-based research. They want to enhance their own and the students’ research-orientated reflective thinking. The research they conduct has to have an added value for a broader audience (Sources: *SER*, p. 70; *meeting with teachers*, *meeting with research coordinators*).

Teachers are engaged in different activities of the institution such as research groups and the organisation of the programmes.

It was obvious to the review team that teachers are also committed to their educational tasks. The teachers met by the review team appeared to be motivated and showed enthusiasm to provide students with the skills and competences required to develop themselves as young professionals.

The visit to the classes showed however that multiple teachers do not seem to teach according contemporary insights in teaching methods. Nonetheless, the review team also saw examples of challenging enriching learning methods that enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

The review team is convinced that the institution has to pay more attention to continuing pedagogical development of the teachers. The review team recommends sharing the good practices of learning methods between staff to embed and foster pedagogical education, entrepreneurial skills and education for research within all subjects.<sup>14</sup> The different methods of teaching could also be shared in research groups. In these groups it can be questioned if current teaching methods foster the students' research attitude. Therefore, RCA has to communicate its expectations of its teachers better by communicating the goals and raising awareness about research amongst the teaching staff.

**Compliance with Standard 4.1**

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 4.1 as follows:

Programme	Compliance level
Bachelor	Substantially compliant
Master	Substantially compliant

**4.2 Size and composition of the teaching staff body**

**Standard 4.2. There are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programme.**

The *SER* states that within the music programme, there are 63 full-time equivalents (FTE) involved in teaching. 50 of these FTE are made up of solely teaching activities and contact hours with students, 9 FTE for the practice and development of the arts, and 4 FTE for the co-ordination and artistic administration of the programme. The 63 FTEs are shared amongst 151 people. Most of these combine their function within RCA with other assignments in the artistic profession. In calculating the volume of teacher-appointments, consideration is given to teachers having the space to be active in the practice and development of the arts. The latter will be discussed under standard 5.2.

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<sup>14</sup> See also standard 2.1.



Both the students and teachers informed the review team that there is sufficient qualified teaching staff for the BA and MA programme.

In line with the recruitment policy of the programmes, applicants for vacant teaching positions are asked to provide both an overview of previous teaching experiences and a list of performing activities. As mentioned under standard 4.1, future teachers, when applying for a vacant position, should also be able to demonstrate their teaching skills.

At the start of each academic year, basic appointments are made which can then be added to at the start of November based on the actual enrolment numbers and the numbers of students per instrument and per teacher. A large number of contract workers are engaged within the Music programmes, which gives sufficient flexibility each year for the composition of the staff. This gives the programmes the possibility to react to both the fluctuation of student numbers and to the actual developments in the profession (Source: *SER*, p. 72).

The review team learned that there is no policy on diversity to attract women or men. It was said by the programme leaders met by the review team that they strictly focus on quality of candidates. (Source: *meeting with institutional management and programme leaders*). Currently, there are 119 men and 32 women. There are 43 professors for principal subject, of which 13 are foreign nationals (Source: *SER*, p. 71).

Teaching staff is involved in discussions on new professional requirements and changes to the curriculum. Teaching staff met by the review team indicated that they have the possibility to discuss the creation of new courses and teaching positions. This can be done in the section meetings for each discipline or section (Source: *Meeting with teachers*).

Both the students and teachers informed the review team that there is sufficient qualified teaching staff for the BA and MA programme. Therefore, also the review team is confident that there are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the BA and MA programme.

RCA has a well-functioning selection procedure for teaching staff. It was clear to the review team that the gender balance is not a point of attention for the institution whereas there is a gender imbalance in the teaching staff body. As mentioned under standard 1, additional steps should be taken to make diversity a topic in the programmes and raise awareness in the conservatory culture.

**Compliance with Standard 4.2**

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 4.2 as follows:

Programme	Compliance level
Bachelor	Fully compliant
Master	Fully compliant

## 5. Facilities, resources and support

### 5.1 Facilities

**Standard 5.1. The institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programme.**

The BA and MA programme are delivered in the International Arts Campus deSingel. The fixed ensembles in residence and the international artistic-cultural programming of deSingel are also involved in the programme, making the arts campus an attractive destination. This partnership stimulates an exchange of talent, art, and knowledge (Sources: *SER*, p. 18; *meeting with institutional management and programme leaders, meeting with representatives from the professional field and alumni*).

During the site-visit, the review team was also offered the opportunity to visit the classes (Source: *Guided tour, visiting classes and exams*). The review team learned from the interviews and the visit of the facilities that they are fit for purpose for the students. This includes IT, computing and other technological facilities. Students met by the review team indicated to be satisfied with the facilities, but they mentioned that at times there is a lack of practicing rooms. Recording facilities are meagre. The programme is therefore holding discussions with one of the co-residents on campus with a view to collaborating on coaching and recordings (Sources: *SER*, p. 77; *meeting with students*).

Physical awareness is given much attention in the programmes. During the visit of classes, the review panel attended also courses dealing with this aspect. The students appreciate these courses.

The programme has a large contemporary instrument collection. Both teachers and students met by the review team were satisfied with it. RCA invests regularly in new instruments (Source: *meeting with teachers; meeting with students*).

All students, teachers and even the wider public have access to the library. The collection of the library is accessible through an online catalogue. According to the *SER*, “the RCA’s library houses more than 650,000 volumes and it is the largest music library in Flanders” (Source: *SER*, p. 76). The library is primarily a higher education library for practical use and study. Due to its particularly rich, diverse and precious heritage collection, it is the top recognised heritage library in Flanders (Sources: *SER*, p. 76; *meeting with representatives of the professional field and alumni*).

The review team commends the interdisciplinary location of the BA and MA. The facilities are appropriate for the delivery of the programmes. The International Arts Campus deSingel offers a lot of opportunities for the BA and MA. The review team recommends solving the current lack of practicing rooms quickly. Using other facilities of AP can be a partial solution to this problem.

Physical awareness is given much attention in the programmes. The review team praises the efforts taken in this area.

### Compliance with Standard 5.1

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 5.1 as follows:

Programme	Compliance level
Bachelor	Fully compliant
Master	Fully compliant

## 5.2 Financial resources

### Standard 5.2. The institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the programme.

The *SER* asserts, “the financing of the music programme is a contentious issue that demands special attention. The programme is funded through injections of working capital (subsidies) from the Flemish Ministry of Education and through the tuition fees paid by students. Distribution of resources is determined by a complex set of parameters, in which student numbers, the value of the study points, the academic results, and the capping of the number of subsidy-eligible students are determining factors, amongst other things” (Source: *SER*, p. 78). The review team learned that RCA receives a fixed working capital. An increase of this capital is only possible in case the working capital for other arts programmes in other Schools of Arts decreases. It is clear to the review team that this is without any doubt a source of tensions between the arts programmes in Flanders (Source: *SER*, p. 78; *meeting with institutional management and programme leaders*).

The *SER* states that “government provides €1.3 million each year for research. These funds are awarded in accordance with the common research policy of both Schools of Arts. Of this, 83% is used for staff costs, and 17% goes towards operating costs and investments. Extra research projects are currently being planned and a sum of €250,000 has been directed towards these in 2018” (Source: *SER*, p. 78).

RCA is embedded in the structure of AP University College and the different programmes have different needs. The review team learned that RCA feels that working inside AP, together with the governmental policy, causes a very complex financial situation: there is a certain financial stability but RCA is still searching for a more structural stability as AP is not always able to follow the financial needs of the conservatoire (Sources: *meeting with institutional management and programme leaders, meeting with teachers*).

The *SER* states, “the Flemish government operates on the assumption that teachers in arts education have a mixed career and that they teach but are also firmly entrenched in the professional world where they have their own ensembles or work with various employees. In order to avoid discussions about taking on too many assignments with possible periods of unavailability or temporary absence, the Flemish government has adopted a significant measure: teachers are free to take on an unlimited number of projects, but their salary as a teacher in arts education is determined by the so-called special salary scale (BSS), which amounts to only 70% of the salary scale which is customarily awarded in other education sectors, such as for school teachers or for part-time music education in music academies” (Source: *SER*, p. 79). The review team learned from the institutional management, the

programme leaders and the teachers that there are currently no other options to pay teachers who devote themselves to music teaching full-time (Sources: *meeting with institutional management and programme leaders, meeting with teachers*).

All in all, the limitation in the salary of teachers can stimulate teachers to continue as professionals in the field. It is the opinion of the review team that this is an interesting starting point. The review team at the same time questions if one can expect that all teaching staff have to be both a team member and an excellent performer that also works externally. It is not obvious to combine teaching (and more) for the institution and to be at the same time active as an excellent performer in the professional field over a longer period of time.

The review team recommends paying special attention to the salary of the contractual teachers. It is the panels' opinion they should have better salary conditions. Teachers told the review team that there is tension in finding teachers who are top, active in the professional field and willing to teach for the salary. For some vacancies, the remuneration discourages certain international teachers to apply (Source: *meeting with teachers*). The review team recommends enhancing RCA's competitiveness in seeking the best teaching staff by offering the best possible conditions.

The review team felt reassured that the financial situation is sufficient for sustaining the programmes' current educational activities. Given the continuous financial support which RCA has received, the review team has no particular reason to assume that the government would cut its financial support for RCA in the near future.

Nevertheless, the financial situation of RCA can be considered as one of its biggest threats, although in the BA programme the programme management tried to attenuate the financial problems by organising more group lessons so that less teachers are needed. The review team commends the intelligent use of available resources by the programmes. The review team encourages the BA and MA programme leaders to keep on addressing this issue on the level of AP and within VLHORA and VLUHR.

## Compliance with Standard 5.2

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 5.2 as follows:

Programme	Compliance level
Bachelor	Substantially compliant
Master	Substantially compliant

### 5.3 Support staff

#### **Standard 5.3. The programme has sufficient qualified support staff.**

The *SER* states that in the programmes “there are 23 FTEs within RCA who take care of general co-ordination and administration, production and administrative support services, and research. In terms of people, this represents a total of 27 staff members made up of 10 men and 17 women” (Source: *SER*, p. 80). Students expressed to feel well supported by the programme’s administrative services (Source: *Meeting with students*). The panel commends the provided student support.

The review team has the overall impression that there is sufficient support staff to adequately support the teaching and learning activities. Although the review team had the opportunity to talk only to a limited amount of support staff, they appeared to be very well informed and aware of all aspects of the management and delivery of the programmes.

A training package is provided by the general services of AP University College, for both teaching and administrative staff (Source: *SER*, p. 33). In addition, individual requests from support staff are taken into account, based on the financial possibilities (Source: *meeting with institutional management and programme leaders*).

The review team learned that RCA wants to establish an active professionalisation policy for its administrative staff. This is one the operational goals of the BA and MA programme (Source: *SER*, p. 81).

It was obvious to the review team that the support staff members are dedicated and efficient professionals who are one of the driving forces behind the programmes. The review team encourages the programme leaders to operationalise an active professionalisation policy for its administrative staff soon.

#### **Compliance with Standard 5.3**

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 5.3 as follows:

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Compliance level</b>
Bachelor	Fully compliant
Master	Fully compliant

## 6. Communication, organisation and decision-making

### 6.1 Internal communication process

#### **Standard 6.1. Effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the programme.**

Communication with students about programme content and organisation takes place via different channels. There are the web platforms DigitAP and MyArts along with email. The review team learned that daily practical communication between students and staff takes place primarily on a personal basis via email. All students and teachers have also an individual pigeonhole. In addition, there is a monthly digital newsletter, the paper calendar and the calendar function on the website. These inform the students about the artistic activities of RCA and of the Music programme in particular. Social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram form a means of continually reporting on the happenings of the campus. In case of official announcements, the communication is done in Dutch and English. Students witness that RCA has different communication tools to communicate to the students (Sources: *SER*, p. 85-86; *Meeting with students*).

Each week, RCA sends out an internal digital newsletter to staff: MEMO. This newsletter keeps staff up to date with decisions and current issues in RCA. This channel of communication was created to reduce the number of emails. Communication with external staff members who are involved in giving lectures or sitting on juries works on a personal basis. Nevertheless programme leaders noticed that not all teaching staff read MEMO and their emails thoroughly. This caused confusion and inadequate follow-up in the past (Sources: *SER*, p. 85-86; Appendices with *Overview of internal communication channels*, *Meeting with institutional management and programme leaders*, *Meeting with students*; *Meeting with teachers*).

The students met by the review team have a rather good communication with their teachers for their one-to-one tuition. For those courses where teachers have to cooperate with each other, there is - according to the students met by the review team - still a lack of communication between them. (Source: *Meeting with students*).

The representatives of the profession and alumni met by the review team describe RCA as 'a very open house'. They feel a strong interest from RCA to be informed by them. Most of the times, this works in a very informal way as it is mostly based on personal ties between teachers and alumni or representatives of the profession (Source: *Meeting with representatives of the profession and alumni*).

A lack of full clarity in the internal communication is mentioned in the *SER*, including improvement measures that will be taken by RCA (Source: *SER*, p. 86).

The programme leaders put in a lot of effort to enhance the internal communication. Nevertheless, the review team noticed that the mechanisms for internal communication could be more effective.

The review team was pleased to see that there is this good regular interaction between teachers and students. Students easily dare to contact teachers and feel save to ask questions. Students met by the review team explicitly mentioned the personalised student guidance by their main teacher. The review team finds this strong cooperation

between students and staff and between students commendable. A prerequisite for programmes where there is a strong connection between students and their teachers, is that in case of conflicts between them, students are aware of the designated services of the programme or the conservatoire where they can go to. The review team found evidence that students are aware of the existing students' services.

It was clear to the review team that the students demand a much better communication. The tools, such as web platforms and the individual pigeonhole, provided by RCA are not sufficient (Source: *Meeting with students*). More and better communication from and between teachers is absolutely a need of the students met by the review team, especially the communication between those teachers who are responsible for the same courses. The review team recommends the teachers to communicate better amongst colleagues.

Based on the meetings of the review team with teachers and with students, the review team concludes that the communication between the different departments is rather poor. The effects are noticeable throughout the curriculum of the BA and MA programme: students mention some overlap in courses and transparency issues; the lack of sharing good practices on the use of different learning methods; the lack of awareness on the ongoing research at RCA; the notion of top talent. Clarity in communication amongst teachers is so important that the review team urges RCA to consolidate their policy on different issues.

The review team is convinced that many problems of communication could be solved if the students' representation would be stronger. A stronger student representation would make it possible that the BA and MA programme leaders are much more and earlier informed in case of miscommunication. The review teams points to AEC documents on strengthening the student representation.<sup>15</sup>

The review team commends that the programme leaders are largely aware of these problems. The programme leaders have a strong vision on how to enhance communication. Improvement measures are already taken in some areas, but will take some time to consolidate.

### Compliance with Standard 6.1

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 6.1 as follows:

Programme	Compliance level
Bachelor	Partially compliant
Master	Partially compliant

<sup>15</sup> This will be discussed under standard 6.2.

## 6.2 Organisational structure and decision-making processes

### **Standard 6.2 The programme is supported by an appropriate organisational structure and decision-making processes.**

The review team studied an organigram of RCA's institutional structure in the *SER*, and saw evidence of clear organisational and decision-making structures. The University College Board of AP has full authority and manages the institution. The Dean of the School of Arts leads RCA. The heads of the two Schools of Arts and the heads of the four departments with professional BA courses participate in policy formulation via AP University College's direction team. The board of the School of Arts governs RCA. This board has the authority to make decisions about education and research policy, internal organisation, the format of staff training, the budget and the financial annual report of RCA within the limits set out by the institution's management body. The board consists of four members who are nominated by the management body, three members nominated by the University of Antwerp, and two students who are referred by the student council of the School of Arts. The Management Team RCA is the internal consultation body that the Dean of the School of Arts advises on day-to-day management issues. The board consists of the Dean, the programme heads, the co-ordinator of research and social services, the co-ordinator of artistic planning and production and the head of administration and organisation. Where appropriate for the agenda items in question, employees from production, administration, communication, research, study programme counselling, and internationalisation regularly attend the meetings of the RCA board (Sources: *SER*, p. 83; *Appendix Organigram RCA and AP; Meeting with institutional management and programme leaders*).

The artistic policy of RCA is formulated by the Artistic Directors of the various programmes.<sup>16</sup> For each discipline or section within the Classical Music programme, there is a Section Leader. This team of co-ordinating teachers gets its authority from the Artistic Staff of Music. They meet monthly and also maintain daily informal contact. The Section Leaders assist the Artistic Staff of Music in the day-to-day management of the programme and take initiatives for their department, within the outlines specified by the Artistic Staff of Music (Sources: *SER*, p. 84; *Appendix Organigram RCA and AP; Meeting with institutional management and programme leaders*).

Students, met by the review team, explained that the music students are formally organised in an active student council. The current student representation consists of only two persons. These students mention that a lot of other students are *de facto* involved. The review team learned from the students' representatives they met that the music department is the weakest department of AP when it comes to student representation. The review team heard many examples proving that the students are trying to make the student body council work (Source: *Meeting with students*).

It was obvious to the review team that the BA and MA programme have close connections to the music industry and the world of work. As mentioned under standard 6.1, alumni and the professional field perceive RCA as 'an

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<sup>16</sup> The RCA Artistic Staff supervise the artistic administration of the programmes and together they make up the artistic think-tank of RCA. They meet approximately eight times per year.



open house'. They feel comfortable to make suggestions about the programmes. Each year, twenty representatives from the profession and alumni meet in the Artistic Advisory Council of Music to give advice on the development of the internationally focussed artistic-pedagogical vision of RCA (Sources: *SER*, p. 84; *Meeting with representatives of the profession and alumni*).

It was clear to the review team that the programmes are supported by formalised and appropriate organisational and decision-making structures. The programmes appear to be managed efficiently. Nevertheless, as mentioned under standard 6.1, it is recommendable that the communication between teachers could be enhanced. Teachers can learn from others teachers in the discipline.

Students have to find out themselves how the student body council works. The review team recommends encouraging and supporting the student representation more. Therefore, the review team recommends RCA to support the student body council professionally. The student body council can be more connected to the students. This will help enhancing the quality culture of the programme.<sup>17</sup>

### Compliance with Standard 6.2

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 6.2 as follows:

Programme	Compliance level
Bachelor	Fully compliant
Master	Fully compliant

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<sup>17</sup> A helpful resource about student representation is the handbook *Increasing Student Voice in HME Institutions. Tips and Guidelines from the AEC Student WG*, published by the AEC. The handbook is available through the publication section of the AEC's website ([www.aec-music.eu](http://www.aec-music.eu)).

## 7. Internal quality culture

### Standard 7. The programme has in place effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures.

The *SER* states that there is an internal quality assurance system in place, which seeks “to permanently focus on this follow-up cycle for improvement measures” (Source: *SER*, p. 89). The programmes collect information through student, teaching staff alumni and profession surveys.

The review team was provided with the questionnaires designed to gather stakeholders’ feedback on their satisfaction with the educational process (Source: *Appendix: Examples of Questionnaires, surveys and feedback of IQC*). These questionnaires enable the BA and MA programme to look closely where improvement measures are desirable. All stakeholders met by the review team are positive about the questionnaires, although the students met by the review team are in favour of more structural feedback on how the programmes deal with their feedback. This would make them feel involved in the internal quality assurance system. The surveys are supplemented by focus group discussions for each department, which allows according to the *SER* “students to evaluate both the less popular courses and the organisation of the programme as a whole” (Source: *SER*, p. 89).

The review team determined that the BA and MA programme have effective quality enhancement in place. Many stakeholders are involved and the follow-up of improvement measures is guaranteed. The review team detected some loose ends in the quality assurance system: feedback on what is done with the results of the survey can be communicated better to the different stakeholders. RCA made an internal quality assurance improvement plan. This plan unites the improvement measures taken by RCA. The review team received this plan and is optimistic about the operational development of this plan (Source: *Appendix: Internal quality assurance improvement plan*).

As described in standard 6, the communication and professional interaction between teaching staff is an area for improvement. The review team recommends including this into RCA’s internal quality assurance system.

### Compliance with Standard 7

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 7 as follows:

Programme	Compliance level
Bachelor	Fully compliant
Master	Fully compliant

## 8. Public interaction

### 8.1 Cultural, artistic and educational contexts

#### Standard 8.1. The programme engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts.

According to the *SER*, RCA has “structural collaborative links and partnerships with institutions for artistic education, research in the arts and artistic practice” (Source: *SER*, p. 92). The *SER* mentions many structural links and partnerships. The representatives of the profession met by the review team confirmed the existence of these partnerships. As mentioned under several previous standards, these representatives are positive about RCA’s attitude towards their initiatives, but they would like RCA to take more structural initiatives. The review team saw evidence of many events in partnership with RCA (Sources: *Meeting with representatives of the profession and alumni; Overview of events with cultural, artistic and educational contexts (2016-2017)*).

The students and alumni, met by the review team, do not feel prepared enough by the BA and MA programme to advance society through the use of their knowledge and skills. They feel prepared to become a very good musician, but not someone who is an actor in society (Sources: *Meeting with students, meeting with representatives of the profession and alumni*). “The increased international and intercultural population represents added value for the institution, but it also represents an additional challenge”, the *SER* mentions (Source: *SER*, p. 29). The research coordinators informed the review team that they are researching this issue in the context of the InArtes project.

It is clear to the review team that the BA and MA programme engage within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts. The review team commends initiatives such as ‘everyone composer’ where children learn to compose under guidance of RCA teaching staff.

When it comes to preparing students for their role and their contribution in society, RCA has still a way to go. Sectors and target groups such as the amateur sector, migrants, children and elderly look not fully developed yet. The latter is already mentioned under standard 3.2. Although the review team is satisfied to see that RCA does research on this topic (InArtes), the review team recommends RCA should appeal to its inventiveness to educate its students to requirements of the current and future society. The review team recommends using the diversity of the city of Antwerp in all its aspects more as a tool for student in the BA and Ma programme.

#### Compliance with Standard 8.1

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 8.1 as follows:

Programme	Compliance level
Bachelor	Substantially compliant
Master	Substantially compliant

## 8.2 Interaction with the artistic professions

### Standard 8.2. The programme actively promotes links with various sectors of the music and other artistic professions.

As already mentioned under previous standards, the BA and MA programme of RCA have continual and intense discussions with the profession. The programmes monitor the changing demands of the music industry through the feedback mechanisms for employers described under standard 7. In addition, employers are invited to participate in the Artistic Advisory Council. The review team was informed by the programme leaders that based on their feedback, adjustments are made to the programme on a regular basis.

It is the explicit wish of the programme leaders to focus on expanding the number of professional placements to ensure that all students achieve a work-experience during their studies (Source: *Meeting with institutional management and programme leaders*). Currently, collaborative projects are in place with partners from the profession which are mostly much appreciated by the students and teachers met by the review team (Sources: *meeting with students, meeting with teachers*).

The BA and MA programme does not have an active policy in stimulating lifelong learning opportunities for its students and alumni. This was confirmed by students and alumni met by the review team. The programme leaders take action to attract alumni, for instance as part time teachers. Those alumni are also invited to RCA's public performances; nevertheless there is no active structured policy in place.

The programme promotes links with various actors of the music and other professions. The review team recommends doing this in a more active and structured way. The review team believes that there are still opportunities to increase synergies with the profession, by further diversifying the nature of the links with the artistic scene as already mentioned under standard 8.1. Added to that, the interaction with the other Belgian conservatories can be increased as mentioned under standard 3.1.

### Compliance with Standard 8.2

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 8.2 as follows:

Programme	Compliance level
Bachelor	Substantially compliant
Master	Substantially compliant

### 8.3 Information provided to the public

#### **Standard 8.3 Information provided to the public about the programme is clear, consistent and accurate.**

The review team noted that the RCA website contains a lot of information about the programme in Dutch and in English. The public can find detailed information about every course, including its learning outcomes, teaching and assessments methods on the website.

The review team commends that a lot of information is available online in Dutch and English. Potential students, students, alumni and the wider public can find clear, consistent, accurate and detailed information on the RCA website.

#### **Compliance with Standard 8.3**

The review team concludes that the programmes comply with Standard 8.3 as follows:

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Compliance level</b>
Bachelor	Fully compliant
Master	Fully compliant

## Summary of the compliance with the Standards and recommendations

The review team concludes that the RCA programmes comply with the *Standards for Programme Review* as follows:

1. Programme's goals and context	
<b>Standard 1.</b> The programme goals are clearly stated and reflect the institutional mission.	<b>Fully compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Make clear what 'attracting top talent' means for the programmes.</li> <li>· Adjust the name of the 'Jazz and popular music' pathway. Currently, the name does not match with the content.<sup>18</sup> Consider for the future whether to focus solely on jazz (as a specific genre), or on a more broad perspective of improvised, non-classical-composed music (as a way of teaching and learning).</li> <li>· Establish collaboration with other conservatoires in Belgium.</li> <li>· Increase awareness on diversity.</li> </ul>	
2. Educational processes	
<b>Standard 2.1.</b> The goals of the programme are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its methods of delivery.	<b>Substantially compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Make more consistent use of the learning outcomes. Discuss these regularly with all teaching staff.</li> <li>· Share good practices of teaching and learning methods.</li> <li>· Enhance creativity of students in the BA.</li> <li>· Enhance interdisciplinarity in the whole BA and MA programme.</li> <li>· Enhance the research attitude of all teaching staff and students.</li> </ul>	
<b>Standard 2.2.</b> The programme offers a range of opportunities for students to gain an international perspective.	<b>Substantially compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Provide structural support for developing language skills.</li> <li>· Increase the mobility of students (and teaching staff).</li> </ul>	
<b>Standard 2.3.</b> Assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes.	<b>Partially compliant</b>

<sup>18</sup> In its response to the draft report, RCA indicated that this can only be changed on a political level.

<b>Recommendations</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Use the learning outcomes in all assessments.</li> <li>· Make students partners in the assessments.</li> <li>· Communicate better about using learning outcomes in the assessments.</li> <li>· Increase the external perspective in all assessments.</li> <li>· Assure that all teachers give feedback to students.</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Student profiles</b>	
<b>Standard 3.1.</b> There are clear criteria for student admission, based on an assessment of their artistic/academic suitability for the programme.	<b>Fully compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	
· /	
<b>Standard 3.2.</b> The programme has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students.	<b>Fully compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Establish an explicit career guidance policy for alumni.</li> <li>· Reflect on broader job opportunities.</li> </ul>	
<b>4. Teaching staff</b>	
<b>Standard 4.1.</b> Members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/pedagogues/ researchers.	<b>Substantially compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Share good practices amongst the teaching staff on research, learning methods, assessment etc. Raise awareness about these topics.</li> </ul>	
<b>Standard 4.2.</b> There are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programme.	<b>Fully compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	
· /	

5. Facilities, resources and support	
<b>Standard 5.1.</b> The institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programme.	<b>Fully compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Solve the lack of practicing rooms.</li> </ul>	
<b>Standard 5.2.</b> The institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the programme.	<b>Substantially compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The lack of finances is a threat for the programmes. Keep on addressing this issue.</li> <li>· Enhance RCA's competitiveness in seeking the best teaching staff by offering the best possible conditions.</li> </ul>	
<b>Standard 5.3.</b> The programme has sufficient qualified support staff.	<b>Fully compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· /</li> </ul>	
6. Communication, organisation and decision-making	
<b>Standard 6.1.</b> Effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the programme.	<b>Partially compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Enhance the internal communication.</li> <li>· Stimulate communication between teachers.</li> </ul>	
<b>Standard 6.2</b> The programme is supported by an appropriate organisational structure and decision-making processes.	<b>Fully compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Support the student body council professionally.</li> </ul>	



<b>7. Internal quality culture</b>	
<b>Standard 7.</b> The programme has in place effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures.	<b>Fully compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> · /	
<b>8. Public interaction</b>	
<b>Standard 8.1.</b> The programme engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts.	<b>Substantially compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> · Prepare students better for the societal role of the musician. · Make use of the diversity of the city of Antwerp.	
<b>Standard 8.2.</b> The programme actively promotes links with various sectors of the music and other artistic professions.	<b>Substantially compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> · Promote links with various sectors of the music and other artistic professions more actively.	
<b>Standard 8.3.</b> Information provided to the public about the programme is clear, consistent and accurate.	<b>Fully compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> · /	

## Conclusion

The RCA music programmes succeed in delivering students that become good musicians. The review team witnessed that RCA graduated musicians are of a very good quality. The artistic practice that is pursued, deserves respect and trust. Preparing students better for their societal role as musicians would enhance their education even more.

The programme leaders are doing a lot of effort to establish an exemplary quality culture and are eager to achieve their ambitious goals. Among other things, they want to attract top talented students and provide them with a present-day programme and highly customized coaching. They want to have an international focus, standards and network and a strong connection with the artistic profession. The quality of the BA and MA programmes has shown significant growth in different areas over the past few years. The review team is confident that they will be able to achieve their intended goals within a few years. In addition the review team advises raising awareness of diversity as a quality factor and using the excellent possibilities for interdisciplinary artistic projects in RCA more structural.

A recurring issue is the interaction and awareness of all teachers in the programme to fully contribute to the BA and MA goals. The review team recommends the programme management to encourage the teaching staff to talk more with each other and to professionalise their courses when it comes to the achievement of learning outcomes, the embedding of research and entrepreneurial skills in all courses and to the providing of profession feedback.

The programme leaders have evidently taken highly commendable efforts towards embedding research in the curriculum. A next step is to make all teachers and students involved in this. The review team wants to recommend that research becomes an inherent part of each course of the master programme.

## Annex 1. Site-visit schedule

### Sunday 13 May - Arrival and preparation

Time	Session	Names and functions of participants from the visited institution	Venue
<i>From 14:30 onwards</i>	<i>Arrival of Review Team members</i>		
18:00-20:00	<b>Preparatory meeting of the Review Team</b>	[The preparatory meeting will take place in the 'Regent Lounge' of Hotel Ramada.]	Hotel Ramada
20:00	Review Team working dinner		Hotel Ramada

### Monday 14 May - Full day site-visit

Time	Session	Names and functions of participants from the visited institution	Venue
09:00-10:45	<b>Review Team meeting</b>	[The meeting room is located on the ground floor.]	Meeting Room RCA
10:45-11:00	Break		Meeting room RCA
11:00-12:30	<b>Meeting 1: official welcome and meeting with the institutional management and programme leaders (Bachelor and Master Music)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Stefaan De Ruyck, Dean School of Arts</li> <li>· Inge Simoens, Head of Music, Coordination international projects Classical Music</li> </ul>	Meeting room RCA

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Els Smedts, Head of department jazz, Coordination International policy Jazz</li> <li>· Justus Grimm, Artistic Director Music, cello</li> <li>· Alain Craens, Artistic Director Music, composer</li> <li>· Nadia Franck, Head of Organization &amp; Administration</li> <li>· Charlotte Saelemakers, Educational development and student counsellor</li> <li>· Sonja Spee, Quality Assurance Art programmes AP</li> <li>· Kevin Voets, Research Coordinator RCA</li> </ul>	
12:30-12:45	<b>Review Team meeting: Review Team members share conclusions with Secretary</b>		Meeting room RCA
12:45-13:30	Lunch		Meeting room RCA
13:30-14:15	<b>Meeting 2: guided tour, visiting classes and exams (parallel) (Bachelor and Master Music)</b>	[A list of classes which can be visited by the review team has been made available.]	RCA
14:15-14:30	Break		Meeting room RCA
14:30-15:45	<b>Meeting 3: meeting with students (Bachelor and Master Music)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Mireia Carreras Llorca (Violin Master 2 + piano Bachelor 3)</li> <li>· Adam Clarke (Composition M2)</li> <li>· Dries Meerts (Sax B3, active in Student Council RCA, student representative in Programme Committee, Student Council AP)</li> <li>· Jasper Charlet (Composition + bassoon B3+ M1(part1))</li> <li>· Pieter-Jan De Smet (Cello M1 - part 1)</li> <li>· Mikko Pablo (Cello M2)</li> </ul>	Meeting room RCA

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Robin Elsmoortel (Guitar B3 jazz)</li> <li>· Joseph Nowell (pianist M1 jazz)</li> <li>· Arne Torfs (Guitar B1/2)</li> <li>· Nina Basdras (Vocal studies Master preparatory programme)</li> </ul>	
15:45-16:00	<b>Review Team meeting: Review Team members share conclusions with Secretary</b>		Meeting room RCA
16:00-16:15	Break		Meeting room RCA
16:15-17:30	<b>Meeting 4: meeting with teachers (Bachelor and Master Music)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Jeroen Malaise, Teacher Arts Entrepreneurship (MA) and Creative Project (MA), Project InArtes</li> <li>· Mathias Coppens, Teacher Analysis (MA), Composition (BA + MA), Advanced Musicianship Piano (MA), literature study Piano (BA), interdisciplinary Project (BA + MA), Creative Project (MA), project ledereen Componist and project Common Ground</li> <li>· Paul Dinneweth, Teacher Eartraining (BA) and Practical Harmony &amp; improvisation (BA &amp; MA), Projects InArtes and Metric</li> <li>· Wim Henderickx, Professor Composition (BA &amp; MA) and Teacher Analysis (MA), project ledereen Componist</li> <li>· Nick Thys, Professor jazz bass, Teacher Ensemble, Combo &amp; Harmony and analysis (BA &amp; MA)</li> <li>· Eliane Rodrigues, Professor Piano (BA &amp; MA), member of the Programme committee</li> <li>· Leo De Neve, Professor viola (BA &amp; MA) and Section head of the lower strings</li> <li>· Hendrik Braeckman, Professor jazz guitar (BA &amp; MA), Teacher combo (BA &amp; MA), practical harmony &amp; improvisation (BA),</li> </ul>	Meeting room RCA

		<p>Advanced musicianship guitar (MA) - combines jazz &amp; classical subjects, member of the Programme committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Luc Anthonis, Professor Choir conducting (MA), Teacher (Chamber) Choir (BA &amp; MA), Section head Conducting &amp; Vocal section, member of the Programme committee</li> <li>· Ivo Hadermann, Teacher Brass chamber music (BA &amp; MA) and Transposition (BA), Section head Brass</li> <li>· Koen Wilmaers, Teacher Percussion, chamber music percussion, literature study percussion (BA &amp; MA), Section head Percussion &amp; marimba</li> <li>· Aäron Wajnberg, Accompanist mainly in vocal section (BA &amp; MA), Teacher piano subsidiary course (mainly BA), Section head key instruments and accompaniment</li> </ul>	
17:30-18:30	<b>Review team meeting</b>		Meeting room RCA
18:30-20:00u	Dinner		Grand Café De Singel
20:00-21:00	Concert	<p>Singers night Jazz: The students of the vocal programme Jazz bring a mix of traditional, modern and their own repertoire, both solo and in ensemble. Arrangements of the music of David Bowie will also be brought. To celebrate the 25th anniversary of the jazz department, also alumni of the vocal programme are invited for this edition of the Singers Night.</p>	Theaterstudio De Singel

Tuesday 15 May - Full day site-visit

Time	Session	Names and functions of participants from the visited institution	Venue
09:00-10:00	Review Team meeting		Meeting room RCA
10:00-11:00	<b>Meeting 5: meeting with representatives of the profession and alumni (Bachelor and Master Music)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Guido Spruyt (Manager Music Department Opera Ballet Vlaanderen)</li> <li>· Bertrand Flamang (Director Jazz Middelheim festival)</li> <li>· Jerry Aerts (Artistic Director International Arts centre deSingel)</li> <li>· Dirk Proost (Co-founder of Champ d'Action, ensemble of Contemporary Music, Antwerp. Teacher of Oboe and Contemporary Music + Free Music and Community Music at The Music Academy of Lier and at the AP University College, involved in Young Conservatoire Project)</li> <li>· Koenraad De Meulder (European Choral Association / Director Koor &amp; Stem)</li> <li>· Koen Maes (General Manager Brussels Jazz Orchestra)</li> <li>· Tjil Bossuyt (Director De Veerman - art-educational projects)</li> <li>· Naomi Beeldens (Alumnus voice, active in music theatre, contemporary music and experimental art)</li> <li>· Michiel De Langhe (Alumnus orchestra conducting, active as conductor &amp; as guest teacher at RCA)</li> <li>· Wout Goris (Alumnus Jazz piano, active as jazz pianist, composer and teacher, also in RCA)</li> </ul>	Meeting room RCA

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Hélène Elst (Alumnus bassoon &amp; contrabassoon, active as player, researcher, teacher, special interest in interdisciplinary improvisation)</li> <li>· Johannes Dewilde (alumnus choir conducting)</li> </ul>	
11:00-11:15	<b>Review Team meeting: Review Team members share conclusions with Secretary</b>		Meeting room RCA
11:15-11:30	Break		Meeting room RCA
11:30-11:45	Performance Brass Ensemble		Entrance Hall
11:45-12:30	<b>Meeting 6: guided tour, visiting classes and exams (parallel) (Bachelor and Master Music)</b>	[A list of classes which can be visited by the review team has been made available.]	RCA
12:30-13:30	Lunch		Meeting room RCA



13:30-14:30	<b>Meeting 7: meeting with research coordinators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Lies Colman (section leader General Courses and General Musical Training)</li> <li>· Yves Senden (Course leader master papers Classical Music MA, academical tutor MA, doctor in Music -graduated at RCA, also Teacher BA &amp; MA of analysis, Practical harmony &amp; improvisation, Philosophy of Music), active in Metric Project</li> <li>· Chris Mentens (Teacher jazz research &amp; Jazz Music History tutor (BA), Academical Tutor master papers jazz (MA)</li> <li>· Frank Agsteribbe (Chair Research Council, also Teacher of Analysis (BA), piano literature (BA), conductor contemporary Music Ensemble RCA (BA &amp; MA), Chamber music historically informed practice BA &amp; MA)</li> <li>· Stephan Weytjens (Teacher research BA, also Course leader Music history classical music and Harmony BA, Teacher analysis BA, doctor in musicology)</li> <li>· Korneel Bernolet (PhD-Student at RCA, academical tutor, also Professor Harpsichord and Teacher practical Harmony &amp; Improvisation)</li> <li>· Ine Vanoeveren (researcher, chairperson research group Creation, research project on Common Ground, background classical and contemporary music)</li> </ul>	Meeting room RCA
14:30-15:30	<b>Review Team meeting - Preparation for feedback session</b> <b>OR</b> <b>Meeting 8: optional meeting - possibility for the review team to invite specific persons (Bachelor and Master Music)</b>		Meeting room RCA

15:30-16:30	<b>Preparation for feedback session</b>		Meeting room RCA
16:30-17:15	<b>Meeting 9: presentation and discussion of preliminary findings with institutional management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Stefaan De Ruyck, Dean School of Arts</li> <li>· Inge Simoens, Head of Music</li> <li>· Els Smedts, Head of department jazz</li> <li>· Justus Grimm, Artistic Director Music, Cello</li> <li>· Alain Craens, Artistic Director Music, composer</li> <li>· Sonja Spee, Advisor Quality Enhancement</li> <li>· Nadia Franck, Head of Organization &amp; Administration</li> </ul>	Meeting room RCA
17:15-17:45	<b>Preparation for feedback session</b>		Meeting room RCA
17:45-18:00	Break		Meeting room RCA
18:00-18:30	<b>Public feedback session</b>		Blauwe Foyer De Singel
18:30-20:00	Dinner		De Singel Grand Café
20:00-21:00	Observing exams composition (optional)		

## **Annex 2. List of documents provided to the review team**

The following documents were provided by RCA to the review team in advance of the site-visit:

*Self-evaluation Report (SER)*

*Documents available on the electronic learning environment*

### *1. Programme goals and context*

#### *a. Mission & Vision – Missie & visie*

- i. Strategical plan (NL + Eng)*
- ii. Minutes of meetings (ASM) – (NL)*
- iii. Policy document (2011-2017) – (NL)*
- iv. Mission statement (NL+ ENG)*
- v. Ambition Model (NL)*

#### *b. Statistical data and analysis (NL)*

- i. SWOT analysis with teaching staff (NL)*
- ii. Omgevingsanalyse Kunstcampus DeSingel (NL)*
- iii. Omgevingsanalyse Opleiding Muziek (NL)*
- iv. Verslag studiereis HKU (23.05.2017) (NL)*

### *2. Educational processes*

#### *a. The curriculum*

- i. Didactical concept*
- ii. ECTS-fiches*
- iii. Learning outcomes – Leerresultaten*
- iv. Nexus Onderwijs- Onderzoek*
- v. Study programme*

#### *b. International perspectives*

- i. Beleidsplan internationalisering*
- ii. Overview of internationale partnerships*

*iii. Information students – teachers /informatie voor studenten / docenten*

*iv. Taalbeleid en –ondersteuning*

*c. Assessment – toetsbeleid*

*i. Overview of assesment methods*

*ii. Overview of educational methods*

*iii. Education- and examination regulation*

*iv. Evaluation forms*

*3. Student profiles*

*a. Overview of students's profiles (nationality/gender/credits/programs/...)*

*b. Entrance qualifications – toelatingscriteria*

*i. Admission criteria – toelatingsvoorwaarden (ENG- NL)*

*ii. Analysis of admission exams – 2011-2017*

*c. Student progression – studievoortgang*

*i. Analysis of student progression 2016-2017 (BA – MA)*

*d. Achievement – studieresultaten*

*i. Results per course unit 2015-2016 & 2016-2017*

*ii. Overall results (2012-2017)*

*e. Alumni and employability (nog geen info)*

*4. Teaching staff*

*a. Staff cv's and qualifications*

*b. Screening procedure*

*c. Training possibilities for teaching staff*

*d. Overview of the size & composition of the (teaching) staff*

*5. Facilities, infrastructure and resources*

*a. Accoustic analysis with sound acoustics results (NL)*

*b. Arrangement of the Conservatoire – Indeling van het gebouw (NL)*

*c. Overview of the supporting staff members*

*6. Communication, organization & decision-making*

*a. Organisational structure and decision-making processes*

*i. Organisational charts*

*ii. Questionnaire on student's participation*

*b. Internal communication process*

*i. Student's Handbook*

*ii. Staff Handbook*

*iii. Library Handbook*

*iv. Who is who 2017-2018*

*v. Overview of communication channels (NL)*

*7. Internal Quality Culture*

*a. Quality culture of Arts programmes in the AP University College (NL)*

*b. Follow up plan of IQC*

*c. Examples of Questionnaires, surveys and feedback of IQC*

*8. Public interaction*

*a. List of partnerships with cultural, artistic and educational contexts*

*b. List of partnerships with artistic professions*

*c. Information provided to the public*

