

MUSIC **Q**U **E** NHANCEMENT QUALITY

Institutional review

Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music



Site visit 11-13 March 2019

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Executive Summary

The Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music (YST) is an excellent institution which fully complies with almost all MusiQuE standards. The Review Team found that one of its key points of commendation is its well-articulated vision which is strongly embedded in the institution. It permeates the whole teaching and learning environment as well as public-facing activities. The institution is appropriately sensitive to its context and demonstrates a strong willingness to contribute to cultural life in the region.

YST has shown a remarkable ability to transform and adapt to meet challenges during the different phases in its history (albeit a relatively young institution). This ability to reflect, react and reposition as necessary, is a very strong characteristic of YST, which will serve them well in a rapidly changing environment. Over the years YST has increased possibilities for NUS students to take YST modules. The interaction between different student groups is experienced as beneficial for both groups and has strengthened the relationship between the Conservatory and the National University of Singapore (NUS).

The Review Team finds the content and structure of the study programmes as well as their methods of delivery, to be in alignment with the goals of the Conservatory. There are robust procedures in place for developing and revising curricula, and there is a willingness to support the goal that students should develop their own distinctive artistic and professional identity. YST provides excellent support for students to define their own pathway, to carry out self-initiated projects and engage in learning experiences outside the Conservatory.

YST was set up as an international school and has kept its international profile with strong international recruitment. The Conservatory is very well connected internationally and offers students a wide range of opportunities for gaining an international perspective. The international profile of the Conservatory is truly impressive.

The admission policy is in alignment with YST's profile. The admission criteria are clear and relevant, and information about criteria and requirements is readily available.

There are strong formal and informal mechanisms in place to monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of YST students. Assessment procedures and criteria are precisely and thoroughly described, and students are well informed about them. Systems are in place to ensure that students receive feedback.

YST has managed to create a culture of caring for students and their progression which is commendable.

The number and composition of teachers is adequate. YST has a very dedicated and strong faculty with a high level of professional and research activity. Faculty are well supported for these activities as well as for professional development. Regular faculty meetings also provide arenas for support and sharing of best practice. The

Conservatory's ability to attract young YST graduates, returning from studies abroad, to become faculty members, is commendable.

YST has excellent facilities and financial resources which are stable in the foreseeable future. This puts YST in a competitive position for the ongoing recruitment of staff and students. The administrative staff team is sufficient and well qualified, and they are offered support for continuing professional and personal development.

There are efficient mechanisms in place for internal communication, enhanced by the Conservatory's cross-functional communications team. The current organisational structure seems appropriate for the organisation, but there could be more clarity around key decision-making and how the effectiveness of the organisational structure is monitored. The Review Team would also encourage YST to increase formal and informal student participation in different committees and teams. This will enhance decision-making processes and strengthen transparency and democracy within the institution

There is clear evidence of a strong quality culture embedded within the institution, but there is less evidence of a more systemic approach to quality assurance and enhancement, with clear and transparent procedures. NUS's support in quality assurance and enhancement matters is important, but at the same time YST's unique characteristics also poses some challenges when trying to align with NUS processes and procedures. The establishment of the proposed International Faculty Development Committee can provide support in this respect.

YST is very well integrated into its local context and the Review Team commends its initiatives to serve the community in different ways. The students are well prepared and encouraged to create their own outreach projects. There are clear indications that alumni understand their responsibility to the wider community. The Conservatory actively promotes links with the profession, and the central position that YST has achieved in Singaporean professional music life is truly impressive. With an increasing number of Singaporean graduates from the YST Bachelors programme, educational opportunities on a higher level will undoubtedly be in demand

Introduction

In September 2018, the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music requested an institutional quality enhancement review to be delivered by MusiQuE. The objectives of the quality enhancement review are to provide the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music an opportunity to engage in a process of internal reflection on the quality of its educational services and, where relevant, to offer the institution suggestions for improvement. Moreover, the review aims to bring fresh ideas and wider perspectives to the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, encouraging the principle of 'many correct answers' to questions concerning the pursuit of quality in higher music education.

The review followed a three-stage process:

1. YST wrote a self-evaluation report (SER) based on, and structured according to, the *MusiQuE Standards for Institutional Review* (see MusiQuE Standards for Institutional, Programme and Joint Programme Review, pp. 18-29).
2. An international Review Team studied the self-evaluation report with annexes and conducted a site visit at YST from 11^h– 13^h March 2019. This comprised meetings with the Senior Management, members of the Governing Board/NUS, faculty, students, alumni, representatives of the profession, and the YST administrative staff. Furthermore, representatives from the students and faculty gave a demonstration of the use of ePortfolio and online learning tools. The Review Team also went on a guided tour of YST, as well as a short excursion to the NUS campus, and attended a few music performances and classes as well as one rehearsal. The Review Team used the *MusiQuE Standards for Institutional Review* noted above as the basis of its investigations.
3. The Review Team produced the report that follows, structured following the *MusiQuE Standards for Institutional Review*.

The Review Team consisted of:

- Philippe Dinkel, Director, Geneva University of Music, (Chair)
- Helen McVey, Director of Business Development, The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
- He Wei, Artistic Director and Dean, Tianjin Juilliard School
- Federico Forla, Student, The Royal Conservatory, The Hague
- Ingrid Maria Hanken, Professor em. Norwegian Academy of Music, (Review Team Secretary)

The Review Team would like to thank the representatives of the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory for the production and timely delivery of the self-evaluation report and all supporting documents, for the organisation of the site-visit and for

the hospitality they demonstrated. The Review Team was able to meet various stakeholders and the atmosphere of all meetings was open and collegial.

Key data on YST

Name of the institution	Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, National University of Singapore
Legal status	Special constituency school within National University of Singapore
Date of creation	2003
Website address	https://www.ystmusic.nus.edu.sg
Programmes offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Young artist programme (pre-college level) • Bachelor of music programme, major in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Violin - Viola - Cello - Double bass - Harp - Flute - Oboe - Clarinet - Bassoon - Horn - Trumpet - Trombone - Tuba - Percussion - Piano - Voice - Audio Arts and Science - Composition - Music Collaboration and Production - Music & Society • Master of music programme, specialisation in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - instrument - conducting - composition
Number of students	At time of review: 218 Bachelor students 1 Master student
Number of teachers	28 full-time, 1 adjunct teacher 52 part-time 7 teaching assistants

1. Institutional mission, vision and context

Standard 1: the institutional mission and vision are clearly stated.

The Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music (YST) was founded sixteen years ago, and its ambition from the start has been to be “part of a wide-ranging strategy to position Singapore as an Asian renaissance city of the 21st century for the arts and culture” (SER p. 3; Annex_0 Intro_1). The Conservatory has gone through several phases during its short history (ibid.), but always with a strong emphasis on its place and role within its context: “...our institutional mission goes beyond purely educating full-time students. Rather, we are collectively an active part of shared, constant evolutions taking place in our surrounding communities” (SER p.7). Its new guiding principle, “Listen in New Light”, “...encourages all within and involved with YST to reflect that our experience and awareness of music is, like music itself, constantly changing” (ibid.). The capacity to embrace and lead change constitutes an important element of the institution’s identity (ibid.).

In the current phase, there is also a strong emphasis on developing the individual identity of each student: The Conservatory has “...honed in on helping each student develop their own distinctive artistic and professional identity contextualised within their surrounding communities and environment” (SER p.9). The philosophy is illustrated by a student quote in the SER: “We come to conservatories not just because we are good at *something*, but because we want to become *someone*” (SER p.8-9). This focus has had “...ongoing implications for our curriculum and anticipated learning outcomes (...) as well as in student life (...), communications and public facing activities” (SER p. 10). The transformation is evident in several areas such as the individuality of the curriculum, where students have a large degree of freedom to create and shape their own artistic profile through electives which constitute a significant part of the study programme. They are also encouraged and funded to initiate projects and engage in learning experiences outside the Conservatory (SER p.8, see also chapter 2). It is also evident in the transition from individual practice to collaborative activity, in an increasing focus on opportunities for professional engagements during their studies, in a stronger emphasis on and visibility of composition and contemporary music ensembles, as well as in the inclusion of newer approaches such as multimedia, digital platforms, and improvisation. (SER p. 9).

The faculty and students met by the Review Team, seemed to have a clear understanding of YST’s identity and its vision and mission, and they were, in general, positive to the changes that have been and still are taking place as a consequence of the new vision and mission (Meeting with faculty; Meeting with students). The alumni were also very positive to the new direction of the Conservatory (Meeting with alumni). The Senior Management described a more nuanced picture, stating that the students by and large support the new identity, but that some faculty were sometimes still coming to terms with the full consequences of the change (Meeting with Senior Management). There is an

awareness of the challenges ahead: “Many of these changes are substantial and potentially quite disruptive of traditional norms – requiring also that we embrace technological developments in our teaching, learning assessing and organisation practices. As we enter into the Transformation phase, we recognise that we are still in the process of gaining full engagement with some dimensions...” (SER p. 10).

YST is predominantly an undergraduate institution offering a BMus degree. There is, however, also a small Masters programme, where only a very limited number of students have been enrolled so far (Annex_0 Additional information: Masters of music). The Conservatory’s postgraduate provision is currently being reimaged in line with changes in Singapore Government’s policy for graduate taught courses so that they become stackable, thereby offering mid-career and potentially modular level enrolment (Meeting with Senior Management). The Review Team found it challenging to fully understand if this is considered to be a Masters programme or not. The Masters programme is no longer described on the YST website. In addition to these programmes, the Conservatory offers the Young Artist Programme, where secondary school students aiming for a professional career can take some modules of the BMus while completing their pre-college education (SER p. 9). The Review Team has focussed its review on the BMus programme.

One defining factor for YST is its relationship with the National University of Singapore (NUS). The Conservatory was originally established as an autonomous institution “a special constituency school”, within NUS, which award the BMus degree is awarded by NUS. YST has become more integrated into NUS through the years and depend on many of NUS’ services (See chapter 5). It has, however, been able to maintain vital elements of its status as an autonomous conservatory, including funding received directly from Ministry of Education (MOE), a separate admissions process, and its own Governing Board appointed by MOE (SER p. 7-8). Over the years, YST has increased possibilities for NUS students to take YST modules, and currently over 600 NUS students are enrolled, almost three times the number of YST students (SER p.9). The interaction between the different student groups is experienced as beneficial for both groups, and the opening up of YST strengthens the relationship between the Conservatory and NUS: “The more inclusive we can be, the more influence we can have” (Meeting with Senior Management).

YST is now seeing the results of their efforts to help each student develop their own distinctive identity. Senior students and alumni seek new ways to present themselves and music, and the recent, innovative alumni festival was a testimony to that (SER p. 10).

The Review Team found that the vision is well articulated and strongly embedded in the institution. It permeates the whole teaching and learning environment as well as public-facing activities. The institution is appropriately sensitive to its context and demonstrates a strong willingness to contribute to cultural life in the region. The relationship to NUS is very constructive, and benefits students at both institutions.

YST has shown a remarkable ability to transform and adapt to meet challenges during the different phases in its history. This ability to reflect, react and reposition as necessary, is a very strong characteristic of YST, which will serve them well in a rapidly changing environment.

The Review Team concludes that YST fully complies with MusiQuE Standard 1.

2. Educational processes

2.1 The programmes and their methods of delivery

Standard: the goals of the institution are achieved through the content and structure of the study programmes and their methods of delivery

“Both the overall curriculum and individual modules undergo extensive review process involving tiers of review at the Conservatory and University level” (SER p. 10). Proposals for individual modules are first reviewed by the Head(s) of relevant areas. The modules are then reviewed by the YST Curriculum Committee with the overall curriculum design and review process for majors and programmes supervised by Senior Management. Proposals are then presented to three NUS committees (the Board of Undergraduate Studies, the University Committee on Educational Policy, and the Senate) for review and approval (SER p. 11). Further approvals from the MOE are at times required.

In accordance with the institutional focus on identity, students have a large degree of freedom in designing their own curriculum, with up to one third of credits allocated to elective modules (SER p. 11- 12). They are offered a wide range of electives across the four main areas of the degree: Analysis & Composition, Contextual Studies, Major Study, and Professional Integration (SER p. 11; Annex_2.1_9). “No two students’ transcripts show identical curriculum components; rather, they reflect artistic choices emerging over the four years” (SER p.12). Students receive support from faculty, their appointed advisors as well as from staff at Student Life Office when making their module choices (ibid.). Students and alumni met by the Review Team confirm that they receive guidance in developing their own pathways (Meeting with students; Meeting with alumni).

Learning outcomes are outlined in the module proposal, and there are guidelines which describe and clarify module expectations. Students are presented with these in the beginning of each semester and are hence able to track their progress in relation to the learning outcomes. Students have access to individual module handbooks online through the learning management system IVLE, which is currently being replaced by a new platform, LumiNUS (SER p.11; Annex_2.1_8). A full audit of all modules is currently taking place to ensure that the modules are up to date. During this process, faculty are also asked to consider implications from the YST repositioning “Listen in a New Light”, and the relevance of the AEC Learning Outcomes (SER p. 11). The exemplars accessed (Annex_2.1_7; Annex_2.1_8; Annex_0. Additional information: MUT 3220 Syllabus) suggest that learning outcomes are clearly identified in some course module descriptions, whereas other descriptions focus more on the content of the module, or the goals for the module, and less on student learning outcomes.

As a consequence of the focus on student identity and individual pathways, there are no prescribed learning outcomes

for the bachelor programme as a whole, only for individual modules. The institution regards learning outcomes not only as a prescription for what students are expected to learn, but as a tool for self-reflection on their development. There is an understanding that learning outcomes are not only about what should be taught in the classroom, but also about what students have the responsibility to learn on their own. Students are therefore encouraged to involve themselves in different learning experiences, and online tools are provided for independent learning (SER p. 12; Demonstration of ePortfolio and online learning tools).

Collaborative activity across the Conservatory is increasingly emphasised, evident in both curriculum changes and programming outputs. Collaborative music-making activities include orchestra (with the Orchestral Institute initiative), chamber music, as well as a range of ensembles in instruments such as electone, gamelan and choir. The introduction of the new majors Music & Society and Music, Collaboration & Production are examples of this shift (SER p. 12; Meeting with Senior Management; Meeting with Faculty).

There is a progression within the student's major study as well as in broader music modules which the student completes during the first two years of study. During this period, the students also choose and complete a range of general education modules from five distinctive baskets, offered by NUS. From the second semester of the second year, students can access elective modules according to interest and aptitude (SER p. 12; Annex_2.1_9).

Students maintain an ePortfolio throughout the four years of study. They are expected to make regular entries pertaining to all aspects of their learning trajectory, such as notes and reflections on lessons, masterclasses, and performances (SER p. 13). The ePortfolio can also be used as a starting point for developing a personal webpage with audio and video presentations, pictures, scores, texts etc. (Demonstration of ePortfolios and online tools). The portfolio enables students to engage in critical self-reflection, and it supports faculty in reviewing teaching and learning processes. Students who demonstrated their ePortfolios to the Review Team were very positive as to the usefulness of it but admitted that they had struggled to begin with (Demonstration of ePortfolio and online learning tools). During the first year, the ePortfolio is monitored closely through the Professional Integration area. During year 2 and 3 the major study teacher and the faculty have joint meetings with the student about the content of their ePortfolio (SER p. 13).

A wide range of teaching methods are utilised at YST. Most modules, including performance modules, make use of materials on digital platforms as well as various blog formats and online reflective writing (SER p.13). One example is the use of reflective writing in chamber music (Annex_2.1_10). The use of online materials encourages students to be self-directed and self-motivated and frees up class time for more interactive participation (SER p. 13, Meeting with Faculty). There are also examples of technological initiatives developed by staff, such as a SMART studio in the piano

area (Annex_2.1_11), and a MOOC on classical music composition, which is a basis for a core access module for NUS students (SER p. 13).

There is an increasing focus on integrating research into the curriculum, especially in connection to the students' performance repertoire. A first-year module, Foundations of Music Discovery was specifically developed to encourage students' critical expression and contextual awareness and introduce them to methods and approaches characteristic of artistic research. Further on in their studies, they are given opportunities to share their insights with peers and in public. YST hosts a triennial artistic research symposium Performer(s)' Present, where students are encouraged to attend and contribute. This year a similar event was arranged "Student(s)' Present" dedicated to student artistic research and projects (SER p. 13-14). Faculty members are active in different kinds of research specialisations (Annex_4.1_1), which feed into the curriculum (SER p. 14). However, no funding is allocated for full-time research positions; all funding is tied to teaching undergraduates. There is a need for both artistic research and for academic music-related research (Meeting with Senior Management).

Students are given opportunities to present their work on a range of platforms from classroom presentation, performances and masterclasses, to public recitals and projects in the Conservatory's concert series (SER p. 14). They are also offered the possibility to give concert at venues in the city (Meeting with the profession). Key YST concerts are recorded or live streamed and shared on social media channels which enables students to present themselves to the industry and a wider audience (SER p.14).

Students receive ongoing career guidance through the Professional Integration area in their studies as well as through their advisor. They can apply for funding through a Student Development Fund for traveling expenses to auditions, festivals, competitions and such (SER p. 14).

The Review Team finds the content and structure of the study programmes as well as their methods of delivery, to be in alignment with the goals of the institution. There are robust procedures in place for developing and revising curricula, and there is a willingness to support the goal that students should develop their own distinctive artistic and professional identity.

YST provides excellent support for students to find their own pathway and to carry out self-initiated projects and engage in learning experiences outside the institution.

Research is being increasingly integrated into the curriculum, and many teachers are actively involved in artistic or academic research. There is funding available to support research activities, but no full-time research positions as

such. The Review Team suggests that it might be useful to prepare a strategic document on research at YST to outline a way forward in this important area.

The Review Team concludes that YST fully complies with MusiQuE Standard 2.1.

2.2 International perspectives

Standard: the institution offers a range of opportunities for students to gain an international perspective.

The Conservatory is a member of several higher music education networks: the ConNext Network, Pacific Alliance of Music Schools, Southeast Asian Directors of Music Association and International Benchmarking Exercise. Through these platforms, different kinds of professional partnerships can be formed, enabling activities such as student exchange and individual collaboration projects devised in the Southeast Asian Group Project module (SER p.14-15).

During the last two academic years, approximately 70% of YST students have participated in an overseas programme, and YST aims to increase this percentage to 85% by the academic year 2020/21 (SER p.15). The teachers met by the Review Team, consider international exchange to be very important for their students, and they encourage them to study abroad (Meeting with faculty). The Conservatory offers support for students taking part in international exchanges, competitions, conferences and courses. Last year over 200 students received such funding (Annex_2.2_2).

International perspectives are also gained through a large number of visiting artists. The international background and experience of the YST teachers contributes to internationalisation. Faculty also receive support for overseas activities which, in turn, bring international perspectives back to YST students (See Chapter 4). Furthermore, the international composition of the student body itself contributes to internationalisation. It was considered beneficial to Singaporean students to be exposed to other teaching and learning traditions (Meeting with Governing Board/NUS). The international profile of the institution was also mentioned as one of the attractions of the Conservatory by alumni and students (Meeting with alumni; Meeting with students).

Several other examples of international collaborations have involved the Conservatory Orchestra, ensembles and individual students have taken part (SER p.15). Another example is the proposed Orchestral Institute of Asia, a cooperative to be led by YST alongside the Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra and Shanghai Orchestra Academy (SER p.15; Annex_2.2_3). The Institute will provide innovative orchestral training in an international environment.

YST was set up as an international school and has kept its international profile even as the number of Singaporean students has increased. The Conservatory is very well connected internationally and offers students a wide range of opportunities for gaining an international perspective, both within the institution and abroad through exchange

programmes, international projects and tours, and by funding student participation in international activities. The international profile of the institution is truly impressive.

The Review Team concludes that YST fully complies with MusiQuE Standard 2.2.

2.3 Assessment

Standard: assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes.

All modules offered are reviewed to ensure alignment between learning outcomes and assessment requirements. Juries are provided with an evaluation form with assessment criteria for each grade (Annex_0. Additional information: Jury evaluation form). Students are provided with information about assessment criteria, feedback channels and grading procedures at the start of their studies and at the beginning of each semester. In performance modules, students receive continuous feedback during lessons and rehearsals, and more formal assessment at their exams. In academic modules a variety of assessment tasks are given, and post-assessment feedback is delivered as appropriate. The review team found no evidence of the use of external examiners in any part of the assessment process, which therefore relies on internal forces.

Assessment criteria and grading procedures are available for each module in the student handbook (Annex_2.1_8). Students met by the Review Team, confirmed that they get feedback continuously, and that assessment criteria and procedures are clearly communicated and transparent. However, they indicated that practices between departments differed as to the timing of the feedback after their recitals (Meeting with students).

Students can also consult faculty about their progress and achievement. Most of the teachers hold weekly consultation hours (SER p. 17). Students met by the Review Team find it easy to consult their teachers if they wish to discuss their progression and achievements (Meeting with students). Each student is also assigned an advisor outside his/her major area, and meetings are scheduled at least once a semester for guidance on broader topics, such as student life and career development. Students met by the Review Team were of different opinions as to the effectiveness of these meetings (Meeting with students). Meetings are also scheduled at the end of the second and third academic year between the student, the advisor, and the major teacher to review the ePortfolio and discuss career direction and other relevant issues or concerns (SER p. 17).

The assessment procedures and criteria are precisely and thoroughly described, and students are well informed about the procedures and criteria. Systems are in place to ensure that students receive feedback on their progression and achievement.

The Review Team concludes that YST fully complies with MusiQuE Standard 2.3.

3. Student profiles

3.1 Admission/Entrance qualifications

Standard: clear admission criteria exist, which establish artistic/academic suitability of students.

The admission process allows for a holistic assessment of each candidate's potential to develop at the Conservatory. Studio faculty assess the candidate's abilities within the major study area, using a grading system. This is provided through the Admissions Handbook which serves as a moderator across all major assessments. The Handbook is produced and updated annually, documenting grading criteria, test questions, sight-reading scores, and study pieces. All candidates also carry out a Music Rudiments Exercise, and their English language ability is tested through interviews and writing samples (SER p. 17; Annex _3.1_1).

Candidates are then further critically assessed by the Admissions Committee comprising four Senior Management team members including the Dean in consultation with Heads/leaders of major areas (SER p. 17).

The admissions policy aims to enable peer-learning opportunities which embrace a balance of diverse cultural and musical identities. Therefore, a range of factors in the applicants' portfolios is assessed, such as intellectual aptitude, artistic drive, interpersonal skills, and personal qualities that will contribute value to the cohort (SER p.17). The diversity is also secured through seeking applicants beyond Singapore and auditions are held in several countries in the region, as well as Australia. YST also encourages applications from capable students from non-Asian countries (Annex _3.1_2). However, from the outset, YST was intended to have a strong regional representation and identity (Annex_3.1_2), and it was underlined that "it should not be a feeding school into the West, but to the region" (Meeting with Senior Management).

The YST website provides information about requirements for application material, academics, auditions and English language, as well as FAQs. Information about continuing education courses is provided by the Professional Integrations Office and NUS SCALE. The Admissions Office also participates in the NUS Open Day, and regular higher education fairs and exhibitions (SER p. 18).

Students are offered full scholarships with the support of a tuition grant from the Ministry of Education, as well as gifts from the Yong Loo Lin trust and other donors. This is obviously of importance for prospective students when considering which institution to apply to (Meeting with students), but the conditions for the MOE tuition grant causes some concern for YST, since some international recipients are expected to serve a three-year bond working in Singapore immediately after graduation. It has sometimes proven difficult for international graduates to find relevant and sufficiently remunerated full-time jobs, the only type of employment eligible for a work pass that allows residency in Singapore.

The conditions attached to the tuition grant have undoubtedly created challenges in recruiting some of the best international students. These issues have been raised with the Government (SER p. 18; Meeting with Governing Body/NUS; Annex _3.1_2), but it is not yet clear to the Review Team what possibilities if any may be put in place to address ambiguity.

The admission policy is in alignment with the profile of the institution and the admission procedure is systematic and transparent. The admission criteria are clear and relevant for establishing the suitability of students, and information about criteria and requirements is readily available.

YST attracts strong international recruitment (which is in line with its aims) and the generous scholarships offered supports the recruitment of international students. The conditions of the government tuition grant, however, has the potential to be counterproductive by deterring talented musicians from applying. The Review Team supports the Management's efforts to engage the Government on the topic of students' fulfilment of their bond obligations and encourages YST to continue to make the conditions of the bond explicit to applicants at the point of enquiry/audition.

The Review Team concludes that YST fully complies with MusiQuE Standard 3.1.

3.2 Student progression, achievement and employability

Standard: the institution has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students.

There is a range of formal and informal mechanisms in place to monitor student progression. The Student Life Committee, where students are also represented, meets monthly to discuss student progression and to identify individual students needing academic counselling or guidance (SER p. 18).

At the end of each semester the Board of Examiners meet to finalise and approve the grades of all modules, which are then published/released. The Dean and/or relevant Vice Dean will see students who are lagging behind or at risk of not completing the programme, and some might be placed on scholarship probation. Students who excel, are placed on the Dean's list. The statistics on completion rates (Annex_7.2) show that in 2017 and 2018 almost 100% of the cohorts completed their studies. This is a vast improvement from the first cohort in 2007.

Students also have the opportunity to seek advice more informally through Student Life office, and the Professional Integration Manager as well as other administrative staff. Students can also consult their teachers directly. The teachers that the Review Team met underlined that there is a sense of care and support and constant close communication across study areas in case of student problems (Meeting with faculty). The Students who met the Review Team supported this view and said that "there is a culture of taking care of the students", and confirmed they receive informal guidance from their teachers. They also mentioned that they are assigned an advisor, which is a relatively new initiative, but they had different experiences as to how well this works (Meeting with students). In addition, each major area or studio organises weekly sessions allowing peer-to-peer and faculty interaction. The student ePortfolios allow monitoring and dialogue between students and faculty concerning their professional development (SER p. 19; Demonstration of ePortfolio and online learning tools).

Alumni are monitored through the Student Life office which maintains a comprehensive database of career developments for all alumni since the first cohort graduating in 2007. It is regularly updated with information from alumni or faculty. (SER p. 19; Annex_3.2_6). Auditions trips abroad also provide opportunities to connect with alumni in the region (Meeting with Administration). The alumni met by the Review Team underlined that YST wishes to maintain contact, and that the Student Life office keeps in touch with them. Alumni ambassadors have been appointed, and there was an alumni festival at YST last year (Meeting with alumni). Alumni statistics from 2019 (Annex_3.2_6) indicate that the majority of alumni find relevant jobs: Of the total of 556 graduates since 2007, 180 are portfolio musicians, 121 are full-time musicians and 45 are full-time teachers.

The Review Team finds that there are appropriate mechanisms in place to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of YST students. In addition, there are a number of informal mechanisms. Both completion rates and employment statistics indicate that these mechanisms are very effective. The Review Team wishes to commend YST with creating a culture of caring for the students and their professional progression, as well as for keeping such close contact with alumni and acknowledging them as an important part of the YST identity and community.

The Review Team concludes that YST fully complies with MusiQuE Standard 3.2.

4. Teaching staff

4.1 Staff qualifications and professional activity

Standard: members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/pedagogues/researchers.

Each full-time faculty appointment is reviewed by an independent ad-hoc committee of faculty with relevant expertise. Both qualifications for teaching and performance and/or scholarly outputs are assessed, as well as educational background and service to university and external communities. (SER p. 19). Decisions for appointments are made at the Conservatory and University level. Appointments are either made according to tenure track, educator track or practice track (SER p. 20). The distinction between the identities that these tracks represent is less clear at the Conservatory than at a research-dominated university (Annex_7.1). Each semester, student evaluations of teaching are submitted for all modules, and performance reviews are carried out annually with performance and academic teachers (SER p. 20).

Several resources for teaching support and professional development are provided by NUS at the Centre for Development of Teaching and Learning as well as the Centre for Instructional Technology (SER p. 20). The teachers expressed that they feel an expectation from the institution to carry out professional development, but at the same time they have a lot of freedom as to what to focus on, which they appreciated (Meeting with faculty).

Full-time faculty are contracted to be engaged in professional activity and research as a significant part of their employment and are expected to perform and present both locally and internationally. One significant arena is the Performers (‘) Present series, an international artistic research symposium every three years, which YST hosts (SER p. 20). The engagement of each faculty member in relation to professional/research activity is reviewed annually in his/her appraisal. There is an annual budget of SGD\$ 150.000 to support their participation in international activities such as festivals, partner school exchange, and professional development. The Research Committee, which meets monthly, also has a budget for funding applications relating to performance and scholarly outputs such as recordings, travel to present at scholarly conferences, and providing musicians for performances of original compositions (SER p. 20). In 2018, nine faculty received a total sum of approximately SGD\$ 29.000 (Annex_4.1_2). The faculty’s professional activity and research is substantial and has an international scope (Annex_4.1_1; website).

Teachers are expected to take part in Conservatory life in different ways: the majority of full-time teachers serve on at least one of YST’s internal Committees, there are also one or two Conservatory-wide meetings each semester for all relevant performance and academic faculty (SER p. 20). Student module feedback (accessed via the semester

questionnaire summaries and comments) are reviewed, giving faculty opportunities to engage in critical reflection on their teaching and student development activities. (SER p. 21).

YST has a very dedicated and strong faculty with a varied background, many of whom enjoy an international career. The faculty is well supported to deliver professional development as well as professional and research activities. The International Faculty Development Committee (See Chapter 7), will provide support in guiding future professional development initiatives. Regular faculty meetings also provide arenas for support and sharing of best practices.

The Review Team found clear evidence that the teaching staff are qualified for their roles and deliver a high level of professional and research activity.

The Review Team concludes that YST fully complies with MusiQuE Standard 4.1.

4.2 Size and composition of the teaching staff body

Standard: there are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programmes.

YST has 28 full-time and 52 part-time teachers as well as one adjunct teacher and seven teaching assistants. The number of full-time teaching staff has been fairly stable, but the number of part-time staffs has increased significantly as a response to curriculum changes. Full-time positions, particularly for faculty on tenure and educator tracks, are generally expected to be continuing, whereas part-time faculty are contracted annually as needed (SER p. 21). The integration of part-time staff into the Conservatory can be challenging, but the part-time teachers that the Review Team met expressed that they felt well integrated and are active in the different activities of the Conservatory (Meeting with faculty). The heads of study areas play a key role in this respect (Meeting with Senior Management).

YST has undergone significant curriculum changes in the last few years, and the changes involve all teaching staff. The teachers have in general been able to embrace these changes, and the current goal is to stabilise the programme and the staff (SER p. 21)

YST is now in the position to be able to recruit alumni who are returning to Singapore after further studies abroad. Six alumni have been employed in continuing positions and several others as teaching assistants and part-time teachers (SER p. 21). The alumni bring with them new perspectives, which can sometimes be challenging for established faculty (Meetings with Senior Management).

The number and composition of teachers seems adequate in order to ensure effective delivery of programmes. The necessary adjustments have been made to accommodate recent curriculum reforms. There is an appropriate proportion of full-time teachers to ensure stability and representation of faculty in all aspects of Conservatory life. The fairly large number of part-time teachers will at the same time ensure the necessary flexibility. The part-time teachers that the Review Team met, seem to identify strongly with the institution, and feel well integrated.

The Conservatory's ability to attract young YST graduates, returning from studies abroad, to become faculty members, is commendable. They will undoubtedly play an important role in the further development of the institution.

The Review Team concludes that YST fully complies with MusiQuE Standard 4.2.

5. Facilities, resources and support

5.1 Facilities

Standard: the institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programmes.

The YST Conservatory is located on the NUS campus, enabling easy commuting for students across campuses for joint courses (Visit to NUS campus). The building was built specifically for YST, and it provides facilities for both educational purposes as well as performances. There is a large concert hall with approximately 600 seats, a Recording Studio, one-to-one teaching studios, ensemble rooms and 37 practice rooms (Annex_5.1_1), which "...remain close to ideal till today" (SER, p. 22).

There is a system in place for students to make reservations for the use of practice rooms (Tour of the building). Students expressed no concerns as to availability of practice rooms (Meeting with students).

Since the building is now 12 years old, NUS has indicated the need for a comprehensive facilities renewal programme (SER p. 22) A Facilities Renewal Plan, which aligns with YST's evolving identity, has consequently been submitted to NUS for funding consideration (Annex_5.1_2). In addition to necessary systemic upgrading and replacements, two strategic developments are proposed: "(i) refitting and developing the Orchestra Hall as a flexible mid-size venue offering a more aesthetically immersive performative experience; and (ii) reconsidering the space above the Concert Hall as a flexible lecture-theatre accommodating larger classes of potentially up to 75 students (including those from NUS)." (SER p. 22).

Students and faculty have access to a wide range of quality instruments. The Conservatory's own collection includes large instruments such as percussion, harp and double bass as well as auxiliary instruments that the students may not play as often. YST's collection also includes 84 pianos, most of which are grand pianos. (SER p. 22; Annex_5.13). There are grand pianos in all teaching studios, ensemble rooms, seminar rooms and two-thirds of the practice rooms. The Conservatory also has access to 59 string instruments on loan from the Rin Collection (SER p. 22; Annex_5.1_4).

A wide range of IT services is provided by NUS to all students, including course registration, online learning management and teaching feedback, and students are issued a lifelong NUS email address. YST is increasingly implementing IT-based administrative systems; students can now apply for leave and grants online, and there is an online venue management system in place (ASIMUT) which facilitates room booking and checking staff and student availability. There are also plans to make forms and applications more mobile friendly. There is Wi-Fi coverage throughout the building, and measures are taken to ensure that there are strong signals everywhere (SER p. 23).

A wide range of relevant software is available for installation on staff and students' personal computers and mobile devices. There is a well-equipped composition studio and an equally well-equipped music technology lab with access to software for notation, sequencing, building websites as well as resources for incorporating technology into learning in different ways (SER, p. 23; Tour of the building). The Review Team observed that technology is actively used in learning and teaching (Class observations; Demonstrations of ePortfolio and online learning tools).

In the recital studio, a high-speed and low-latency network point enables live interaction with other institutions, and there is a video-conferencing facility in the conference room (SER, p.23).

The music library is managed by NUS (Meeting with YST administration). It is open Monday to Friday 8.30 am- 6.00 pm every day. There are plans to reconfigure the library to address current challenges and future needs; Level 1 will become a study and collaboration space and Level 2 will house the library collections with self-service machines and card access, making the library accessible 24/7. The extensive collection includes both Western art music as well as world music and works by local musicians including YST staff and alumni: 32,000 chamber music scores, 41,200 books and music scores, 1,500 CDs and DVDs and 3,300 recordings by staff and students. The library also subscribes to a large number of relevant e-journals and databases such as Oxford Music Online and RILM Abstracts of Music, and to other online resources, among them Naxos Music Library, and Classical Scores Library (SER p. 23). YST students and staff also have access to the NUS collections where there is an extensive collection of digital resources (Meeting with YST administration).

Based on its tour of the facilities and the relevant documentation, the Review Team confirms that the facilities are not only appropriate but exceptional. The concert hall and recording studio are impressive, and the number and standard of practice rooms relative to student numbers is outstanding. The Review Team supports the proposed plans to develop the orchestra hall into a flexible venue and repurposing the space above the concert hall into a flexible lecture-theatre. Both these developments are logical consequences of YST's vision for the future.

The collection of instruments and the library collections are appropriate. The Review Team support the plans to redefine Level 1 of the library which will enable more collaborative learning. YST has embraced the possibilities that new technologies can provide, and the Review Team saw clear examples of how technology is used actively and effectively in learning and teaching as well as in administrative processes.

The Review Team concludes that YST fully complies with Standard 5.1.

5.2 Financial resources

Standard: the institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the study programmes.

The Conservatory is in a very favourable financial position. This allows the institution to offer "...highly competitive full-time student support (including fees, living allowance and some external development opportunities), appropriate staff and faculty employment packages, a vibrant programming and production calendar, access opportunities for NUS students and strategic possibilities for encouraging evolution in the local and regional ecosystem." (SER p. 24).

The income stems mainly from tuition fee grants from the Ministry of Education (42.5%), tuition fees (25%), and income from endowments (30%). No significant deviations from the government grants and tuition fees are expected for the next five years (Annex_5.2_1). There has been an annual surplus every year (SER p.24).

Budget allocations are set in consultation with the Senior Management team and NUS's Office of Finance, and subsequently considered by the Governing Board, before being approved by the NUS Provost (SER p.24).

The financial resources are excellent and stable in the foreseeable future. This enables YST to be competitive as to recruitment of highly qualified students and staff and enable successful delivery of the study programmes.

The Review Team concludes that YST fully complies with Standard 5.2.

5.3 Support staff

Standard: the institution has sufficient qualified support staff.

YST has 20 full-time administrative and technical support staff divided between finance & resources (6), artistic administration & strategic development (8), academic affairs (1), professional integration (1), and student life (3). Administrative and logistic support for events is also provided by student interns, student assistants and recent alumni (SER p. 24). NUS also offer a comprehensive support system that YST can draw upon, such as student counselling (Meeting with faculty).

The Conservatory strongly supports continuing professional and personal development and has enabled its administrative staff to participate in different management and leadership programmes (SER p. 24). NUS has also developed a learning and development guide to facilitate staff development (Annex_5.3_1).

The Review Team concludes that the support staff is clearly sufficient and capable of supporting the diverse activities of the institution. They are dedicated and well-integrated into the life of the institution. The Conservatory offers support for continuing professional and personal development for its support staff both within the NUS system and abroad. This is of great value in ensuring the quality of support for the running of a complex and ambitious institution such as YST.

The Review Team concludes that YST fully complies with Standard 5.3.

6. Communication, organisation and decision-making

6.1 Internal communication process

Standard: effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the institution.

The communications team has the overarching responsibility for internal as well as external communication (Meeting with administration). Several platforms are used to ensure communication within the institution. All part-time and full-time faculty meet at least once a semester, and full-time faculty and Senior Management hold a full day meeting annually. Teachers and administrative staff receive feedback in annual appraisals and performance planning. Meetings are held regularly in the different committees, and information from the different meetings is collected by the communications executive and shared across the management and Governing Board (Meeting with administration). The Dean holds meetings with each student cohort twice a semester to ensure close communication (SER p. 19), and students can give feedback on modules online, as well as through student life committee representatives. The student life committee also organises a general feedback session once a year to gather feedback from the student body (SER p. 19). There is a student notice board in the building for dissemination of general information, and mailboxes for students and staff for individual communication (SER p. 25).

In addition, there are several virtual channels in use: the YST website, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube serve as updated communication channels both internally and externally. For internal communication purposes, the learning management systems IVLE and LumiNUS enable communications between teachers, students and peers. The venue management system ASIMUT, where venues can be booked online, provides information about schedules of classes, rehearsals, committee meetings and person availabilities (SER p. 25). All students, including alumni and all staff have a NUS e-mail account with an online directory (SER p. 25). WhatsApp messaging groups are also in use to facilitate projects (SER p.26). There are TV screens in the building displaying content from the website, a gallery of upcoming events, and a summary of the full day's events in different venues (SER p. 26; Tour of the building). Green initiatives have been taken by reducing the number of printed concert programs and instead display QR codes on the screens on concert evenings where audience can access the programme and background material through their own devices. Weekly *What's on* emails are sent to subscribers informing them about a selection of upcoming events (SER p. 26).

Since December 2018, a monthly electronic YST Digest is sent to all students, staff and external stakeholders with relevant updates on YST as a whole organisation (SER p.26; Annex_6.1_1). An events calendar is printed each semester outlining upcoming concerts, masterclasses etc., and at the end of each academic year a newsletter, *Resonance* is produced in printed format, summarising institutional focus, events and achievements from the year as well as news articles from the website (SER p. 26)

The Communication Team plays an important role in collecting and disseminating information within the institution and externally. The composition of the team, drawing on different areas of responsibility and including student interns, ensures its effectiveness. Several channels are in use for internal communication. This has the potential to create confusion among students, but the Review Team heard no indications of that. The regular meetings between the Dean and students are an important arena for mutual exchange of information and views. The institution seems to strike a good balance between digital and other modes of internal communication.

The Review Team concludes that YST fully complies with Standard 6.1.

6.2 Organisational structure and decision-making processes

Standard: the institution has an appropriate organisational structure and clear decision-making processes.

YST is led by the Dean in collaboration with five other members of the Senior Management Team. In the report of the previous international review, it was suggested that it would be useful to have an organisational structure that emphasises the academic structure rather than the management structure (Annex_0 Intro_4). The report also voiced concerns that the structure with many departments and department heads could "...lead to Departments operating in silos, and faculty members affiliate themselves closely with the Department than to the Conservatory or to the academic programme." (ibid.). The report therefore suggested to have two broad teams, namely Performance and Academic Programmes, rather than multiple programmes/departments. The current organisation structure seems to have taken these suggestions on board, at least partially: There are still distinct study areas, with Heads leading them. The term "department" is not used officially, since NUS considers YST as one department within the University (e-mail correspondence with Jenny Ang). In addition, there are five committees working across the different areas, such as the curriculum committee as well as six formalised cross-area faculty meeting groups and teams such as collaborative music making, and professional integration team (Annex_6.2_2). The Senior Management Team oversees managerial aspects, such as finance and resources as well as educational and artistic aspects, such as academic programmes & research and student life (SER p. 26-27). At least one member of the Senior Management Team is a member of all these committees and meeting groups. The organisation chart is drawn as a circle (Annex_6.2_1), because this best illustrates how the management works; as a team, which is unusual in this region (Meeting with Senior Management).

Students are represented in the student life committee, one of the aims being to train students to take part in the decision-making process (Meeting with Senior Management). According to Senior Management, the number of student complaints have gone down. (ibid.). All students are now members of the Conservatory Club led by a Student Management Committee elected by the students annually, which has regular meetings. A constitution is drafted, and

the Student Management Committee mainly deal with issues concerning student welfare (Annex_3.2_5). The current President of the Conservatory Club is now Chairman of the NUS Students' Union (Meeting with Senior Management; Meeting with students). Apart from the student life committee, there is no representation in any of the other committees or in the YST Governing Board (Annex_6.2_18; Annex_6.2_2).

The Senior Management Team draws up proposals for strategic decision-making for consideration by YST Governing Board and/or NUS. The Governing Board is appointed by the Ministry of Education and has seven external members. The YST Dean and the NUS Provost are ex-officio members. The Governing Board

- “ - provides strategic direction and guidance on artistic knowledge to the YST to further its objectives in education, scholarship and music performance;
- guides the Conservatory on strategic planning, endowment fund-raising, and in its interactions and partnerships with stakeholders; and
- evaluates and grants approval of new projects and capital expenditures” (SER p.27).

YST also works with NUS risk management office to develop its risk register. Risk ambassadors are being identified from staff, and they will undergo training (SER p.27; Annex_6.2_19; Meeting with Governing Board (NUS)).

The organisation structure of YST has undergone significant changes these last years. The current structure seems appropriate for the organisation, and the representation of the Senior Management in all committees as well as in the Governing Board secures a good connection between the different levels. However, the Review Team did not get a clear picture of how the Senior Management measures the effectiveness of the different bodies, including the Senior Management itself. The Review Team finds the provided organisation chart rather complex, with some overlap between the different bodies, and it is also somewhat unclear to the Review Team who makes the decisions in case of overlap. However, the members of the institution that the Review Committee met, seem to have a relatively clear understanding of the structure of the organisation.

Another concern for the Review Team is the limited participation by students. We are aware of the fact that there are cultural differences as to the role students are invited to play within the organisation structure of higher education institutions across regions. Since YST is such an internationally oriented institution, we would nevertheless suggest that students should be included to a larger extent into the different committees and teams. Giving more room for the students' voices to be heard, will undoubtedly enhance the decision-making processes and strengthen transparency and democracy within the institution.

The Review Team concludes that YST substantially complies with Standard 6.2.

7. Internal Quality Culture

Standard: the institution has a strong internal quality culture, supported by clear and effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures.

A range of formal reporting structures are in place at the Conservatory, and the Senior Management Team has overview and assurance responsibility. The Senior Management Team meets fortnightly to ensure constant communication and consideration (SER p. 28). The Governing Board assures that strategies and operations are aligned with the long-term mission and vision. Furthermore NUS (by the Provost's Office) oversees long-term strategic planning, programme changes, promotion and tenure (SER p. 29). There is an ongoing review process of all teaching activities, and necessary curriculum revisions are carried out (SER p. 28) (Meeting with Senior Management; See also Chapter 2).

Being a small institution, with close and frequent contact between students, teachers, and administration, any difficulties can be easily identified, and appropriate interventions carried out (SER p. 28, Meeting with faculty; Meeting with students). Students can also raise concerns and discuss with the student life committee (Meeting with Senior Management). Statistics collected on student completion, employment, and satisfaction, as well as staff and teacher annual appraisals, and public feedback is used as quality indicators (Meeting with Senior Management).

NUS offers wide-ranging support in infrastructure to YST including student support and counselling, as well as risk management (SER p. 29; Meeting with Governing Board/NUS). YST aims to align and integrate its quality enhancement and assurance processes with those of NUS. There are, however some aspects where alignment is more difficult: "...a particular challenge concerns the nature of our educational model, which is more individually-tailored and practice-based particularly compared to a research-intensive university. Defining what constitutes quality in teaching and learning, research, and faculty development, still needs clarification both with NUS and in the conservatory sector at large." (SER p. 28). An International Faculty Development Committee is being established to offer guidance to YST on challenges concerning University promotion and tenure expectations as well as research measurement (SER p. 28, Annex 7_1).

The Conservatory also uses its engagement with different international networks for quality enhancement purposes, among them the International Benchmarking Exercise Group. Recently, the AECs Learning Outcomes have been used as part of an overall curriculum auditing where the NUS Registrar's Office, teachers and Year 4 students took part (SER p. 29).

Through the documentation and meetings with representatives of the institution, the Review Team finds clear evidence of a strong quality culture embedded within the institution. The support of NUS in quality assurance and enhancement matters is important, but at the same time the unique characteristics of YST compared to a research-based university such as NUS, also poses some challenges when attempting to align with NUS processes and procedures. A conservatory is distinctively different from a more theoretically oriented university department when it comes to how teaching is organised, the type of research undertaken, and procedures for student and staff recruitment. To address these characteristics YST needs to develop some unique quality assurance and enhancement measures that nevertheless are clear and transparent. YST is well under way of doing so, and the new International Faculty Development Committee is a valuable initiative in this respect. It can support YST in developing more relevant criteria and procedures for promotion, tenure and research measurements.

The Review Team suggests that the international networks that YST is a part of, can be actively utilised to provide inspiration and guidance in these matters.

The Review Team concludes that YST substantially complies with Standard 7.

8. Public interaction

8.1 Cultural, artistic and educational contexts

Standard: the institution engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts.

YST plays a pivotal role in the music industry in Singapore (Meeting with representatives of the profession), and YST is regularly approached to contribute to national planning initiatives and policy making (SER p. 29).

Through their Young artist platforms, the Conservatory provides several learning and musical engagement initiatives for musicians at the pre-tertiary level: The Young artist programme offers tuition to 15-18 year old's, The Young composers' academy supports talented young musicians aged 15-21 with university-level mentoring, The YST Piano academy invites talented musicians aged 16-18 to a three day intensive training course, and in the Double time at YST-initiative, children aged 9-11 are taught a second instrument over a four-month period by BMus Year 3 orchestral pedagogy students (SER p. 30)

The Conservatory contributes in different ways to communities and development of projects: YST faculty are active as leaders in several local festival and events, and YST is the lead organization in establishing and hosting the Singapore international violin competition. The Conservatory also organises an annual Double reed day, which serves as a platform for reed activity in Southeast Asia. Furthermore, YST opens its venues to many local art events (SER p. 30; Annex_6.2_17. g), and for ensembles (Meeting with alumni; Meeting with representatives of the profession). Representatives of the profession met by the Review Team, commended YST for its contributions to local music life (Meeting with representatives of the profession).

The students are being prepared to contribute to society through different components in their education. Through the leading & guiding course module all Year 3 students engage with school children, and students also participate in workshops with healthcare workers and visits to hospital wards. As part of the major music, collaboration & production, students can create outreach projects independently within Singapore or abroad. (SER p.30-31; Annex_6.2_17. g). Student artistic development grants provide financial assistance for outreach projects (SER p. 31)

<p>The Review Team considers YST very well integrated into its local context and commends its initiatives to serve the community in different ways. The students are well prepared and encouraged to create their own outreach projects. There are clear indicators that alumni take on their responsibility to the wider community.</p>
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The Review Team concludes that YST fully complies with Standard 8.1.

8.2 Interaction with the artistic professions

Standard: the institution actively promotes links with various sectors of the music and other artistic professions.

YST has strong links to the local artistic professions and is considered a key player in the music industry. Many alumni are now working as professional musicians in Singapore (Meeting with Representatives of the profession). Several examples of cooperation between YST and the music sector were given in the meeting with representatives of the profession. These include providing performance and teaching practice opportunities for students, internships, and freelance opportunities. Also, international artists with engagements in local ensembles and orchestras give masterclasses at YST, and there are partnerships around exams (Meeting with representatives of the profession). YST supports the local music life in different ways, such as hosting festivals and events, and giving rehearsal space and lending instruments to ensembles (SER p. 31; Meeting with representatives of the profession; Annex_6.2_17. g).

YST provides incentives for students who wish to develop their career in different ways: “YST offers modular credit for creative leadership projects with career development dimensions such as major self-initiated projects, or significant musical achievements including major competition participation and internships.” (SER p. 31).

The Conservatory is taking active steps to remain engaged with ongoing developments within the profession. YST keeps close contact with alumni (SER p. 31; Meeting with alumni), and there are frequent local and international visitors presenting seminars and workshops as well as international symposia, and visits from international artists. Seminars are held each semester with industry professionals discussing current trends (SER p. 31). Students receive overarching career guidance through the professional integration component, and there is a mentoring programme in place (Meeting with faculty).

Lifelong learning is currently a major initiative of NUS and the Singapore government. YST contributes to this initiative through its Continuing professional education programme (CPE) and the Masters programme introduced in 2015. (SER p. 32; Annex_0. Additional information, Maters of music). The CPE-programme is geared towards professionals who have not had the opportunity for professional training. There have so far been two graduates, and the programme is currently being re-evaluated in cooperation with the NUS School of continuing and lifelong education. The aim is to be able to provide government-subsided certificate and diploma courses, with the possibility of stacking towards a future Masters degree. (SER p. 32). There has been a limited number of students on the Masters programme. So far seven students have graduated (SER p. 32). There are currently discussions on a national level of the emphasis on Masters degrees vs. other forms of lifelong learning (Meeting with Senior Management), and the Masters programme is currently not advertised (YST website)

The Review Team finds strong evidence that YST actively promotes links with the profession and carries out the necessary and relevant initiatives to remain abreast with its developments. The central position that the Conservatory has achieved in Singaporean professional music life is truly commendable, especially considering its short history. With an increasing number of Singaporean graduates from the YST Bachelors programme, educational opportunities on a higher level will undoubtedly be in demand. The Review Team therefore supports the different lifelong education initiatives to serve the music profession.

The Review Team concludes that YST fully complies with Standard 8.2.

8.3 Information provided to the public

Standard: information provided to the public about the institution is clear, consistent and accurate.

A communications team was established in 2016 based on the "...recognition that the Conservatory is a complex organisation serving a range of stakeholders with whom we need to engage in different ways and for different purposes. Rather than communications being a singular responsibility, the ambition is to develop a more pro-active culture involving as many as possible." (Annex_8.3_1). The communications team collectively drafts and curates all information, news and promotion material. This enables a more consistent and coordinated approach (SER p. 32).

Public information pertaining to admissions and events are published on the website, and there is also a printed concert season calendar and a subscription mailing list. The NUS Bulletin provides students with information about study programmes (SER p.32). YST also has a presence on several digital platforms, i.e. Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, where data on the public's access can be gathered (Annex_8.3_1). The content is targeted to different groups on the different platforms (Meeting with administration). User feedback is gathered to inform future information and communications activity, such as admissions campaigns (SER p. 32; Annex_8.3_2). A communications & engagement position was created in April 2018 to lead the communications team and manage and review all information to the public (SER p. 32).

The website and other material reviewed by the Review Team provided clear, consistent and accurate information. The visual quality is also very high. There is clear evidence of a deliberate and well-functioning communications strategy, and the composition of the communications team, covering all important areas, seems effective.

The Review Team concludes that YST fully complies with Standard 8.3.

9. Summary of the institution's compliance with MusiQuE Standards

1. Institutional mission, vision and context	
Standard 1. The institutional mission and vision are clearly stated.	Fully compliant
2. Educational processes	
Standard 2.1. The goals of the institution are achieved through the content and structure of the study programmes and their methods of delivery	Fully compliant
Standard 2.2. The institution offers a range of opportunities for students to gain an international perspective.	Fully compliant
Standard 2.3. The assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes.	Fully compliant
3. Student profiles	
Standard 3.1. Clear admission criteria exist, which establish artistic/academic suitability of students.	Fully compliant
Standard 3.2. The institution has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students.	Fully compliant
4. Teaching staff	
Standard 4.1. Members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/pedagogues/ researchers.	Fully compliant
Standard 4.2. There are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programmes.	Fully compliant
5. Facilities, resources and support	
Standard 5.1. The institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programmes.	Fully compliant

Standard 5.2. The institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the study programmes.	Fully compliant
Standard 5.3. The institution has sufficient qualified support staff.	Fully compliant
6. Communication, organisation and decision-making	
Standard 6.1. Effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the institution.	Fully compliant
Standard 6.2. The institution has an appropriate organisational structure and clear decision-making processes.	Substantially compliant
7. Internal quality culture	
Standard 7.1. The institution has a strong internal quality culture, supported by clear and effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures.	Substantially compliant
8. Public interaction	
Standard 8.1. The institution engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts.	Fully compliant
Standard 8.2. The institution actively promotes links with various sectors of the music and other artistic professions.	Fully compliant
Standard 8.3. Information provided to the public about the institution is clear, consistent and accurate.	Fully compliant

Annex 1 - Site-visit Schedule

Day 1: Monday, 11 March 2019

Time	Event	Participants / Remarks (*YST alumni in green)
08:45	Transfer from Yacht Club to YST	
09:00-11:00	Review Team preparatory meeting	
11:00-12:30	Meeting 1 Senior Management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prof Bernard Lanskey 2. Assoc Prof Brett Stemple (Assistant Dean, Performance & Artistic Research) 3. Assoc Prof Craig De Wilde (Vice Dean, Academic Programmes & Research) 4. Assoc Prof Chan Tze Law (Vice Dean, Professional Integration) 5. Ms Jenny Ang (Deputy Director, Artistic Administration & Strategic Development) 6. Assoc Prof Peter Edwards (Assistant Dean, Composition & Contemporary Music) 7. Ms Rachel Tang (Associate Dean, Administration) 8. Mr Tan Wei Boon (Deputy Director, Student Life)
12:30-13:00	Review Team Meeting	Possibility of catching last piece of Soundbites: OpusNovus from 12:45-13:00
13:00-14:00	Lunch – Bar Bar Black Sheep	Located just outside YST Conservatory
14:00-15:30	Meeting 2 Meeting with Faculty	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Ang Chek Meng (Part-Time Faculty, Chamber/Violin) 2. Ms Bethany Nette (Teaching Assistant, Professional Integration) 3. Asst Prof Dr Chen Zhangyi (Analysis & Composition) 4. Assoc Prof Jason Lai (Conducting) 5. Dr Khoo Hui Ling (Instructor, Contextual Studies) 6. Mr Lim Yan (Senior Lecturer, Collaborative Piano) 7. Prof Thomas Hecht (Head of Keyboard Studies) 8. Assoc Prof Zhang Jin Min (Head of Woodwinds, Bassoon)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Assoc Prof Zhang Manchin (Viola) 10. Mr Zhou Xiaodong (Senior Lecturer, Audio Arts & Sciences)
15:30-16:30	Review Team Meeting	
16:30-17:00	Break	
17:00-18:00	<p>Meeting 3</p> <p>Meeting with Governing Board/NUS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Robert Tomlin (Chair, YST Governing Board) 2. Mrs Valarie Wilson (Member, YST Governing Board / Director, Arts Education, Ministry of Education) 3. Ms Kathy Lai (Deputy CEO, Enterprise Singapore / former CEO, National Arts Council) 4. Ms Rena Na (NUS HR) 5. Mrs Frances Silverayan-White (NUS Risk Management Office) 6. Prof Bernard Tan (Senior Vice Provost, Undergraduate Education)
18:00-18:30	Review Team Meeting	
18:30-19:00	Tour of building	Includes visit of Conservatory Orchestra concert tour rehearsal of Asst Prof Chen Zhangyi's Concerto for Erhu, Zhongruan, Percussion and Ensemble (new work)
19.00	Transfer from YST to dinner	
19:30-21:00	Dinner – Burlamacco Ristorante, Stanley Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Robert Tomlin (Chair, YST Governing Board) 2. Mrs Valarie Wilson (Member, YST Governing Board / Director, Arts Education, Ministry of Education) 3. Ms Kathy Lai (Deputy CEO, Enterprise Singapore / former CEO, National Arts Council) 4. Prof Ho Teck Hua (Member, YST Governing Board / Senior Deputy President and Provost, National University of Singapore) 5. Prof Bernard Lanskey
21:00	Transfer from dinner back to Yacht Club	

Day 2: Tuesday, 12 March

Time	Event	Participants / Remarks
08:30	Transfer from Yacht Club to YST	
08:45-09:15	Review Team meeting	
09:15-10:00	Class Observation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MUT2202 (L) Counterpoint Through the Ages <i>Asst Prof Chen Zhangyi, Seminar Room 1</i> 2. MUT3224 Teaching Music Online 1 <i>Gabriel Lee, Part-Time Faculty, Seminar Room 3</i> 3. MUT3220 Wind Ensemble Arranging/Composition <i>Dr Lien Boon Hua, Part-Time Faculty, Seminar Room 5</i> 4. MUT2203 (L) Texture and Timbre <i>Adeline Wong, Lecturer, Seminar Room 6</i> 5. MUT2201 (L) Harmonic Practices <i>Martin Jaggi, Part-Time Faculty, Seminar Room 8</i>
10:00-11:00	Meeting 4 Meeting with Alumni	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Adrian Chiang (MMus '16, Conducting) <i>Band Directors' Association & re:Sound Collective</i> 2. Mr Lee Kok Wey (BMus '14, Recording Arts & Sciences) <i>Acoustic Consultant, Arup</i> 3. Ms Ng Jingyun (BMus '18, Voice) <i>Voice performer, freelance voice coach</i> 4. Ms Syafiqah 'Adha Sallehin (MMus '16, Composition) <i>Composer; Founder, Open Score Project</i> 5. Mr Wailun Chong (MMus '19, Conducting) <i>Conductor</i>
11:00-11.30	Break & Review Team Meeting	

11.30-12.30	Meeting 5 Students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ms Chiang Yung-Yuan, BMus3, Clarinet (Taiwan) 2. Mr Cui Yihao, BMus3, Music, Collaboration & Production (Singapore) 3. Mr Ding Jian Han, BMus4, Composition (Singapore) 4. Ms Ho Qianhui, BMus4, Viola (Singapore) 5. Mr Kim Dohyung, BMus3, Cello, President/Student Management Committee (Korea) 6. Ms Lau Hui Ping, BMus4, Trumpet (Malaysia) 7. Mr Lim Jingjie, BMus3, Voice (Singapore) 8. Ms Lin Xiangning, BMus4, Piano (Singapore) 9. Ms Luong Khanh Nhi, BMus4, Piano (Vietnam) 10. Ms Priscilla Fong, BMus2, Voice (Singapore) 11. Ms Wang Yuqi, BMus 3, Cello (China)
12:30-13:00	Review Team meeting	
13:00-14.30	Lunch – University Town	Short walk from YST
14:30-15:30	Meeting 6 Representatives of the profession	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Arnaud de Fontgalland <i>Founder & Artistic Director, Sing'Baroque</i> 2. Ms Cecilia Pang <i>Director (Communications & Service Quality), Sengkang Health</i> 3. Mr Chng Hak-Peng <i>CEO, Singapore Symphony Group</i> 4. Ms Christel Hon <i>Senior Producer, Esplanade Co Ltd</i> 5. Mr Kok Tse Wei <i>Deputy Director, Sector Development (Music), National Arts Council</i> 6. Mr Mervin Beng <i>Chairman, re:Sound Collective</i> 7. Mr Terence Ho <i>Nominated Member of Parliament / Executive Director, Singapore Chinese Orchestra</i>

		8. Ms Yap Shu Mei <i>Founder & Director, Mandeville Conservatory of Music</i>
15:30-16:00	Review Team Meeting	
16:00-16:30	Break	Option to attend wind chamber dress rehearsal
16:30-17:30	Meeting 7 Meeting with YST Administration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ms Chiam Hui Li (Associate Director, Admissions) 2. Ms Jenny Ang (Deputy Director, Artistic Administration & Strategic Development) 3. Ms Jenny Lee (Manager, Professional Integration) 4. Mr Marcus Tay (Manager, Academic Affairs) 5. Ms Ong Shu Chen (Executive, Communications & Engagement) 6. Ms Rachel Tang (Associate Dean, Administration) 7. Ms Tang I Shyan (Senior Manager, Programming & Productions) 8. Mr Tan Wei Boon (Deputy Director, Student Life) 9. Ms Yap Zi Qi (Senior Manager, Orchestra & Ensembles)
17:30-18:00	Review Team Meeting	
18:00	Transfer from YST to Yacht Club, then to drinks and dinner	
19:00-21:30	Drinks – Rooftop, Andaz Singapore Dinner – Auntie’s Wok & Steam, Andaz Singapore	Joined by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prof Bernard Lanskey 2. Mr Martin Prchal (Royal Conservatoire of The Hague) 3. Assoc Prof Albert Tiu (Piano) 4. Assoc Prof Qin Li-Wei (Cello) 5. Ms Ong Shu Chen (Communications & Engagement)
21:30	Transfer from dinner back to Yacht Club	

Day 3: Wednesday, 13 March 2019

Time	Event	Participants / Remarks
10:15	Transfer from Yacht Club to YST	
10:30-11:00	Review Team meeting	
11:00-12:00	Meeting 8 E-Portfolios and Digital Tools for Musicianship	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Ding Jian Han, BMus4, Composition (Singapore) 2. Ms Jenny Ang (Deputy Director, Artistic Administration & Strategic Development) 3. Dr Khoo Hui Ling (Instructor, Contextual Studies) 4. Ms Ong Shu Chen (Executive, Communications & Engagement) 5. Ms Priscilla Fong, BMus2, Voice (Singapore) 6. Mr Sulwyn Lok, BMus4, Recording Arts & Sciences
12:10-13:00	Attend Noon Recital – YST Concert Hall	
13:00	Transfer from YST to lunch	
13:15-14:15	Lunch – Esarn Thai Restaurant	
14:15	Transfer from lunch back to YST	
14:30-16:30	Review Team meeting - Preparation for the feedback meeting	
16:30-18:00	Feedback to the institution	With YST Senior Management
18:00	Transfer from YST to dinner	
18:00-20:00	Dinner – The Knolls, Capella Hotel	With Prof Bernard Lanskey and Mr Martin Prchal

*YST alumni

Annex 2 - Supporting documents

- Self-evaluation report (SER) (32 pages)
- Annexes to the SER:

Annex_0 Additional information

Annex_0 Intro_1 Keynote Address by Deputy Prime Minister of Music, 26 November 2001,

Annex_0 Intro_2 AEC Follow-Up Review Jan 2014.

Annex_0 Intro_3 AEC Review Report Sep 2010.

Annex_0 Intro_4 YST International Advisory Panel Report Oct 2015.

Annex_1_10 GB minutes 3 Aug 2018.

Annex_1_11 GB minutes 24 Oct 2018.

Annex_1_1 Branding Away Day Presentation Mar 2016.

Annex_1_2 Focusing Conservatory Impact Mar 2016.

Annex_1_3 YST Brand Logo October 2016.

Annex_1_4 GB minutes Jan 25 2017

Annex_1_5 GB minutes Apr 17 2017

Annex_1_6 GB minutes 14 Aug 2017

Annex_1_7 GB minutes Oct 23 2017

Annex_1_8 GB minutes 1 Feb 2018

Annex_1_9 GB minutes 2 May 2018

Annex_2.1_11 SMART studio - Thomas Hecht (not for sharing)

Annex_2.1_1 Review AAS Curriculum Committee April 2018

Annex_2.1_2 UCEP AAS Proposal March 2018

Annex_2.1_3 UCEP AAS Title and Curriculum Revision Apr 2018 YSTCM

Annex_2.1_4 Review 2 New BMus Curriculum Committee September 2017

Annex_2.1_5 UCEP BUS Two New BMus Majors YSTCM Revised 30 October 2017

Annex_2.1_6 New Majors BMus Sept 2017 YSTCM

Annex_2.1_7 MUH3202 Introduction to Musicology Module Handbook Sem 2 2018 2019

Annex_2.1_8 MUA1167 MUT1101 MUH1101 Handbooks IVLE Jan 2019

Annex_2.1_9 Review Module listing Jan 2019

Annex_2.1_10 Chamber music student reflections

Annex_2.2_1 Overall 3yr Plan towards increasing UG overseas participation

Annex_2.2_2 Students Overseas Trip Approvals

Annex_2.2_3 Feb 13 - Item 5 Orchestral Institute
Annex_6.2_17 Resonances Newsletter
Annex_2.3_1 Review Module Evaluation Report
Annex_2.3_2 Review Student Questionnaires Teacher Report
Annex_3.1_1 Admissions Handbook 2019-2020 (Complete)
Annex_3.1_2 YST Admissions Governing Board Meeting 2 May 2018
Annex_3.2_1 Student Life Committee Meeting Minutes 23 August 2018
Annex_3.2_2 Student Life Committee Meeting Minutes 4 October 2018
Annex_3.2_3 Student Life Committee Meeting Minutes 18 October 2018
Annex_3.2_4 Student Life Committee Meeting Minutes 14 November 2018
Annex_3.2_5 Constitution For Conservatory Club
Annex_3.2_6 Alumni Statistics 2 Jan 2019
Annex_3.2_7 Young Artist Programme Report 2014 - 2017
Annex_4.1_1 Review Sample of Research Outputs 2010-2018
Annex_4.1_2 Research Funding Report 2018
Annex_5.1_1 Building Facilities
Annex_5.1_2 YST FRP Proposal Slides (Rev8b)
Annex_5.1_3 Music instruments
Annex_5.1_4 Rin Collection (AY2018_2019)
Annex_5.2_1 Overview of Current Financial Context
Annex_5.2_2 FY2019-FY2023 Financial Projections
Annex_5.2_3 Notes of FY2019 Budget Meeting with Provost Dec 2018
Annex_5.3_1 Staff Learning and Development
Annex_6.1_1 YST Digest November 2018
Annex_6.1_2 YST Digest November
Annex_6.2_10 Resource Committee meeting minutes (20 Nov 2018)
Annex_6.2_11 Leaders of Major Study meeting minutes (24 Oct 2018)
Annex_6.2_12 Full-Time Studio Faculty meeting minutes (20 Aug 2018)
Annex_6.2_13 Music Studies Committee meeting minutes (3 Oct 2018)
Annex_6.2_14 Collaborative Music-Making meeting minutes (15 Oct 2018)
Annex_6.2_15 Professional Integration Team meeting minutes (7 Nov 2018)
Annex_6.2_16 Comms Team meeting minutes (10 Dec 2018)

Annex_6.2_19 YST Governing Board Charter
Annex_6.2_19 YST_Risk_Register_Dec 2018
Annex_6.2_1 YST Organisation Chart_2019
Annex_6.2_20 Policy-on-Approving-and-Signing-Authority (2017)
Annex_6.2_2 Committees Aug 2018
Annex_6.2_3 Senior Management meeting minutes (20 Nov 2018)
Annex_6.2_4 Senior Management meeting minutes (23 Oct 2018)
Annex_6.2_5 Curriculum Committee meeting minutes (1 Nov 2018)
Annex_6.2_6 Student Life Committee Meeting Minutes (18 October 2018)
Annex_6.2_7 Student Life Committee Meeting Minutes (14 November 2018)
Annex_6.2_8 Research Committee meeting minutes (12 Sep 2018)
Annex_6.2_9 Research Committee meeting minutes (14 Nov 2018)
Annex_7_1_Proposal to Replace Conservatory's FPTC with a Quality Enhancement Committee
Annex_7_2_YST Student Completion Rates
Annex_8.3_1 Managing Communications at YST Conservatory
Annex_8.3_2 Survey Results for 2019 YST Admissions