



## **Review Report**

# **Master of Music**

**Conservatorium Maastricht  
(Maastricht, The Netherlands)**

**Limited Programme Review**

**Site-visit: 27 – 29 November 2019**

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## Summary

In November 2019 the Master of Music degree programme offered by Conservatorium Maastricht of the Zuyd University of Applied Sciences was visited by a review panel compiled by MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement (hereafter MusiQuE). Prior to the assessment process, the review panel was approved by the Accreditation Organisation of The Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO). The review panel assessed the quality of the programme using the limited programme assessment framework of NVAO (version September 2018). The NVAO standards for limited programme assessment were mapped against the MusiQuE standards for programme review. As a result, the MusiQuE standards and areas of inquiry were added under each NVAO standard in order to both express and reinforce the correspondence between both sets of criteria and to complete the NVAO framework with criteria relevant for performing arts programmes. The report is structured according to the mapped NVAO-MusiQuE standards. The panel's judgement as expressed in the present report is based on the assessment rules for limited programme assessments (existing programmes), which are further detailed in Annex 5.

The Master of Music programme is a full-time programme of two years (120 ECTS). This internationally-oriented Master serves the purpose of deepening the student's experience, practice and knowledge of Classical and Jazz Music. The approach of the programme focusses on experiment through practice-based research connected to the chosen instrument and the personal goals in music. The programme aims to build useful knowledge that will serve the musician in the society of today. To realise such a dynamic programme, strategic goals are built around keywords such as "international", "craftsmanship", "innovation" and "community", and used as milestones for the policy and content of the Master of Music programme.

### **NVAO Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes**

**The intended learning outcomes tie in with the level and orientation of the programme; they are geared to the expectations of the professional field, the discipline, and international requirements.**

**The programme receives the following assessment on NVAO Standard 1: the programme meets the standard.**

The basic principle of the Master of Music programme of Conservatorium Maastricht is that students from all over the world are welcome and encouraged to deepen and broaden their competencies on a musical, professional and personal level (*Source: SER, p.1*). The Master programme of Music aims to train the musician for working in an ever-changing and innovating music world and therefore, in addition to the musician's artistic-technical development, the programme wishes to focus on flexibility, networking and artistic identity. The Master of Music programme has nine graduation profiles: Instrumental classical music (all instruments), Instrumental jazz (all instruments), Vocal classical music (opera, operetta, solo singing), Vocal jazz, Composition Classical music, Composition/arranging/performing, Conducting (wind/brass band, symphony orchestra, big band and choir), Music theory and Educational research in music.

A member of both *Netwerk Muziek* (Music Network) at national level and *Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen* (AEC) at international level, Conservatorium Maastricht subscribed to the AEC Learning Outcomes until 2017, when the Dutch Conservatoires in *Netwerk Muziek* collectively established detailed frameworks for the bachelor's and master's programmes they offer. As such, for the realisation of its programmes, Conservatorium Maastricht chose to integrate the framework for master programmes of the Dutch National Training Profile for Music (DNTP) in the curricula (*Source: SER, p.2*). The intended learning outcomes are set out in concrete terms and comply with the Dublin Descriptors and the EQF level 7 Descriptors.

Conservatorium Maastricht (CM) has rich connections with the professional field and has regular meetings with representatives of the professional community to keep in touch with trends and needs. The review panel appreciates the open atmosphere the conservatoire has for critical feedback collected both internally and externally, and takes

note of the existing quality culture which supports the on-going internal debate concerning survival on the highly competitive international market, and stimulates their current transition and internal reorganisation.

## **NVAO Standard 2: Teaching and learning environment**

**The curriculum, the teaching and learning environment, and the quality of the teaching staff enable the incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.**

**The programme receives the following assessment on NVAO Standard 2: the programme meets the standard.**

The programme is designed around three core aspects: craftsmanship, artistic vision and identity, and social positioning. These core aspects are built up in a concentric formation in which craftsmanship is the inner circle, by analogy with a sound wave, craftsmanship is the starting point from which the student can develop and refine her/his artistic identity, define her/his role in society, and position herself / himself in the industry. The conservatorium Maastricht provides the students a thorough basis in craftsmanship and, at the same time, gives the students a great freedom of choice. The self-management by the student allows them to choose from a variety of options logged in their portfolio linked to their Personal Development Plan (PDP). This high degree of freedom was praised by the review panel, but it seemed to produce a disorientating effect on foreign students who shared with the review team some of the difficulties they encountered upon arrival in Maastricht. The review team therefore recommends that more attention be paid by the Conservatorium towards student guidance through all the logistics inherent to their setting-up and organisation of their individual study programme and PDP.

The students try to meet the demands of the professional field by developing knowledge and skills 'through' and 'in' the professional practice with an international orientation. The review panel was pleased to encounter a group of excellent teachers who activate the students through e.g. music literature, audition training, audio and video material commonly used in the current professional practice, practical and tailor-made research (e.g. Arabic singing for beginners, Online Performance Improvement for piano), and 'Your Art as a Business' (YAB) – a practical workshop designed to develop the students' skills in the area of artistic management, public relations, marketing and communication.

The review panel was pleased to note the open-minded atmosphere as well as reflective approach of the students and teachers. The CM has the policy that teachers should have part-time contracts to be able to combine the teaching appointment with a professional career as a musician, which is beneficial for the educational environment they create. For the student chapter in the SER, videos were made by the students, expressing their feelings about the opportunities they get and can create in their programme. In those videos communication problems and shortage of practice rooms are often mentioned, and they also surfaced on site, during the panel's meetings with some of the programme's constituencies. Furthermore, these points of critique have already been included on the CM's agenda as points of improvement in the focus meetings from 2019 (*Source: SER Appendix 32*). Although there is a shortage of practice rooms the review panel is very positive about the facilities, especially noting the professional recording studio. A shared concern between the panel and representatives of the Programme regards the maintenance of some musical instruments, deemed necessary to preserve their quality up to standard, and the costs that it incurs. The review team recommends the CM and, equally, the Maastricht Faculty of Performing arts and the Zuyd Academy of Applied Sciences, that adequate support be offered to the Programme in order to enable it to allocate sufficient resources in the maintenance of and equipment with high quality musical instruments.

### **NVAO Standard 3: Assessment**

**The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.**

**The programme receives the following assessment on NVAO Standard 3: the programme meets the standard**

The course descriptions are clear with regard to objectives, assessment, procedures and assessment criteria. CM has a good assessment structure in place and there is a good balance between process and product evaluation. Students are familiar with the criteria, they are discussed during the lessons and after presentations, in the feedback sessions. The discussions after presentations are highly appreciated by the students and were deemed very helpful in their further development.

The panel advises CM to introduce rubrics to achieve more consistency in assessment. The review panel is very positive about the (international) external assessors in the committee of examiners for the final recitals. The review panel highlighted that an enhanced level of objectivity amongst the committee of examiners would enable the students to get a real grip of the challenges intrinsic to the professional world they are preparing for, and advises the Programme to take additional measures in this regard – e.g. through rubrics with evaluative criteria, quality definitions for those criteria at particular levels of achievement, and a scoring strategy that would foster consistency across internal and external assessors.

### **NVAO Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes**

**The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.**

**The programme receives the following assessment on NVAO Standard 4: the programme meets the standard**

The review panel concludes that CM achieves the principal goal to train talented young musicians to high artistic and professional standards and equips them with the virtuosity and inventiveness they need to become a unique and successful performer. The final examinations demonstrate that graduates from all departments perform well in the final recitals. The review panel was especially pleased with the final Jazz recitals that are organised as a real concert festival.

### **Final conclusion**

Given the outcomes of the above-mentioned standards the panel recommends as weighted and substantiated final conclusion regarding the programme: positive.

## Introduction

The Zuyd University of Applied Sciences is one of the seven main higher education institutions in the Netherlands providing a Master of Music. With around forty Bachelor's and thirteen Master's programmes, 15,000 students and 1,700 staff, Zuyd University of Applied Sciences, is one of the biggest universities of applied sciences in the Netherlands (Source: <https://www.zuyd.nl/en/about-zuyd>). The Theatre Academy (200 students) and the Conservatorium Maastricht (550 students) form together the Maastricht Faculty of Performing Arts within the Zuyd University of Applied Sciences (Source: *SER*, p. iv).

In April 2019, Conservatorium Maastricht (CM) commissioned MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement (MusiQuE) to organise a review procedure for the accreditation of its Master of Music degree programme. MusiQuE coordinated the organisation of the accreditation procedure and carried out the review of the two-year Master's programme with a professional orientation and 9 graduation profiles. The report that follows covers the review of this Master of Music programme.

The procedure for the accreditation of CM's Master of Music followed a three-stage process:

- the CM prepared a *Self-evaluation Report (SER)* and supporting documents, based on the *MusiQuE Standards for Programme Review* mapped against the NVAO Standards for Limited Programme Assessment;
- an international review team composed by MusiQuE and approved by NVAO, studied the *SER* and conducted their main site visit at the CM on 27-29 November 2019. The site visit comprised meetings with representatives of the CM 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* mapped against the NVAO Standards for Limited Programme Assessment as the basis of its investigations;
- a preliminary site visit was organised in June 12-13 2019, to enable two members of the review team to observe and attend final student assessments and recitals.
- the review team produced the accreditation report herein, structured along the *Standards* mentioned above.

The review team consisted of:

- Mr. Georg Schulz – Panel Chair, Former Rector and Associate Professor at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz (Kunstuniversität Graz), Austria.
- Mr. Jeffrey Sharkey – Panel Member, Principal of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow, United Kingdom.
- Mr. Thomas De Baets – Panel Member, Professor of Music Education at LUCA School of Arts and KU Leuven, Head of Music and Group Head of Performing Arts at LUCA, Leuven, Belgium.
- Mr. Thomas Zoller – Panel Member, Professor of Composition / Arranging and Director of the HFMDJ Jazz Orchestra at the Academy of Music Carl Maria von Weber in Dresden, Germany.
- Mrs. Joyce Vanderhoydonck – Student Member, trained in classical and jazz piano, currently enrolled in the Master Programme in Jazz Singing of the Royal Conservatory in Ghent, Belgium.
- Mrs. Katrien Goossens - NVAO Certified Secretary, former Teaching Assistant at Ghent University, author and content developer at Van In Publishing House, Antwerp, Belgium.

The review team would like to express its sincere gratitude to the Head of Education and Quality Management: Mr. Marc Rutten, and his team for the organisation of the site visit, and for welcoming the review team as peers in such a hospitable way. The review team conveys the present report with the aim to support the CM in its continuous development, beyond the purpose of acquiring international endorsement and the extension of the programme's accreditation, rather with the intent to offer instrumental advice for its management, teachers, and students alike, thus furthering the CM's and the Programme's capacity to fulfil its role in society and to strengthen its regional and

international relevance. The review team would like to encourage the CM to make the accreditation report available to all stakeholders by sharing it across its constituencies and by publishing it in a clear and visible manner on the CM website.

### **Key data on the programme**

1. Nomenclature of the programmes in CROHO [central register of higher education programmes]: Master of Music
2. Orientation and level of the programme: Master of Music (professional orientation)
3. Number of credits: 120 EC
4. Location(s): Maastricht Conservatorium
5. Mode(s) of study: full time
6. CROHO registration number: 44739 (25JX)
7. Number of students 2018-2019: 170
8. Name of the institution: Conservatorium Maastricht
9. Status of the institution: publicly funded institution providing higher education
10. Outcome of the institutional quality assurance assessment: granted 2014

## 1. Intended learning outcomes

**NVAO Standard 1. The intended learning outcomes tie in with the level and orientation of the programme; they are geared to the expectations of the professional field, the discipline, and international requirements.**

**Corresponding MusiQuE standards:**

- MusiQuE Standard 1: The programme goals are clearly stated and reflect the institutional mission.
- MusiQuE Standard 2.1: The goals of the programme are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its methods of delivery.

In this chapter the review panel describes the findings, considerations and conclusions with respect to the intended learning outcomes to support its assessment.

### Legal requirements

As stated in the self-evaluation report, the programmes are set up according to the rules stipulated in the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (WHW), e.g. funding, structure, admission and governance. Another issue stipulated by the WHW is the requirement of a set of Education and Examination Regulations (EER) and an Examination Committee (*Source: SER, p.2*). The review panel found both instruments in place (Appendix 14A, B, C,D). Furthermore, the Master of Music degree programme complies with the principles of the Dutch National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

### Intended learning outcomes

The paramount goal of the Programme is to transform the CM into a hub in the world of music, one that inspires and equips students on their journey to becoming unique, excellent and successful performers. To this purpose, the curriculum has been in continuous development (SER p. iv) towards artistic research and cross-curricular and international competences. The Master of Music programme aims to train the musician for working in an ever-changing and innovating music world. As such, in addition to the musician's artistic-technical development, the Programme also caters the students' flexibility, networking and artistic identity. (SER p. 2) This is translated in the curricula into two domains: Excellent craftsmanship on the one hand, and Identity & Positioning on the other hand.

As a part of the *Netwerk Muziek* (Music Network), a network of Dutch Conservatoires, CM integrated the Dutch National Training Profile for Music (DNTP) in the curriculum of the master's programme since 2019-2020 (SER, Appendix 11). CM switched from the AEC Learning Outcomes to the DNTP for the following reasons (SER p. 2):

- The profile supports the revised mission and vision of CM, particularly the focus on two domains of education; excellent craftsmanship, and identity and social positioning;
- It meets the current demands of the modern-day context-oriented and creative musician, where research and contextual focus is defined on a skills level;
- The outcomes are described in more general terms than the AEC Learning Outcomes. With regard to the research and development skills, this means that it supports the CM vision on individual profiling in the development and execution of the master's project.

The programme also complies with the Assessment Framework for Higher Education (SER, Appendix 10) which stipulates that programmes must use learning outcomes related to the Dublin Descriptors and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) Level 7 descriptors for Music (Appendix 15). The DNTP learning outcomes are described in six domains, while in CM a seventh domain was added for the Education Profile. According to the



Alignment Document DNTP – learning objectives Master of Music (Appendix 27), these domains, competencies and indicators match the learning objectives of the programme.

### **Features/Profile**

According to the SER (p. 1), the art community of CM wants to offer students and professionals a rich musical and educational environment which enhances craftsmanship, helps finding artistic identity and supports in achieving social positioning in the world of music. CM offers students various unique features to support this. The students can choose from nine different graduation profiles:

- Instrumental classical music (all instruments),
- Instrumental jazz (all instruments),
- Vocal classical music (opera, operetta, solo singing),
- Vocal jazz,
- Composition classical music,
- Composition/arranging/performing,
- Conducting (wind/brass band, symphony orchestra, big band and choir),
- Music theory,
- Educational research in music.

In their Master of Music programme, CM offers the student the opportunity to broaden her / his perspective on the profession. Students make a Personal Development Plan (PDP) and they can find room for personal development through elective courses, international perspective, health and well-being programmes, Your Art as a Business (YAB) practical workshop, and, if desired, they can choose an external teacher. Other important features that are present in the programme, and were appreciated by the review panel, are the Master project and the projects fostering interdisciplinarity – both within the programme, between the Classical Music and Jazz students, as well as across Faculty, in joint ventures between the CM and the Theatre Academy. While the panel noted that different master programmes of the performing arts are not really connected yet, the CM made clear their intention to integrate the interdisciplinary projects curriculum wise, both during interviews and through the documentation provided. The review team takes the opportunity to encourage the CM in the pursuit of this objective and points to the already existing foundation in this regard: great emphasis on working together and reaching out, was expressed by teachers and students alike in the interviews with the panel. Even though still incidental rather than structural, inspiring ideas and initiatives for interdisciplinary projects came forth from both jazz teachers and classical students, indicating that there is a lot of room for proactivity and a lot of potential the CM could capitalize on.

At the same time, the panel notes that the Programme sets forth very ambitious goals for itself. While its aspirations are commendable, the panel would like to emphasize that continuous efforts to align the content, structure and methods are needed. The Programme is therefore advised to further its work in calibrating these goals with SMART objectives – specific and significant, measurable, attainable, relevant and properly resourced, and time bound.

· MusiQuE standard 2.2: The programme offers a range of opportunities for students to gain an international perspective.

### **International perspective**

The panel appreciates the international dimension of the conservatoire, which offers many opportunities for all students, domestic and international alike, to gain and broaden their international perspective. Not only the community consists of a wide range of nationalities among students, teachers, and guest lecturers, but the programme is also centred on the CM's international policy (SER, Appendix 9) and translates it through its partnerships with several international professional organisations (e.g. European Opera Academy (EOA), EU Jazz, etc.), and a series of international contests in which they partake (e.g. Euregional Symphony Orchestra project,

International Jazz Contest, etc). Furthermore, the programme has an active participation in festivals with a cross-border orientation (e.g. Brussels-Antwerp-Maastricht symphony orchestra project (BAM), Jazz Maastricht, Euregional Chamber music festival, Preview Festival, etc.), and it has in place a set of international exchange agreements with European Conservatoires within the framework of the Erasmus scholarship. The CM also encourages an active participation of teachers in ERASMUS Staff Exchange and in the ERASMUS+ Strategic Partnership projects.

While it commends the attention that the Programme pays to expanding its international dimension by attracting students and teachers from across the world, the panel invites the Programme to reflect upon the meaning and relevance of “internationalisation” in the CM’s particular context. As such, the panel recommends that equal effort be invested in consolidating and strengthening existing international partnerships on the one hand, and supporting exchanges and joint projects between domestic and international students on the other hand, thus fully exploring all available pathways for purposefully practising internationalisation at home. The panel commends the Programme for its ambitious goal of transforming the CM into a world-leading conservatoire and underlines that, in this regard, a series of intermediate steps could be prioritised. As such, the panel notes the CM’s extraordinary advantage given by its location at the conjunction of three different borders and advises the Programme to prioritise attaining and maintaining a leadership position in the region. Subsequently, benchmarking exercises with institutions deemed role models for the CM may be instrumental for a further expansion of the CM’s role and influence on the international scene.

· MusiQuE standard 7: The programme has in place effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures.

#### **Quality assurance and enhancement**

Quality assurance and enhancement procedures in the Master of Music programme are stipulated in the Quality assurance handbook of the Zuyd Hogeschool. The CM collects regularly different kinds of statistical information (*Source: SER Appendix 19, p. 26*) on the performance of its programmes, on the satisfaction level of alumni (*Source: SER Appendix 20 A*), on the graduation phase (*Source: SER Appendix 20B*), on satisfaction with and relevance and content of the curricula (*Source: SER Appendix 20C*), etc. During the site visit, the students confirmed the regular surveys about the programme and the kind reminders they receive via e-mail. Likewise, the members of the Programme Committee mentioned to the review panel, that the quality department organises student councils as an additional instrument to get feedback from the students and to update them about the actions that have been taken and the impact that their feedback has had at programme level. To reach more students, CM tries to organise student councils together with student performances. As a further step towards quality enhancement, the CM has in place a Participation Council, giving students the possibility to express and share, through their elected representatives, concerns and challenges they experience in relation to various assignments they receive from teachers. In the SER provided to the panel, the management defined specific key performance indicators (Appendix 12), which are evaluated each year, to enhance further integration of the renewed mission, vision and strategic goals into the organisation and the master’s program curriculum. Taking into account all the elements in the above, the panel commends the CM and the Programme for its dedication to creating a quality culture and encourages the management to further their efforts in this direction.

· MusiQuE standard 8.1: The programme engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts.

#### **Cultural, artistic and educational contexts**

CM holds an important position as a local cultural centre for Maastricht and its surroundings. Every year the conservatoire organises around 450 public events, of which 300-350 take place outside the institute. They sustain tight connections with the region in joint performances at Bozar, and project-based performances together with the

Academy of Theatre (e.g. Bonefantenmuseum). In discussions with the panel, the management team highlighted that the CM takes responsibility, in the wider educational context, for organising young talent classes where the CM students give lessons in other schools and workshops for younger people. In the Master programme, CM strives towards incorporating local culture on an international level by working cross cultures, and stimulating the students to perform modern, innovative music starting from their own culture. Collaborations with the Art Faculty, Art Faculty lectorates, Technology Driven Art, Autonomy and Publicity in the Arts, and connections to the Maastricht Centre for the Innovation of Classical Music (MCICM) are in place (*Source: SER p.8*).

While the panel commends all these engagements, it notes that the CM could expand its horizon even more in this regard. Great potential for further intra- and cross-faculty collaborations and joint projects already exists. The Jazz Department represents a commendable example in this regard, one that the Classical Music Department can follow both internally, within the Programme, as well as externally through common projects with the Theatre Academy, for instance. The more interdisciplinarity the students are exposed to, the more versatile they are being trained to become. And versatility occupies a pole position among the Programme's stated learning outcomes.

· MusiQuE standard 8.2: The programme actively promotes links with various sectors of the music and other artistic professions.

#### **Links with the sectors of music and the artistic profession**

CM stays in touch with significant trends in the music society and the profession in various ways. All the teachers are active as professional musicians. It is the policy of the conservatoire to provide teachers with a part-time contract. The conservatoire works closely together with regional, Euregional and international partners in the professional field. e.g. the Classical Vocal Studies department with Opera Zuid, the Jazz department with Jazz Maastricht, the Jazz Orchestra and EUjazz, the composers and arrangers with Intro in Situ, the orchestral instruments with Philharmonie Zuid. CM works together with organisations which facilitate paid concerts for performances in care centres (Young for Old Foundation) and supporting programmes for the chamber music series (Theater aan het Vrijthof). The master students have the opportunity to get involved in competitions and awards like Music Award Maastricht, Henriette Hustinx-prijs and the Geveke Engelen Foundation. (*Source: SER p.4, SER Appendix 17*).

· MusiQuE standard 8.3: Information provided to the public about the programme is clear, consistent and accurate

#### **Information provided**

From the documentation and from the interviews held during the site visit, the review panel learnt that CM uses a wide variety of tools for providing information on its activities to both students and the public at large. In the guide *Conservatorium Maastricht in a Nutshell*" (*Source: SER Appendix 25*) students can find the most important practical information about studying at Conservatorium Maastricht. The website (<https://www.conservatoriummaastricht.nl/en>) is in English and has a clear structure. On the website students can find information about the institution, the different programmes, the content of all curricula, application and admission procedures, festivals, concerts, projects, etc. The communication office uses Facebook, Instagram and YouTube to communicate events and relevant updates to the community. The panel commends the CM and the Programme for its remarkable work in this regard, and recommends that they further their effort to maintain this level of accuracy, consistency and clarity of information they provide to the larger public.

## Conclusion:

With an enhanced focus on the CM's future plans, the SER received by the review team offered, in the analysis listed under each standard, an up to date quality analysis and a description of the extent to which these plans are being realised. The wealth of additional documentation that the panel received (36 annexes) and the information provided therein – e.g. the internal audit report (2017, Appendix 8a), the points for improvement and actions taken since (Appendix 8b), together with the reflections at the end of each chapter in the SER, enabled the review team to gain more insight into the actual status of the programme. During the interviews the review panel had the opportunity to engage in fruitful discussions with strong and determined members of the staff who were very open about the challenges that need to be tackled in the process of institutional re-organisation that the CM is currently undertaking, and seemed to have a very clear view on how they will manage this transition step by step.

The review panel finds the Programme's vision and mission clear and well formulated and commends its management for holding ambition as a key ingredient of success. At the same time, the panel shares the concern that setting ambitious goals may add additional pressure on existing mechanisms and procedures and advises therefore the Programme to calibrate their priorities in relation to existing resources. Continuous efforts to align the Programme's content, structure and methods are a necessity. The Programme is therefore advised to further their work in calibrating these ambitious goals with SMART objectives – specific and significant, measurable, attainable, relevant and properly resourced, and time bound.

The review panel appreciates the clear argumentation for the CM's choice to embrace the DNTP Learning Outcomes and finds the Master of Music a very attractive programme, capitalising on the CM's strategic placement at a crossroad of borders and on the wealth of accumulated experience of the international teaching staff employed.

The panel is positive about the organised public events and about the internal booking agency for both the Classical and the Jazz department. The review panel also appreciate the high degree of freedom for students and the Personal Development Plan (PDP) that helps students specialise and reflect on their own development process. The panel is convinced that the PDP makes the student responsible for a balanced and acceptable learning pathway within the set framework of the programme.

The review panel is very content with the opportunities offered by the programme to develop students' craftsmanship, entrepreneurial and research skills, but it noted that the different master programmes of the performing arts are not really connected yet. The CM made clear their intention to integrate the interdisciplinary projects curriculum wise, hence the review team takes the opportunity to encourage them in the pursuit of this objective and points to the already existing foundation in this regard: great emphasis on working together and inspiring ideas and initiatives for interdisciplinary projects came forth from both jazz teachers and classical students. The panel therefore recommends that the Programme and the CM continue nurturing intra- and cross-faculty collaborations, seizing all opportunities to embed interdisciplinary projects into the curriculum and thus achieve the intended versatility of the student profile.

The review panel commends the CM's overall quality culture in which artistic standards and educational quality go hand-in-hand: the PDCA-cycle is clearly integrated, learning outcomes are being reviewed by students and alumni, and validated with external stakeholders from the professional community. The review panel concludes that there is an ongoing positive development of quality mechanisms and procedures and recommends the CM and the programme to maintain its drive towards a flourishing quality culture, which is essential in the process of institutional reorganisation currently underway and in handling the challenges inherent to "these pains of growth".

The review panel observed an excellent-working Jazz department developing new initiatives to keep up the pace to meet the goals, and set the scene for the realisation of CM's ambitious mission. The strive of the Jazz Department for intra- and cross-faculty collaborations is a model worth following by other departments of the CM, an action that would certainly contribute to expanding the CM's horizon even further. With regard to the international dimension presented in the SER, the panel would recommend more measured statements as being more appropriate for self-reflective analyses. It may very well be the CM's ambition to become "the most international conservatoire". No doubt, the CM has proven its capacity to attract a wealth of international students and teachers from all over the world. In striving to fulfil its ambition though, the panel suggests that CM give further consideration to the meaning and relevance of "internationalisation" in the CM's particular context. As such, the panel recommends that equal effort be invested in consolidating and strengthening existing international partnerships on the one hand, and supporting exchanges and joint projects between domestic and international students on the other hand, thus fully exploring all available pathways for purposefully practising internationalisation at home. The panel also notes the CM's extraordinary advantage given by its location at the conjunction of three different borders and advises the Programme to prioritise attaining and maintaining a leadership position in the region. Subsequently, benchmarking exercises with international institutions deemed role models for the CM may be instrumental for a further expansion of the CM's role and influence on the international scene.

#### **Compliance with NVAO Standard 1**

**On the basis of the information in the SER, further documentation including annexes and the meetings during the site visit, the review team finds that the programme meets the NVAO standard 1.**

## 2. Teaching and learning environment

**NVAO Standard 2. The curriculum, the teaching and learning environment, and the quality of the teaching staff enable the incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.**

Corresponding MusiQuE standards:

- MusiQuE Standard 2.1: The goals of the programme are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its methods of delivery.

In this chapter the review panel describes the findings, considerations and conclusions on the learning environment.

### **Content, structure and methods of delivery (MusiQuE Standard 2.1)**

#### **The programme and application**

As described in Appendix 14 A, B, and C to the SER, the Master of Music programme is a two-year full-time course of 120 ECTS, with three possible tracks to follow – Classical Music, Jazz and Music Education. The website is clear on the prior education, language skills and the admission requirements for a student who wants to apply. After registration for admission and prior to the audition, the student candidate needs to compose a Curriculum Vitae (CV) and a Personal Development Plan (PDP). In the Personal Development Plan (PDP), s/he should describe her/his strengths, weaknesses and learning objectives with regard to the learning outcomes of the Master's programme. The student has to submit both documents one week before the audition. For the audition it is possible, for foreign students, to send a video and for the entrance examination, Skype and other applications are used for testing.

#### **Content and structure of the programme**

The review panel finds that the programme is clearly structured. It consists of different subjects for different programmes, whereas all the subjects and activities included in the curriculum can be grouped under two main pillars at the core of their intended learning outcomes: Excellent Craftsmanship, and Identity & Social Positioning (*Source: SER, p. 7*).

- *Excellent craftsmanship:*

Excellent craftsmanship places the artistic and technical development of the student at the core of the Jazz and Classical Music tracks. To this purpose, the students have individual lessons, supplemented by co-rehearsal, where relevant. In addition, they take part in ensemble activities (e.g. ensembles, bands, big bands, orchestra projects) and activities tailored to offer them an international orientation (e.g. masterclasses, summer courses, Erasmus activities). To achieve excellent craftsmanship, the students are offered a high degree of freedom to pursue the pathway of their choice: they can choose their own lecturer(s), masterclasses and type of ensemble activities, and they justify and evaluate these activities in their portfolio linked with the PDP. Under teacher guidance, the PDP can be adjusted throughout the programme, depending on the students' progress and taking into account their evolving interests. Excellent craftsmanship is featured in the Music Education track too, through a stronger emphasis on educational research in the field of instrumental teaching methods, teaching strategies, educational research development, and art and culture.

- *Identity and social positioning:*

Identity and social positioning stands for enabling the students to develop their professional and social skills and it is also featured in all three tracks of CM's Master of Music. As such, 'Your Art as a Business' (YAB) is embedded in the curriculum as a workshop where students can acquire hands-on knowledge, skills, and expertise both in terms of promoting and properly communicating their artistic products, but also in terms of

marketing strategies and the financial management related to their artistic profession. To achieve these successfully, they are purposefully guided towards finding their own voice and define their artistic identity, and, subsequently, towards properly profiling their artistic productions. The physical and mental well-being dimensions of the artistic profession are also fitted into the curriculum through the Health and Well-being module, by which students are being encouraged to gain self-awareness regarding the physical and mental circumstances during study and career.

The development of knowledge and skills to achieve both excellent craftsmanship, and identity & social positioning under all three educational tracks of the Master of Music are encouraged and sustained (a) through relevant study materials (e.g. music literature, audition repertoires and other video and audio sources commonly used in the current professional practice), (b) through research, (c) through continuous contact with the professional practice, and (d) through an international orientation rooted in the CM's internationalisation policy (see Chapter 1 pp. 9-10 above).

The review panel were content to note the strong philosophical structure on which the programme is organised and the solid curriculum coherence that it insures across all its educational tracks.

Student feedback is overall positive on the content of the curriculum: it scores 3.6 on a 5-point scale in the National Student Survey (NSE 2018) (*source: SER p. 15*). The overall study programme achieved a rating of 3.80 in this survey, with a high score for 'General atmosphere' (3.96) and connection with the professional field (4.00). The recent alumni survey (2019, Appendix 20A), shows a positive score for the main subject lessons (4.12 on a 5-point scale), but a lower score for cultural entrepreneurship (3.00). Based on the fact that the alumni followed the programme offered between 2012 and 2018, the introduction of YAB in the programme since 2017 and the positive evaluation of YAB by the current students (*SER p. 16, Jazz YAB: 4.10; Classic YAB 3.55 in 2019*), CM expects a higher score in the next alumni survey.

## Research

Based on the SER p. 8, research in the music programme is defined as practical and tailor-made and has to be based on the students' own professional practice with the intention to benefit their personal development as musicians. The review team notes that research forms a substantial part of the curriculum through the allocated number of hours and credits (ECTS). The panel endorses the Programme's choice for practical applicability for the professional field as the main criterion for the practice-oriented and practice-relevant research methodology to be used by the students in their research project. It was pointed out to the review team during meetings with representatives of the teaching staff that the philosophy behind the training in research skills is the creation of a research attitude as part of the practice and learning to recognise what research can mean as a part of the practice. To this purpose, CM organises classes in research methods, directs every student towards a research coach who will be responsible for offering guidance through the completion of their research project, and schedules peer-to-peer coaching sessions to further support them in finalising their research.

In order to ensure that all stakeholders (especially international) are clear about the concept of research as it is applied at CM, the review panel recommends that CM consider how best to express this in its strategic documents, e.g. by using the phrase '*informed, reflective artistic practice*'.

It was pointed out, both by students and by teaching staff that, at times, the research coach and the main subject teacher may overlap. The students reported that, given the structure of the programme, they have to register their choice for the research coach before the choice of the main subject. It was not clear to them if it was possible to change coaches if necessary. The panel recommends that the Programme identify the source of the confusion and take appropriate steps to either better communicate the options to students or, if appropriate, to allow more flexibility

for students to tailor their research as they progress in their study. The panel recommends as well to foster communication between the research coach and the main subject teacher in a structured way.

In 2017 Maastricht University, the South Netherlands Philharmonic and Zuyd University of Applied Sciences initiated the Centre for the Innovation of Classical Music (MCICM) (*Source: SER, p. v*). Now students can get involved in academic research on innovation in performance practice and music education. CM states in their SER that with this practice-based artistic research they integrate research skills, and artistic and technical development in the programme. Furthermore, students' writing and presentation skills are being trained through the requirement to create a report on the insights they gained through practice-oriented research and to present these orally. Students in the Music Education Track are required to do research in the field of instrumental teaching methods, pedagogy/teaching strategies, educational research development, art and culture. The panel noted that writing a research report is not deemed mandatory for students' graduation. Because the submission of a research project is not a condition for graduation, the review panel were able to sample only a limited number of masters research papers / presentations as part of the student portfolios. The panel recommends that CM consider profiling the research component of the Master of Music as, for example, '*informed, reflective artistic practice*' in order to maintain its curricular correspondence with similar programmes in conservatoires across the world.

Student feedback is positive on the research programme with a score of 3.53 (on a 5-point scale, alumni survey 2019, Appendix 20A). The NSE results show that jazz and classical students are reasonably satisfied with the research component. The average score for 'Scientific skills' is 3.44. From the collaboration with MCICM since 2017, CM expects further strengthening of the connection with practice-based research.

### **Preparation for the profession and internationality**

In addition to the training in the main subjects there are several other ways in which students are prepared for a professional career. Students can practice their professional skills in ensembles, Orchestras, Operas, festivals, productions, seminars and summer courses. The specialisations, especially Jazz and Classical Music, work together closely with partners in the professional world, e.g. the Classical Vocal Studies department with Opera Zuid, the Jazz department with Jazz Maastricht, the Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw, and EUjazz, the composers and arrangers with Intro in Situ, the orchestral instruments with *Philharmonie Zuid*.

The review panel is enthusiastic about the CM booking agencies for Classical and Jazz which are able to arrange professional-level concerts for students. CM also works with organisations which facilitate paid concerts, such as the Young for Old Foundation (performances in care centres), St. Jan's kerk, Centrummanagement Maastricht (Lazy Sunday Concerts), Theater aan het Vrijthof (supporting programmes for the chamber music series). Students are directly involved with contests and prizes like Music Award Maastricht, Henriette Hustinx-prijs and the Geveke Engelen Foundation.

Student feedback is overall positive on the preparation for the profession, with a score of 3.69 and attention for internationalisation that scores 3.98 (NSE 2018, SER p. 15). Alumni have been critical about the way the programme offered opportunities to gain international experience (2.94) (Appendix 20A). In response, more international projects (BAM, EOA) have been set up by CM (SER p. 16).

### **Didactic approach and methods of delivery**

It is noted in the SER (p. iv) that CM's didactical concept can be best described as a cognitive apprenticeship model: while motivation for learning is strongly directed by an inspiring main-subject teacher, there is an equal strong emphasis on guiding the master student in developing further professional autonomy. The panel was able to witness



during the classes they observed on site, the extraordinary force and artistic drive that main-subject teachers are able to channel in their students and they congratulate the teaching staff for their pedagogical artistry and the passion they evidently instil in their students. With regard to the classical track though, the review panel invites the CM to consider further the ways in which they might instil a greater sense of ownership among students, in terms of space to develop artistic identity. During the lessons they were able to observe, the panel noted the students' shyness in stepping outside the beaten track, towards experimentation and developing their own personal style. Students' reflective attitude, and self-confidence to critically select the elements most relevant for one's individual artistic becoming, are part and parcel of a *cognitive apprenticeship* model. The review team therefore invites the Programme towards further self-reflection with regard to their claim for "cognitive" in the apprenticeship model developed, at least with regard to some of its classical main subject groups.

According to the SER (p. iv), Cognitive Apprenticeships allow students to actively practice what they have learned in a mock "real-life" environment. The panel saw clear examples in the curriculum:

- Modelling as part of main subject lessons observed by the panel. It involves a Master carrying out a task so that student can observe and build a conceptual model of the processes that are required to accomplish the task.
- The review panel saw coaching lessons (YAB, Circle-lesson) consisting of observing students while they carried out a task and offering hints, feedback, modelling, reminders, etc.
- The PDP and the research project where the students have to articulate their knowledge, reasoning, or problem-solving processes.
- The Circle-lessons, the PDP, and all festivals, projects and professional real-life experiences that enable students to reflect and compare their own skills with those of an expert or another student.
- Work placement, productions and research where students are forced to do exploration to learn how to frame questions or problems that are interesting and that they can solve.

During the site visit the review panel observed lessons which illustrated real craftsmanship training in the Classic track, research-based improvisation in the Jazz track, and entrepreneurial skills training in YAB with a workshop in creating a business plan. The panel also observed a peer-to-peer feedback session in the Circle-lesson, and noted that the discussion could have benefited from more room for interaction between peers and a more fruitful dialogue between students collectively and their research coach. Similarly, in other lessons that the panel observed, they remarked a tendency for the main subject teacher to overstep the mediator role. The panel is aware that the students may have felt inhibited to interact during lessons due to the presence of the panel. Nevertheless, based on first hand observations on site, the panel encourages the students towards more self-assertiveness and suggests to CM the need for further staff development around the concept of teaching staff as "mediator".

The two main subject lessons the review panel attended in the Classic programme were good examples of pure modelling on a high level, which forms the first step in the Cognitive Apprenticeship Theory (CAT), (*Source: SER p. iv*). YAB, the Circle and the Jazz lessons had a clear coaching and scaffolding design, which includes additional modelling as necessary, corrective feedback, and reminders, all intended to bring the apprentice's performance closer to that of the master's. Part of the effectiveness of the cognitive apprenticeship model comes from learning in context on which the review panel agrees that students get and can create sufficient opportunities. Nurturing the students' ability for cognitive reflection and self-assertiveness is, however, equally essential in a cognitive apprenticeship model, and the panel takes the opportunity to encourage the Programme to reflect further on how they might develop a greater sense of cognitive reflection and self-assertiveness among students, at least with regard to their classical training. The panel therefore recommends that further consideration be paid by the Classical Music track towards openness for experimentation both in terms of students' artistic training, and in finding creative ways to stimulate their critical-thinking.

## Guidance

In terms of guidance, and given all of the above, the review panel finds that the right balance between freedom and guidance is difficult to strike. The review team agrees with the members of the Programme and the teaching staff that not all students have the same needs, which makes it difficult to predict the amount of guidance they need. From the application and selection phase onwards, CM tries to get a good view on the students' capacities and expectations for the future. Both the video messages collected in the SER's student chapter and the panel's discussions with the students during the site visit, revealed that all students embrace the freedom they are offered and struggle, at the same time, to find their own artistic identity. Deemed "a fascinating challenge" by students and teachers alike, a balance between freedom and identity can only be established on a case by case basis. In this regard, the panel draws attention to the fine line that exists between guidance and autonomy, and recommends the CM to explore greater flexibility in the students' classical training.

By introducing the PDP as early as the application and selection phase, it is clear for the panel that CM tries to introduce the student with the idea of identity from the very beginning. After intake, staff members guide the content and the process in various ways. Their different roles in this regard are clearly described (see SER p.11). To track the progress of development, the students create a Portfolio. The Portfolio Handbook (Appendix 34) guides the students to give a clear and detailed account of their progress and actions taken in search of their identity as musicians. In their portfolio, students have to create a Personal Development Plan (PDP), to offer an overview of their ensembles playing, and to reflect and collect evidence for their "free space" activities. Despite all these measures being in place, some students reported not to have a clear vision on their future identity during discussions with the panel, and to have experienced rather weak guidance.

To address the unpredictability of needs in terms of guidance, CM has an academic guidance counsellor that works pro-actively. He contacts students if their results are causing concern. The panel observed that, by the time results are present, a lot of time in a two-year programme is lost already. Students seldom go to an academic guidance counsellor at their own initiative, even if they need help (SER p. 17). CM therefore encourages students to help each other as well. To this purpose, they trained an ambassadors' team in 2016. The ambassadors are equipped to help incoming students with practical matters. They function as an easily accessible source of information, and can refer students to academic guidance counsellors or other members of staff, if necessary. Apart from face-to-face individual contact, the ambassadors use all sorts of digital communication. A good example of this is the Facebook group they set up for incoming students. New students can read the responses to individual questions from other incoming students as well; and this was reported to make communication much more efficient when the students are looking for more guidance.

The panel therefore recommends that the CM find more effective ways to monitor the delicate balance between freedom and guidance, and pro-actively offer additional support to incoming students on a case by case basis, thus preserving the advantages of the freedom offered to their studentship as a whole.

- MusiQuE standard 4.1: Members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/pedagogues/researchers.
- MusiQuE standard 4.2: There are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programmes.
- MusiQuE standard 5.3: The programme has sufficient qualified support staff.

### **Teaching staff and supporting staff (MusiQuE Standard 4.1, 4.2 and 5.3)**

The CM is an international teaching community. The large proportion of teaching staff are part-time teachers and active as performers or researchers in the music professions at international level. The quality assurance surveys indicate that the satisfaction of the students with the teaching staff is high. In the Graduation Phase Survey from 2018, the main subject lecturers score 4.33, in the NSE 2018 the score for the 'Lecturers of the programme' was 4.16, both on a 5-point scale (SER, p.16).

From the overview on the website and the encounters during the site visit, the review panel is convinced about the broad and high-quality composition of the teachers in terms of content, pedagogical and educational expertise. In 2018-2019, 13.5 FTE of the teaching staff are allocated specifically to the Master of Music programmes, guest teachers and the participation in overall projects not included (*Source: SER p. 12*). In terms of guidance, the different roles of the main subject teacher or subject coach, research coach and study coach are all defined very clear. All students can rely upon a study coach, who guides them in drawing up, compiling and developing their portfolio and their PDP. Students also have a main subject teacher or subject coach, responsible for guiding the artistic and technical development of the student. And, for guidance in their research projects, the students get support from a research coach with experience in research in his own profession (SER p.11).

Nevertheless, the panel notes that, at times, these roles may overlap – e.g. the main subject teacher may also be the research coach of the same student. When that happens, students reported that preference may be given to main subject coaching to the detriment of research. Even when these roles are performed by different teachers, the panel recommends that the Programme review the effectiveness of communication between these different coaches. A structured conversation between the main subject teacher and the research coach might be beneficial for the applicability of the research work. It is therefore worth considering by the Programme to what extent such a conversation might be embedded in the study plan in a more structural rather than an incidental way.

The panel was pleased with the high level of expertise of supporting staff in quality assurance, facility management, and public relations and communications. Students, however, reported that the student administration team is currently lacking an international students' advisor, even though the review team had the opportunity to meet the international officer during its meeting with senior administrators. The review panel therefore recommends the Programme to take into consideration the most effective ways to further increase the visibility of the international office among its student population, given that especially international students are faced with a variety of particular administrative issues upon registration, which were reported to raise certain challenges for their successful first year immersion.

- MusiQuE standard 5.1: The institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programme.
- MusiQuE standard 5.2: The institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the study programmes.

## Resources

The CM is situated in two locations in Maastricht. The Classical Music department is housed in the main building of CM, Bonnefantenstraat 15, situated in the centre of Maastricht. The Jazz and Education departments are housed in the Franciscus Romanusweg 90, also in the centre of Maastricht, at 15 minutes' walking distance from the main building. During the site visit the review panel was able to visit both buildings and were positive about the accommodation and facilities. The review panel was especially pleased with the professional recording studio, and the high-quality audio-visual and sound equipment available. The review team noted the computer facilities, the library and the access to relevant (digital) scientific publications to be sufficient to support the needs of the students. Furthermore, special music software and all digital communication programmes are installed on the available computers (Osiris, Asimut, Moodle). The students reported, though, a shortage in practice rooms for students which was, in turn, acknowledged by the Programme's management. The panel thus recommends that a schedule with extended opening hours be considered for practice rooms. The Programme therefore is advised to assess to what extent it would be feasible to implement such a measure and whether further financial assistance by the CM and the Zuyd University of Applied Sciences might be required. The panel considers necessary that the Programme be offered all support needed at Faculty and University level to ensure extended practice hours for its students.

## Financial resources and communication

CM is financed via the Dutch system for Higher Education through different types of income (*Source: SER, p.13*):

- Student tuition fees, set annually by law for Dutch and EU students. For the 2019-2020 academic year, the fees are € 2.083
- Funding from the government for European students.

Non-European students are not funded by the government. These students pay much higher tuition fees, set by the institution. In the 2019-2020 academic year, the fees are € 7.850. Excellent international non-EU students can apply for a Zuyd Excellence Scholarship. This offers a net discount on the tuition fees of € 3,600 per year. Additional scholarships, like the Holland Scholarships, are available. One-time financial aid can be made available through the CM Foundation upon successful application.

Based on what the panel was able to observe during the site visit, the institution's current financial resources enable the successful delivery of the study programmes. The quest for additional financial support opening pathways for ever growing possibilities is, of course, embedded in the everyday life of any institution. But the CM seems to make the best use insofar of their available financial resources. Further support in this regard by the Zuyd University of Applied Sciences would undoubtedly be welcomed, especially with regard to maintenance costs for existing musical instruments, to investment in new musical instruments, or to extended opening hours for practice rooms.

- MusiQuE standard 6.1: Effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the programme.
- MusiQuE standard 6.2: The programme is supported by an appropriate organisational structure and clear decision-making processes.

### **Communication, organisation and decision-making (MusiQuE Standard 6.1 and 6.2)**

Students and teachers alike are provided with relevant information through various channels. Besides a well-structured website and social media tools, there is an intranet for all employees and students that offers general information (in Dutch and English) about working and studying at Zuyd University. It includes information for international students, help for student finance, rights and duties. All the employers at the Zuyd University use the Zuyd email as the most important communication tool to contact each other, accessible via webmail. For more specific communication between teachers and students three other virtual learning platforms are used: Moodle, Azimut, and Osiris. In Moodle the CM and programme staff publish the course descriptions, manuals and other relevant specific information about the programme (e.g. schedules and timetables, the EER, or the annual assessment calendar). CM equally uses the two other platforms: Osiris and Asimut. Osiris is a tracking system with information on programmes, study progress and test results, while Asimut is used for planning and producing timetables and allocating (study)rooms, and it can be accessed via smartphone too. Moreover, support offices and coaching staff are also available to assist students in their educational and training experience.

It was highlighted during the previous internal audit (2017), as well as in the panel's discussions with students during the site visit, that while justified and fit for purpose, all these different channels and tools for communication sometimes come across as quite confusing for new students who may have studied in different communication cultures in universities all over the world. Some students reported that they feel overwhelmed by the amount of administration they need to deal with upon arrival in Maastricht, and the fragmentation of the information shared through so many different channels. In particular, the structure of the content on Moodle was not necessarily appreciated by the students. Likewise, it was brought to the panel's attention that the student administration is not always able to adequately support foreign students to tackle the often complex administrative issues they encounter. Along the same lines, the video messages included in the SER's Student Chapter show students describing their experience during their first year at the CM "as if they were constantly trying to catch a train that's already been running for a while".

For the CM, internal communication represents an on-going concern, with its two buildings, part-time teaching staff and high proportion of foreign students. CM already took actions on the internal communication issues by installing Moodle and is aware of the current problems in transparency and alignment with the other platforms like Osiris, or Asimut. The panel congratulates the CM for its self-reflectiveness on this matter and recommends that they streamline their communication channels, giving priority to those reported as most fit for purpose by both part time teaching staff and students alike.

Furthermore, the panel takes note and commends the CM for the various sources of support made available to its students: the academic guidance counsellor, the student counsellor, the confidential advisor, the Legal Protection Office, the student psychologist, the Academic Affairs Office, the Examination Board, or the student ambassadors (*Source: SER p.13*). Despite all these resources and support systems in place, confusion still prevailed among students interviewed, with regard to staff or offices to be addressed with matters such as discrimination, or sexual harassment. The management team also confirmed that students, indeed, encounter difficulties in seeking and accessing the right type of assistance. To address this issue and to increase the efficiency in communication, it was brought to the panel's attention that a buddy-system for students is currently being tested at Zuyd University level, and it will be implemented in CM in case of success.

In light of the evidence presented, the panel reinforces its recommendation that the CM and the programme prioritise their communication through the channels reported as most fit for purpose, by students and teaching staff alike. At the same time, the Programme is advised to consider how to better enable its administrative staff for offering adequate support to foreign students facing particularly complex bureaucratic challenges that may hinder their successful first year immersion. The panel also recommends that the effectiveness of all the various support mechanisms in place be re-evaluated and streamlined, in a way that empowers students to easily find the guidance they need, and identify and use the right set of resources at their disposal. In this regard, the panel commends the Programme and the CM for their Student Ambassadors' initiative and confirms that it was well received by the students.

### **Conclusion:**

The review panel was pleased with the open-minded atmosphere amongst the students, management team and teachers. The review panel finds that all three tracks of the Programme – Classical Music, Jazz and Music Education, are clearly structured under the two pillars: excellent craftsmanship, and identity & social positioning. The panel considers a commendable feature of the programme that entrepreneurship and freedom of choice are embedded into the curriculum, thus challenging students to develop their own artistic identity and voice. While it appreciates the significant amount of freedom allowed for the student to create her/his personal programme, the panel is mindful of the burden that such freedom might represent for students who do not have a clear vision about the pathway they want to pursue from the very beginning of the programme, and who might find it difficult to remain consistent and persistent in their Personal Development Plan. Therefore, the panel advises that more guidance be offered at the beginning of the programme, in order to ensure that the personal projects of all enrolled students are set on track at approximately the same time.

The review panel acknowledges that a right balance between identity and guidance is difficult to strike, and cannot be standardised especially since not all students have the same needs. Predicting the amount of guidance that students may need never ceases to represent a challenge. The panel notes, though, that the key lies with the teaching staff's persistence and resilience to find the appropriate balance between guidance and identity on a case by case basis.

The panel found the teacher/student ratio to be satisfactory and was impressed with the excellent artistic craftsmanship and the level of pedagogical skill amongst the teaching staff. Observing a series of very good lessons both under the Jazz and the Classical Music tracks, the panel was convinced about the practical implementation of the educational concept in the curriculum. Furthermore, the panel commends the Programme for the attention paid to the importance of the entrepreneurial training provided through the YAB. Students are thus guided to develop skills in project design, communication, interaction and leadership, which will prove essential in their future artistic careers.

With regard to the cognitive apprenticeship model, the panel notes that the main subject lessons observed in the Classical track were good examples of pure modelling on a high level. This is, indeed, the first step in the Cognitive Apprenticeship Theory (CAT) (*Source: SER, p. iv*). YAB, the Circle-lessons of peer to peer feedback, and the Jazz lessons had a clear coaching and scaffolding design, which includes additional modelling as necessary, corrective feedback, and reminders, all intended to bring the apprentice's performance closer to that of the master's. Part of the effectiveness of the cognitive apprenticeship model comes from learning in context on which the review panel agrees that students get and can create sufficient opportunities. Nurturing the students' ability for cognitive reflection and self-assertiveness is, however, equally essential in a cognitive apprenticeship model, and the panel takes the opportunity to encourage the Programme to reflect further on how they might develop a greater sense of cognitive reflection and self-assertiveness among students, at least in the students' classical training.

The panel therefore recommends that further consideration be paid by the Classical Music track towards openness for experimentation both in terms of students' artistic training, and in finding creative ways to stimulate their critical-thinking. With regard to research, the panel endorses the Programme's choice for the practice-oriented and practice-relevant research methodologies that they encourage students to implement in their research project. The review team commends the Programme's attention to creating a research attitude as part of the practice and teaching students to recognise what research can mean as a part of the practice: classes in research methods are included in the curriculum, students are directed towards a research coach and peer to peer coaching sessions are regularly scheduled. The panel noted, nevertheless, that writing a research report is not deemed mandatory for students' graduation. While the research projects that the panel was able to access were convincing, the panel suggests to the CM that the research component of the Master of Music might be more appropriately profiled as, for example, *informed, reflective artistic practice* in order to maintain its curricular correspondence with similar programmes in conservatoires across the world.

The review panel noted the efforts by the CM to improve the internal communication, and encourages the Programme and the CM to continue addressing this ongoing concern. Enhancing the administration's capacity to recognise and address the complex challenges that foreign students encounter should be featured among the CM's primary concerns, especially since significant effort is being invested into maintaining and expanding a fairly diverse international studentship.

The review panel understands the challenges that foreign students reported to encounter and how the existing tools and amount of information may come across as overwhelming. It thus recommends the Programme to provide more administrative help and IT-guidance in order to get all documents delivered and information structured in time. Furthermore, the panel recommends that the multifarious communication channels be streamlined, giving priority to those reported as most fit for purpose by both part time teaching staff and students.

With regard to facilities and allocated resources, the panel finds them adequate to realise the curriculum. The panel notes, however, that the availability of study spaces for students and workspaces for teaching staff could be further improved. A shortage of practice rooms was particularly highlighted by the students. The panel therefore recommends that a schedule with extended opening hours be considered for practice rooms.

### **Compliance with NVAO Standard 2**

**On the basis of the information in the SER, further documentation including annexes and the meetings during the site visit, the review team finds that the programme meets the NVAO standard 2.**

### 3. Assessment

#### **NVAO Standard 3. The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.**

Corresponding MusiQuE standards:

- MusiQuE standard 3.1: There are clear criteria for student admission, based on an assessment of their artistic/academic suitability for the programme.
- MusiQuE standard 2.3: Assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes.

In this chapter the review panel describes the findings, considerations and conclusions on the assessment system.

- MusiQuE standard 2.3: Assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes.

#### **Assessment policy (MusiQuE Standard 2.3)**

The rules relating to assessments and examinations at CM are laid down in the Education and Examination Regulations (EER) (Appendix 14) and in the Assessment Policy Document (Appendix 18). The Programme outlines therein the specific requirements for assessing music education, and the connection between the learning outcomes, the curriculum, and the assessment methods employed (*Source: SER, p. 20*). The international frameworks for higher education, the CM's educational vision and the Programme's learning outcomes constitute key principles in CM's Assessment Policy (Appendix 18).

Summative tests are used by the Programme to determine the students' progress in acquiring skills and/or achieving learning outcomes. Information on these tests' connection with the intended learning outcomes, the period in which they were taken and how many ECTS were awarded for successfully passing the exams, was made available to the panel both in the SER and in the Assessment Policy Document (Appendix 18). Based on information collected during the interviews with students and alumni, as well as through direct observation of final assessments, the panel is able to confirm that the tests resemble, to the extent possible, realistic situations from the professional practice.

The main tests are assessed by committees of internal and external experts. CM uses an assessment protocol to assess recitals, research projects and research presentations (*Source: Assessment Policy Document, Appendix 18*). Assessment forms, formats for reports to be submitted etc. are included in the Handbook Portfolio (Appendix 34). Students always get feedback on the results of the main tests, both orally and in writing.

Based on the information listed above, the review panel finds CM's vision on student assessment in the Master of Music to be in line with its educational vision. Through its observations on site, the review panel recognised in CM's assessment system the high degree of independence for the student – the freedom they have to determine the programme of recitals, to choose research topics, to organise ensemble activities, etc. The panel can confirm that students are often assessed individually, even though collaborative assignments also occur quite regularly – e.g. for students' entrepreneurial skills within the YAB, where every assessment is always meant to be a learning experience. The review panel is positive about the process-based-assessment (e.g. the PDP), which makes the assessment a steering mechanism for the learning process.

From the assessment of final recitals observed directly or, where the case, electronically, it was clear for the panel that the students' artistry and mastery of the musical-technical aspects of their profession are at the core of the Master programme. Aspects of artistic identity appeared to be, however, less important at least in the Classical Music



track. As the panel understands CM's policy, the final recital represents, after all, an aptitude test for the profession: the student is judged based on generally recognised standards and must demonstrate not only the achievement of learning outcomes, but the fulfilment of (international) requirements for the Master's level more broadly (*Source: Appendix 3, p. 6*). The learning process is no longer at the forefront, the students have to show that they are ready for professional practice. Therefore, the assessment criteria for the final assessment only refer to the musical performance, more specific they refer to the "domain of qualification" regarding the "artistic and technical development". The panel has seen tests and feedback forms and is of the opinion that the Programme has a good assessment system that is clearly linked to the stated learning outcomes and supports the students in their development towards professionalism. The quality of the assessments is assured by the involvement of an educational specialist in the development of the tests. The assessors are all experts in their field. The students and alumni alike also confirmed to the panel the supportive value of the feedback they receive.

### **Execution of assessment policy**

The test chosen formats and the connection between learning outcomes, curriculum, assessment and ECTS are outlined in the Assessment Policy Document (Appendix 18). The Conservatorium Maastricht uses assessment protocols and assessment forms to assess main subject exams, research exams, and other important assessments. All information about assessments and grading can be found in each course description (Appendix 35) as well as in the Osiris tracking system. Assessment often takes place in a group of lecturers, in order to ensure objectivity in scoring. For the assessment of the PDP a Handbook Portfolio is in place (Appendix 34) with schedules and procedures. Likewise, for the assessment of research projects, a Research Protocol is in place (Appendix 36).

The review panel were content to note the relationship between the assessment formats and the intended learning outcomes that the CM provided through the SER and related documentation.

According to the Handbook Portfolio (Appendix 34) every student should build up a Personal Development Plan. It is a dynamic document in which the student plans and reflects on his/her personal development. Every student is asked to fill out this document as part of the application to the Master of Music and to review it at the start of year 1. Throughout the programme this document will be further adjusted taking into account the students' individual progress and their evolving interests. The Handbook Portfolio carefully outlines the principles, components and deadlines for the assessment of the PDP. According to the Handbook, the PDP is used to collect evidence for the created products and the corresponding feedback received. The review panel finds the PDP to be an effective and helpful instrument to support the students' learning process provided that a right balance between teacher guidance and student independence be ensured.

For the research skills the student draws up a master project proposal and formulates a research question. This practical research results in a master project presentation, which will be assessed by other lecturers than the students research coach. The lector regularly sits in research assessment committees to see if more professional development of research coaches is needed. In the Research Protocol (Appendix 36) all the requirements for the research projects are properly explained.

CM's approach to artistic research (p. 7, Appendix 36, Research Protocol) refers to research that leads towards music or musical performance, and research that uses music or musical performance to answer a question. The panel suggests to the CM that a more accurate profiling of this activity may be considered when revising its strategic documents (see Chapter 2, pp. 15-16 above).

At the CM's request, two members of the review panel were invited to undertake an additional one-day visit to attend final assessment sessions (date of visit: 12 - 13 June 2019). During this preliminary visit, five final assessments were observed by the two panel members and an interim report with these observations was shared with the whole review panel and taken into account while evaluating the Programme's assessment system. Furthermore, all panel

members observed video recordings of 13 final assessments and studied feedback reports by exam committee members, where these were available.

The panel thus learnt, through first hand observation, that the assessment criteria are clearly formulated, they have a general character, and they are familiar to the students. They refer to instrumental skills, objective musical skills, artistic outcome, stage presence and personal vision. According to the regulations, the chair of the Examination Board hands out the individual assessment forms to all examiners and explains what must be completed before the examination. Although the regulations state that the mark should be based on performance, and not on the development of the student, the panel observed that teachers sometimes refer to their own experiences about the student's attitude during the preparation process. According to the teachers interviewed by the panel, the criteria have made assessments more transparent. However, in the assessments observed, the panel noted that rubrics were not consistently applied, and that there was a tendency towards high grading for performances that are not necessarily comparable. The panel therefore recommends that rubrics with evaluative criteria, quality definitions for those criteria at particular levels of achievement, and a scoring strategy be coherently introduced during assessments in order to foster consistency in grading across internal and external assessors.

The students reported during their meeting with the review panel that they are familiar with the criteria of assessment, because these criteria are linked to the course objectives and they are discussed during lessons early on. They also mentioned how much more they appreciate the immediate feedback after a practical assignment, rather than the mark or the qualifying result they get, and how crucial they find this feedback to be for the continuous adjustment of their learning path.

The Graduation Phase Survey 2018-2019, made available to the panel, shows that the graduation phase was rated positively for the opportunities it offers to students to autonomously give direction to their own professional development (4.11); for its opportunities to respond to current developments in the field/discipline and profession (3.67) on a 5-point-scale. The satisfaction on the clarity of the assessment criteria and the feedback are both (4.17). From the NSE 2018 the connection between the assessment and the content is rated (3.57).

Based on all documentation received and the information collected on site, the panel is able to confirm that the CM and the Programme employ clearly defined and transparently communicated assessment methods, attuned to the intended learning outcomes. In this regard, the panel finds the programme's system of assessment as adequate and in line with NVAO requirements.

Observing the tendency towards high grading, the panel invites the CM to reflect upon the most effective ways to balance the investment in the development of excellent craftsmanship with that of an artistic identity among students both in terms of teaching and learning, as well as in terms of assessment. The panel notes that the high value placed on traditional technique and craftsmanship, at least as far as the Classical Music track is concerned, is mirrored by the system of assessment and the high scores awarded to performances that were less innovative, in the view of the review panel. The panel notes that a way forward for the Programme may be, on the one hand, to find appropriate balance between guidance and identity, on a case by case basis, all throughout the students' learning process. And, on the other hand, to introduce rubrics for final assessments, clearly defining levels of achievement for each criterion of evaluation, as well as a scoring strategy that would be coherently employed by both internal and external assessors. Likewise, the panel advises that a structured discussion across exam committee members about the intended learning outcomes and the role of identity among these, would help to steer the assessment towards a more objective appreciation of the students' personal artistic signature on the repertoires they select for their final recitals.

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

### **Intake and admission procedure (MusiQuE Standard 3.1)**

The panel finds that the qualifications and process for applying to the Master in Music are clearly stated on the website. For the candidates who live at a great distance from Maastricht, the admission system is flexible. All documents can be uploaded and CM sometimes allows applicants to send out a DVD or a link to a YouTube video. Skype is used for streaming contact and CM is experimenting with ZOOM as a streaming examination facility. Exemptions are granted by the Examination Board, based on the recognition of prior learning or qualifications (so-called RPL, Dutch EVC).

The CM was considered as a top choice by many of the students interviewed by the panel, on the one hand for its excellent pool of main subject teachers recruited from all over the world and, on the other hand, for its strategic position at the crossroad of three borders, in the heart of Europe which allows students a broader access and exposure to the professional field.

Based on what the panel was able to observe during the site visit, the Programme has clear selection criteria in place and the admission procedure seems to be effective. The CM is obviously successful in attracting a large pool of international students and the programme offers a transition year (Appendix 5) for students who encounter difficulties in adapting to the programme's requirements during their first year of studies.

### **Quality assurance**

The programme uses the following criteria for the quality assurance of assessment (Assessment Policy Document, Appendix 18)

- Validity of assessments is screened by aligning the learning objectives, assessment criteria, curriculum content and test assignments (Appendix 27);
- Reliability of assessments is increased by the four-eye-principle: on the one hand the use of multiple internal and external experts for assessments, and, on the other hand, the use of qualified assessors and evaluation courses for assessors (SKE, Senior Kwalificatie Examinering /BKE, Basis Kwalificatie Examinering)
- Transparency in the assessment is given by communicating clear procedures, rules and criteria to the students. The results of the assessment are made transparent through feedback: the judgement should be substantiated orally and in writing based on the assessment criteria.

The programme has a quality assurance procedure in place, keeping in check the quality, reliability and relevance of testing and assessment (Quality Assurance Manual, Appendix 19). The quality instruments the programme uses to check whether the intended learning outcomes are in accordance with the achieved learning outcomes are: peer reviews, module evaluations, graduation evaluations, written year evaluations among students and lecturers, profile surveys among alumni and evaluations of quality assurance via the internal and external audit.

CM has an Examination Board which is a body responsible for determining, in an objective and expert manner, whether a student meets the conditions laid down by the EER regarding the knowledge, understanding, and skills required for the award of a degree. The Examination Board gathers information from students and teaching staff, attends examinations, and handles complaints from students and teaching staff. As such, the Examination Board gets a good overview on the quality of testing and assessment and, based on that, supplies the management with both solicited and unsolicited advice. Every academic year, the Examination Board reports on its activities in the annual report (Appendix 22). The Examination Board has four members: a chair, a secretary and two members from the teaching staff. Affinity with and knowledge of the different programmes is ensured throughout its membership.

Because of the representation of all departments, the members are allowed to act as external advisors, but most of all as 'critical friends' when it comes to judgement and decision-making. The members of the Examination Board attend network meetings and other training activities in the field of testing and assessment. Zuyd University offers regular training for Examination Board members. The composition, tasks, responsibilities and organisation of the Examination Board are fully described in the Handbook Examination Committee 2019 (Appendix 23).

With regard to CM's ambition to focus on students' flexibility, networking, and artistic identity in addition to the musician's artistic-technical development, the panel recommends that the Programme engage in broad discussion about the notion of identity. The panel also recommends that the assessors be trained not only with respect to assessment procedures, but equally with consideration to the innovative content of the students' performances.

In the same vein, while the panel finds the written feedback given after the final examination to be helpful and substantiated, it recommends that the Programme consider how 'identity' is assessed and how feedback on that might be made explicit by assessors during examinations. The review panel recommends that CM invest further effort in standardising the collection of written feedback, and include more explicitly the examination criteria with clearly defined levels of achievement in the written feedback forms, thus allowing for a more consistent and comparable collection of data.

## Conclusion

The review panel is content to note that an assessment policy is in place, along with clear assessment regulations. The review team concludes that the intended learning outcomes are adequately translated into learning objectives for various courses, and the assessment criteria and methods in place relate well to the learning objectives and test assignments. The assessment methods used are adequate for measuring the achievement of the learning objectives and, as such, they ensure the realisation of the intended learning outcomes.

The panel notes that the assessment forms could be further improved and be made more tangible, focusing on more aspects of the musician's artistry than only technical skills – i.e. like improvisation, stage presentation, and artistic identity.

In order to attain a higher level of consistency in marking and grading, and, more importantly, to better balance technical mastery to artistic identity, the review panel advises the Programme and the CM to fine-tune the evaluations criteria. To this purpose, the panel recommends that rubrics be introduced for final assessments, clearly defining levels of achievement for each criterion of evaluation, as well as a scoring strategy that would be coherently employed by both internal and external assessors.

Likewise, the panel stresses the need for a broad discussion at the level of the Programme with regard to the notion of artistic identity and its role in relation to intended learning outcomes. This would allow for a shared understanding of artistic identity across the different tracks of the Programme, and would enable its further formalising in the feedback forms used during student assessments. Subsequently, the panel advises that a structured discussion across exam committee members about the intended learning outcomes and the role of artistic identity among these take place as part of the preparations for final assessments, in order to ensure a more objective evaluation of the students' personal artistic signature on the repertoires they select for their final recitals. Furthermore, the panel advises that the role of artistic identity be formally enhanced in the written forms used by assessors during student examinations.

The review panel found that immediate feedback rather than the final mark is highly appreciated by the students in the assessment process, and it commends the CM and the Programme for successfully embedding the assessment procedure into the learning process. At the same time, it was noted by the panel that written feedback was not

collected consistently, nor in a homogeneous way. The review panel therefore recommends the CM on the one hand to invest further effort in standardising the collection of written feedback and, on the other hand, to include more explicitly the examination criteria and the corresponding definitions of achievement levels in the written feedback forms in order to allow for a more consistent and comparable collection of data.

The review panel also took note of the fact that the student's main subject teacher is a member of the examination committee. As such, it is justifiable that the teacher's first-hand experience with the student's development process may be subconsciously weighted in during assessment, even though regulations state that the mark should be based on exam performance only. The review team therefore recommends the CM to consider how best to counteract this tendency, e.g. by excluding the main subject teacher from the Examination Committee, in order to better simulate real life audition conditions and to ensure increased objectivity during final assessments. In addition, for a better inclusion of research activities, the panel recommends the CM to consider exploring possible connections between the artistic examination and the research project.

Lastly, the review panel appreciates the training activities in the field of testing and assessment frequently organised by Zuyd University, which enable the Examination Committee to perform its legal task to the required standards.

### **Compliance with NVAO Standard 3**

**On the basis of the information in the SER, further documentation including annexes and the meetings during the site visit, the review team finds that the programme meets the NVAO standard 3.**

## 4. Achieved learning outcomes

### NVAO Standard 4. The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Corresponding MusiQuE standard:

- MusiQuE standard 3.2: The programme has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students.

In this chapter the review panel describes the findings, considerations and conclusions on the achievement of intended learning outcomes.

#### **Monitoring progression and achievement (MusiQuE Standard 3.2)**

CM uses a student tracking system Osiris, designed to give access to students, teachers and staff members to all relevant information on programmes, study progress and test results. The Osiris system shows the fulfilment of all required courses and registers the exemptions following the Examination Committee's approval.

CM uses different methods to assess if the achieved learning outcomes are in accordance with the intended learning outcomes. The programme uses a diverse mix of test formats to gain insights on the students' achievement progress. In the graduation phase, students are being assessed based on their a final recital or concert, and their portfolio collected in their PDP. Even though not compulsory for all programme's tracks, the students may also include in their portfolio the presentation of their research project.

#### **Final recital/concert**

In preparing for the site visit, the review panel studied thirteen recordings and documents from students that graduated in the past two years. Moreover, five final assessments were directly observed by two of the panel members in a preliminary site visit organised for this purpose during the summer exam period. Their interim report was shared with all members of the panel and served as further evidence when evaluating the achievement of intended learning outcomes. Overall, the review panel appreciated the balanced mix of student recitals and master projects that the CM provided. The panel finds that the extent to which the students achieve the intended learning outcomes is sufficient for a positive evaluation. Nevertheless, a greater connection between the students' artistic output and their reflective skills may foster a better achievement of the intended learning outcomes in the future.

Direct observations of final assessments and the recordings of student recitals alike, provided evidence to suggest that assessment criteria and feedback forms are not homogeneously and consistently used by all examination commissions. To this effect, the panel reinforces its recommendation that the CM invest further effort in standardising the collection of written feedback and include the examination criteria more explicitly in the written feedback forms in order to ensure a more comparable collection of data.

The right balance between guidance and technical mastery and the space to develop an artistic identity was a recurrent theme in the interviews with alumni, and representatives of the profession as well. Versatility and artistic identity were qualities reported to ensure a higher employability rate by both alumni and representatives of the professional field during their meeting with the review panel. Such features were reported to be better embodied by Jazz graduates, while graduates of Classical Music seemed to be better known for excellent craftsmanship and technical mastery which are already in high supply on the artistic performance market.

More collaboration between artistic departments and more space for experimentation and improvisation for students, especially those in the Classical track, were recommendations wholeheartedly expressed by both alumni and

representatives of the profession. The strong focus on craftsmanship combined with a lower emphasis on identity and social positioning in some classical study paths of the programme may, therefore, make students' professional life more difficult after graduation. In this context, the panel takes the opportunity to stress again that further consideration be paid by the Classical Music track towards openness for experimentation both in terms of students' artistic training, and in finding creative ways to stimulate their critical-thinking.

Nevertheless, the panel found that, overall, CM's alumni were able to maintain contact with the profession after graduation even though not all of them were able to secure employment right away – some of them chose to pursue further studies, or to embrace teaching while conducting their own freelance projects. Others began careers in artistic management, while also continuing performing in different concerts. Taking into account the challenges of an ever fluctuating and fluid labour market especially in the artistic domain, the panel concludes that the considerable extent to which CM alumni are able to secure jobs in the profession, in the Dutch context, endorses the Programme's capacity to achieve intended learning outcomes.

In the student survey, the feedback on achieved research skills is overall positive (3.59) and also on the achieved skills in general (3.9) (SER p. 15, NSE 2018). The results from the Graduation Phase Survey (2018-2019), held annually among students shortly after their final examination, are also positive. The graduates rate the graduation phase at an average of 7.38 on a scale of 1 to 10. On a 5-point-scale the content of the graduation phase as characteristic of the international profession(s) it trains for was rated 3.89. For the opportunities in giving autonomously direction to the professional development, the graduation phase was rated 4.11 and to respond to current developments in the field/discipline and profession it was rated 3.67 (SER p. 15, 16). The 2019 survey among alumni who graduated between 2014 and 2018 (Appendix 20A) shows they are satisfied with their current profession (3.8) and income (3.6). 88% of the income comes from professional music activities. (SER, p. 24)

The panel noted as well that the CM holds up to date records of their successful alumni (Appendix 31), but statistics reflecting alumni's employment record were not immediately evident. The review panel therefore recommends that the CM considers developing and implementing a transparent tracking system of their alumni, in line with current GDPR regulations. Aside from the statistical value of such data in the assessment of achieved learning outcomes, building up a consistent data base of alumni would enable the CM to expand their network and further consolidate the bridge between the learning environment and the profession, enabling fruitful exchanges between current students and former alumni.

## Conclusion

The review panel studied a selection of final assignments and research projects. In addition, the review panel attended five final examinations (recitals) of the various specialisations during the extra site visit. Based on the information gathered from these sources, and the interviews with alumni and representatives of the professional field, the review panel can conclude that the Programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved, and that graduates meet the competencies required of their degree programme.

The review panel was convinced that the CM equips its graduates with the necessary breadth of skills and competencies required of their degree and allows them to pursue their future career development. The final examinations show that graduates from all departments perform well. The review panel was impressed to note that the final Jazz recitals that are organised as a real concert series.

With regard to artistic research, the panel recommends that the CM could consider exploring possible connections between the artistic examination and the research project in order to ensure a better inclusion of research activities.

Lastly, the panel recommends that a consistent tracking system of alumni be designed and implemented, not only to allow the collection of statistical data as further evidence to support the assessment of achieved learning outcomes, but more importantly as means to expand their network and consolidate the bridge between the learning environment and the profession through interactive exchanges between current students and former alumni.

#### **Compliance with NVAO Standard 4**

**On the basis of the information in the *SER*, further documentation including annexes and the meetings during the site-visit, the review team finds that the programme meets the NVAO standard 4.**



## Final Conclusion

CM's Master of Music is a programme with solid foundations, able to ensure a continuous flow of international students and teachers, and benefitting from a highly motivated management team and extremely capable teaching and support staff. The panel appreciated the openness and transparency of the management and teaching staff during the site visit, and their pro-active attitude and determination to tackle the challenges inherent to the institutional re-organisation that the CM is currently undertaking. The ongoing positive development of quality mechanisms and procedures was made evident to the panel during the site visit. At the same time, the panel shares the concern that setting ambitious goals may add additional pressure on existing mechanisms and procedures and advises therefore the Programme to calibrate their priorities in relation to existing resources. A way forward for the Programme may be to further align its content, structure and methods, and to consider complementing their goals with SMART objectives – specific and significant, measurable, attainable, relevant and properly resourced, and time bound.

The review panel finds the Programme's vision and mission clear and well formulated and commends its management for holding ambition as a key ingredient of success. Likewise, the panel appreciates the clear argumentation for the CM's choice to embrace the DNTP Learning Outcomes and finds the Master of Music a very attractive programme, capitalising on the CM's strategic placement at a crossroad of borders and on the wealth of accumulated experience of the international teaching staff employed.

The panel commends the CM for their intention to integrate the interdisciplinary projects curriculum wise, and recommends that the Programme and the CM continue nurturing intra- and cross-faculty collaborations, seizing all opportunities to embed interdisciplinary projects into the curriculum and thus achieve the intended versatility of the student profile.

The review panel appreciates the opportunities and the freedom that the Programme offers to its students in developing their craftsmanship, entrepreneurial and research skills, and draws attention, at the same time, to the fine balance between teacher guidance and student autonomy that needs to be effectively and continuously monitored in order to ensure an enhanced achievement of the intended learning outcomes. To stimulate students to develop their artistic identity at equal pace with their technical craftsmanship, the teaching staff is advised to remain persistent and resilient in finding the appropriate balance between guidance and freedom, on a case by case basis. Further, the panel recommends that the Programme engage in a broad discussion on the meaning and relevance of the notion of "identity", in order to ensure that the meaning is shared across its constituencies, and that the most effective ways to implement the concept, both in teaching and learning, as well as in assessment procedures, are collectively identified and agreed upon.

The panel suggests that it is a priority for the Programme to identify how to effectively stimulate students' critical-thinking and instil among them a greater sense of ownership in terms of space to experiment and to develop their artistic identity. Similarly, the review panel recommends that the Programme equally consider how "identity" is assessed and how feedback on that might be formally made explicit by assessors during examinations in a coherent, consistent and structured way.

With regard to research, the panel endorses the Programme's choice for the practice-oriented and practice-relevant research methodologies that they encourage students to implement in their research project. The review team commends the Programme's attention to creating a research attitude as part of the practice and teaching students to recognise what research can mean as a part of the practice. The panel noted, nevertheless, that writing a research report is not deemed mandatory for students' graduation. While the research projects that the panel was able to access were convincing, the panel suggests that the research component of the Master of Music might be more appropriately profiled as, for example, *informed, reflective artistic practice* in order to maintain its curricular correspondence with similar programmes in conservatoires across the world.

The review panel commends the CM's internationalisation policy and the attention that the Programme pays to expanding its international dimension by attracting students and teachers from across the world. Along these lines, the panel invites the Programme to further reflect upon the meaning and relevance of "internationalisation" in the CM's particular context, and to investigate all available pathways for purposefully practising internationalisation at home. The panel commends the Programme for its ambitious goal of transforming the CM into a world-leading conservatoire and underlines that, in this regard, a series of intermediate steps could be prioritised – e.g. attaining and securing a leadership position in the region, or benchmarking with conservatoires that serve as role model for the CM.

Lastly, the review panel noted the efforts by the CM to improve internal communication, and encourages the Programme and the CM to continue addressing this ongoing concern. To this purpose, the panel advises that the CM and the programme prioritise their communication through the channels reported as most fit for purpose, by students and teaching staff alike. Enhancing the administration's capacity to recognise and address the complex challenges that foreign students encounter should also be featured among the CM's primary concerns, especially since significant effort is being invested into maintaining and expanding a fairly diverse international studentship.

Overall, based on the SER and the documentation provided by the CM, as well as on the evidence collected during the fruitful discussions with the management team, the teaching and supporting staff, the students, the alumni and the representatives of the profession invited to the interviews, the review panel agrees on a positive advice for the accreditation of the CM's Master of Music Programme. The panel was positive on all standards of the assessment framework, and made a series of recommendations that the Programme and the CM should take into consideration in view of ensuring that an enhancement-led approach towards quality is applied consistently and coherently across all the Programme's structures and procedures.

**Therefore, the panel recommends its weighted and substantiated final conclusion regarding the programme: positive.**

**Overview of compliance with the standards and recommendations**

The review team concludes that the programme meets the standards as follows:

NVAO Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes	The programme meets the standard.
<p>Corresponding MusiQuE standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· MusiQuE Standard 1: The programme goals are clearly stated and reflect the institutional mission.</li> <li>· MusiQuE Standard 2.1: The goals of the programme are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its methods of delivery.</li> <li>· MusiQuE standard 2.2: The programme offers a range of opportunities for students to gain an international perspective.</li> <li>· MusiQuE standard 7: The programme has in place effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures.</li> <li>· MusiQuE standard 8.1: The programme engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts.</li> <li>· MusiQuE standard 8.2: The programme actively promotes links with various sectors of the music and other artistic professions.</li> <li>· MusiQuE standard 8.3: Information provided to the public about the programme is clear, consistent and accurate</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The review panel encourages the CM in the pursuit of their objective to integrate the interdisciplinary projects curriculum wise, and recommends that intra- and cross-faculty collaborations be further supported, building on the already existing foundation in this regard.</li> <li>• Noting the very ambitious goals that the Programme set for itself, the panel advises for further efforts to align the content, structure and methods and recommends that the Programme further calibrate its goals with SMART objectives – specific and significant, measurable, attainable, relevant and properly resourced, and time bound.</li> <li>• The panel recommends that the Programme further reflect upon the meaning and relevance of “internationalisation” in the CM’s particular context – e.g. by investing equal effort in consolidating and strengthening existing international partnerships on the one hand, and supporting exchanges and joint projects between domestic and international students on the other hand, thus fully exploring all available pathways for purposefully practising internationalisation at home.</li> <li>• The panel notes the CM’s extraordinary advantage given by its location at the conjunction of three different borders and recommends that the Programme prioritise attaining and maintaining a leadership position in the region – e.g. through benchmarking exercises with institutions deemed role models for the CM.</li> <li>• The review panel commends the CM and the Programme for the comprehensive information publicly provided and recommends that they further their effort to maintain this same level of accuracy, consistency and clarity.</li> <li>• The panel commends the Programme for its overall dedication to creating a quality culture and recommends that the management further their efforts in this direction.</li> </ul>	

**NVAO Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment****The programme meets the standard.****Corresponding MusiQuE standards:**

- MusiQuE Standard 2.1: The goals of the programme are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its methods of delivery.
- MusiQuE standard 4.1: Members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/pedagogues/researchers.
- MusiQuE standard 4.2: There are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programmes.
- MusiQuE standard 5.1: The institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programme.
- MusiQuE standard 5.2: The institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the study programmes.
- MusiQuE standard 5.3: The programme has sufficient qualified support staff.
- MusiQuE standard 6.1: Effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the programme.
- MusiQuE standard 6.2: The programme is supported by an appropriate organisational structure and clear decision-making processes.

**Recommendations:**

- In order to ensure that all stakeholders (especially international) are clear about the concept of research as it is applied at CM, the review panel recommends that CM consider how best to express this in its strategic documents, e.g. by using the phrase '*informed, reflective artistic practice*'.
- The panel recommends that the Programme review the effectiveness of communication between the research coach and the main subject teacher and consider to what extent such a conversation might be embedded in the study plan in a more structured way in order to increase the applicability of the students' research work.
- The review panel notes the confusion persisting among students with regard to whether it is possible to change research coaches throughout the programme and recommends that the Programme take appropriate steps to either better communicate the options to students or, if appropriate, to allow more flexibility for students to tailor their research as they progress in their study.
- With regard to the classical track, the review panel recommends that the Programme pay further consideration to the ways in which they might stimulate students' critical-thinking and instil a great sense of ownership among students, in terms of space to experiment and develop artistic identity.
- Noting the students' shyness to express a reflective attitude and to critically experiment towards developing their own personal style, the review panel recommends that the Programme reflect further on how they might develop a greater sense of cognitive reflection and self-assertiveness among students, at least with regard to their classical training.
- The panel recommends that the CM find more effective ways to monitor the delicate balance between students' autonomy and teacher guidance, and pro-actively offer additional support to incoming students on a case by case basis, thus preserving the advantages of the freedom offered to their studentship as a whole.
- The panel recommends that the Programme take into consideration the most effective ways to further increase the visibility of the international office among its student population, given that especially international students are faced with a variety of particular administrative issues upon registration, which

were reported to raise certain challenges for their successful first year immersion.

- The panel recommends that a schedule with extended opening hours be considered for practice rooms – i.e. the Programme is advised to assess to what extent it would be feasible to implement such a measure and whether further financial assistance by the CM and the Zuyd University of Applied Sciences might be required; the panel considers necessary that the Programme be offered all support needed at Faculty and University level to ensure extended practice hours for its students.
- The review team congratulates the CM for its self-reflectiveness on matters related to internal communication and recommends that they streamline their communication channels, giving priority to those reported as most fit for purpose by both part time teaching staff and students alike.
- The panel advises that the Programme consider how to better enable its administrative staff for offering adequate support to foreign students facing particularly complex bureaucratic challenges that may hinder their successful first year immersion.
- The panel also recommends that the effectiveness of all the various support mechanisms in place be re-evaluated and streamlined, in a way that empowers students to easily find the guidance they need, and identify and use the right set of resources at their disposal.

**NVAO Standard 3. Assessment**

**The programme meets the standard.**

Corresponding MusiQuE standards:

- MusiQuE standard 3.1: There are clear criteria for student admission, based on an assessment of their artistic/academic suitability for the programme.
- MusiQuE standard 2.3: Assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes.

**Recommendations:**

- The panel recommends that rubrics with evaluative criteria, quality definitions for those criteria at particular levels of achievement, and a scoring strategy be coherently introduced during assessments in order to foster consistency in grading across internal and external assessors.
- The panel invites the CM to reflect upon the most effective ways to balance the investment in the development of excellent craftsmanship with that of an artistic identity among students both in terms of teaching and learning, as well as in terms of assessment.
- The review panel recommends that the Programme engage in broad discussion about the notion of identity, and consider how 'identity' is assessed and how feedback on that might be made explicit by assessors during examinations – e.g. through a structured discussion across exam committee members about the intended learning outcomes and the role of artistic identity among these.
- The panel also recommends that the Programme take appropriate measures to steer the assessment towards a more objective appreciation of the students' personal artistic signature on the repertoires they select for their final recitals – e.g. by training assessors not only with respect to assessment procedures, but equally with consideration to the innovative content of the students' performances.
- The review panel recommends that the CM invest further effort in standardising the collection of written feedback, and include more explicitly the examination criteria with clearly defined levels of achievement in the written feedback forms, thus allowing for a more consistent and comparable collection of data.

Corresponding MusiQuE standard:

- MusiQuE standard 3.2: The programme has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students.

**Recommendations:**

- The panel advises that the CM and the Programme consider more collaboration between artistic departments and more space for experimentation and improvisation for students, which would contribute to increasing students' versatility, an attribute in high demand across representatives of the profession.
- With regard to artistic research, the panel recommends that the CM could consider exploring possible connections between the artistic examination and the research project in order to ensure a better inclusion of research activities.
- The panel recommends that the CM consider designing and implementing a consistent tracking system of their alumni, not only to allow the collection of statistical data as further evidence to support the assessment of achieved learning outcomes, but, more importantly, as means to expand their network and consolidate the bridge between the learning environment and the profession through interactive exchanges between current students and former alumni.

**Final conclusion**

The panel recommends a weighted and substantiated final conclusion regarding the programme: **positive**.

## Annex 1. Site visit schedule

### 1. Site Visit Schedule

**Day 0: Arrival of the Panel Members / Wednesday 27 November 2019**

Time	Session	Names and functions of participants from the visited institution
18:00-20:00	Preparatory meeting of the Review Team	Review Team alone
20:15-21:00	Dinner	Review Team alone
21:15-22:30	Preparatory meeting of the Review Team	Review Team alone

**Day 1: Thursday 28 November 2019**

8.30-9.00	Walk from the hotel to Conservatorium Maastricht	Guide ██████████	(Location 1: Classical Building)
9:00 – 10:30	<b>Meeting 1</b> Welcome and meeting with the Management of the institution.	<b>Members of the Management of the Conservatorium Maastricht (CM)</b> (institutional / departmental / programme leaders) ██████████, Zuyd Director ██████████, Artistic Director CM ██████████, Head Jazz ██████████, Head Classical ██████████, Head of Education and Quality Management  <b>Members of the Review Team</b>	Location 1: Classical Building  Deans Office

10:30 - 11:00	<b>Review Team meeting: Review Team members share conclusions with Secretary (debriefing)</b>		<b>Location 1: Classical Building Deans Office</b>
11:00 - 12:00	<b>Meeting 2: Meeting with the Programme Committee</b>	<p><b>Senior administrative officers and members of the Programme Committee</b></p> <p>██████████, Chair Examination Board, coordinator MoM Classical ██████████, (substitute) Coordinator MoM Jazz ██████████, administrative support Master of Music Programme ██████████, Education and Examination Regulations (EER), Quality Officer ██████████, Head Support and Quality Management, coordinator MoM Education Programme ██████████, International office, (Erasmus) Exchanges; Pieter Jansen, HOD MoM Classical</p> <p><b>Members of the Review Team</b></p>	Location 1: Classical Building <b>Deans office</b>
12:00 – 12:30	<b>Review Team meeting: Review Team members share conclusions with Secretary (debriefing)</b>		<b>Location 1: Classical Building Room 108 or Deans Office</b>
12:30 - 13:30	<b>Meeting 3: Meeting with the artistic and academic members of staff</b>	<p><b>Professors and teachers in the Programme</b></p> <p>██████████, Vocal Opera Classical ██████████, Clarinet Classical ██████████, Your art as a Business Classical / Coordinator European Opera Academy ██████████, Vocal Jazz, Research Coach ██████████, Saxophone, Jazz ██████████, teacher Jazz@Society, Improlab. Coordinator Junior Jazz ██████████, teacher Education Program, Master Circle Education</p> <p><b>Members of the Review Team</b></p>	Location 1: Classical Building <b>Deans Office</b>



13:30 – 14:30	Lunch [working lunch for the Review Team alone]	Location 1: Classical Building Room 108 First Floor
14.30 – 16.30	<b>Class Observations / Split review team:</b> <b>Group A. Remains put in Location 1 – Classical Building in Bonnefantenstraat</b> <b>Group B. Move towards Location 2 – Jazz Building in Franciscus Romanusweg (15 minutes-walk)</b>	
	<b>Group A. Class Observations / “Classical Building” (Bonnefantenstraat)</b> 14.30-15.30 Individual lesson Clarinet ( ) room 403/408 14.30-15.00 Your art as a Business Class ( ) room 202 15.00-15.30 Solo Singing Class Opera – group meeting ( ) room 401	
	<b>Group A. Review of the facilities / “Classical Building” (Bonnefantenstraat)</b> 15.30-16.00 Visit of studios, concert venues, practice facilities, libraries etc./ <b>Guide:</b> 16.00-16.30 <b>Group A. Move towards the Jazz Building (Franciscus Romanusweg) 15 minutes-walk</b>	
	<b>Group B. Class Observations / Jazz Building (Franciscus Romanusweg)</b> 15.00-15.30 Research Circle ( ) room 11 15.30-16.00 Individual Master Class Vocal Jazz ( ) room 11 15.30-17.00. Impro-lab MastersJazz ( ) Zaal Wijck (performance hall)	
	<b>Group B. Review of the facilities / “Jazz Building” (Franciscus Romanusweg)</b> 16.00-16.30 Visit of studios, concert venues, practice facilities, libraries etc./ <b>Guide:</b>	

16.30-17.00	<b>Plenary Review Team Meeting:</b> Review Team members share conclusions with Secretary (debriefing).		Location 2: Jazz Building Room 18
17.00 – 18.00	<b>Meeting 4: meeting with students</b>  <i>Including a presentation of the students' contribution to the self-evaluation process.</i>	Students representing all study cycles and different levels and subjects (including, where relevant, a representative of the student union / council)  ██████████, Guitar Classical ██████████, Trombone Classical ██████████, Piano Classical ██████████ ██████████, Violin Classical ██████████ ██████████, Vocal Opera Classical ██████████, Education Programme ██████████ ██████████, Trumpet Jazz ██████████, Double Bass Jazz ██████████, Vocals Jazz  Members of the Review Team	Location 2: Jazz Building Room 18
18.00 – 18.30	<b>Review Team meeting: Review Team members share conclusions with Secretary (debriefing)</b>		Location 2: Jazz Building Room 18
18.30 -19.30	<b>Return to Hotel (10 minute walk from the Jazz Building in Franciscus Romanusweg)</b>		
19:30	<b>Dinner - Review Team alone</b>		

Day 2: Friday 29 November 2019

Time	Session	Names and functions of participants from the visited institution	Venue
08:30 - 10:00	Review Team meeting	[Time for open consultations with the review team or extra session with members of management or staff, as requested]	Location 1: Classical Building Deans office
10:00 - 11:00	Meeting 5: meeting with alumni and representatives of the profession.	<p><b>Alumni, employers, organisation representatives from the region</b></p> <p>██████████, Double Bass</p> <p>Jazz alumnus ██████████,</p> <p>Vocals/Composing Jazz alumna ██████████,</p> <p>Vocals Jazz alumna ██████████,</p> <p>██████████, Viola</p> <p>Classical alumna ██████████</p> <p>██████████, Flute Classical alumna</p> <p>██████████, Programming director De Doelen Rotterdam, former director Jazz Maastricht</p> <p>██████████, Opera Director</p> <p>██████████, booking agent Parkstad Theater Heerlen</p> <p><b>Members of the Review Team</b></p>	Location 1: Classical Building Deans office
11:00 - 12:15	Review Team meeting: Review Team members share conclusions with Secretary (debriefing) & preparation of the feedback session [Headlines of the review report are outlined]		
12:15-12.45 12.30 -13.30	Feedback/results on the 4 standards and The Development Dialogue	Conversation between members of the management team, teaching staff, support staff, students and the Review Team	Location 1: Classical Building  Matty Niel Hall 3 <sup>rd</sup> floor
13.30 – Lunch, drinks & Departure of the Review Team			Classical Building / Room 108

## Annex 2. Review Team composition

Name of panel member	Brief job description
Georg Schulz	Panel Chair, Former Rector and Associate Professor at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz (Kunstuniversität Graz), Austria.
Jeffrey Sharkey	Panel Member, Principal of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow, United Kingdom.
Thomas De Baets	Panel Member, Professor of Music Education at LUCA School of Arts and KU Leuven, Head of Music and Group Head of Performing Arts at LUCA, Leuven, Belgium.
Thomas Zoller	Panel Member, Professor of Composition / Arranging and Director of the HFMDJ Jazz Orchestra at the Academy of Music Carl Maria von Weber in Dresden, Germany.
Joyce Vanderhoydonck	Student Member, trained in classic and jazz piano, currently enrolled in the Master Programme in Jazz Singing of the Royal Conservatory in Ghent, Belgium.

Secretary (certified by NVAO):	Katrien Goossens
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All Review Team members and the Secretary signed a declaration of independence and confidentiality prior to the accreditation process.

### Annex 3. List of documents provided to the review team

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

- *Self-evaluation Report (SER)*
- *Appendix 1 – KUO-next agenda 2016-2020*
- *Appendix 2 – Strategy 2023 Passion for Development*
- *Appendix 3 – Master of Music Jazz Programme*
- *Appendix 4 – Master of Music Education Programme*
- *Appendix 5 – Transition Year Document*
- *Appendix 6 – NQA Report of site visit Master of Music Conservatorium Maastricht 2014*
- *Appendix 7 – Apply and feedback forms external teachers*
- *Appendix 8A – Report full audit BOB MoM 2017 (in Dutch)*
- *Appendix 8B – Recommendations and undertaken actions Internal Audit 2017 MoM*
- *Appendix 9 – Internationalisation Policy Document 2014-2018*
- *Appendix 10 – Assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system*
- *Appendix 11 – The Dutch National Training Profile for Music 2017*
- *Appendix 12 – Ke Performance Indicators (KPI's)*
- *Appendix 13 – Opleidingsprofielen 2018 KVDO, Chapter 6.2*
- *Appendix 14A – Education and Examination Regulations (EER) Master of Music 2019-2020 2a*
- *Appendix 14B – Education and Examination Regulations (EER) Master of Music 2019-2020 2b*
- *Appendix 14C – Education and Examination Regulations (EER) Master of Music 2019-2020 2c*
- *Appendix 14D – Average contact hours and instruction time MoM*
- *Appendix 15 – EQF SQF Level 7 Descriptors for Music*
- *Appendix 16 – ECA REPORT Conservatorium Maastricht*
- *Appendix 17 – List of (international) external relations and collaborations (including external feedback)*
- *Appendix 18 – Assessment Policy Document 2014-2018*
- *Appendix 19 – Quality Assurance Handbook*
- *Appendix 20A – Alumni Survey 2019*
- *Appendix 20B – Graduation phase Survey 2018-2019*
- *Appendix 20C – National Student Survey 2018 (NSE)*
- *Appendix 20D – Year Evaluation 2018-2019*
- *Appendix 20C – Alumni Survey 2016*
- *Appendix 21 – Organizational Structure Conservatorium Maastricht*
- *Appendix 22 – Annual report Examination Board (in Dutch)*
- *Appendix 23 – Handbook Examination Committee 2019*
- *Appendix 24 – Quality Assurance Handbook Zuyd Hogeschool 2019*
- *Appendix 25 – Information booklet for new students: Conservatorium Maastricht in a nutshell*
- *Appendix 26 – Zuyd Assessment Compass*
- *Appendix 27 – Alignment document DNTP - learning objectives Master of Music*
- *Appendix 28 – Overview Curricula MoM*
- *Appendix 29A – Diploma rendement (Rates)*
- *Appendix 29B – Dropout rates Master Students*
- *Appendix 30 – Graduates 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 (with results and thesis titles)*
- *Appendix 31 – Examples of successful alumni*
- *Appendix 32 – Notes Focus groups Master students*
- *Appendix 33 – Staff Policy Plan Arts Faculty Maastricht (in Dutch)*
- *Appendix 34 – Handbook Portfolio*

- *Appendix 35* – Course Description Master Classical
- *Appendix 36* – Research Protocol

## **Annex 4. Clarification concerning the approach adopted by the review team**

### **Framework, criteria and assessment rules**

For the assessment of the programme the panel used the limited programme assessment framework (for existing programmes) of NVAO (version September 2018) to serve as the basis for the assessment process. The NVAO standards for limited programme assessment were mapped against the MusiQuE standards for programme review. As a result, the MusiQuE standards and areas of inquiry were added under each NVAO standard in order to both express and reinforce the correspondence between both sets of criteria and to complete the NVAO framework with criteria relevant for performing arts programmes.

The panel judgment was based on the assessment rules for limited programme assessments (existing programmes) in the abovementioned framework.

### **Preparation of the panel**

Before the start of the review process MusiQuE organised a series of online sessions for the peer-reviewers to prepare them for their role in the assessment process, both before the preliminary site visit on 12 – 13 June 2019 and the main site visit on 27 – 29 November 2019. All panel members have been asked to prepare a written analysis of the self-evaluation report and its appendixes in advance of the site-visit. The analyses and contributions of all individual team members were made available to the entire review team.

A private review team meeting on the first day of the site-visit was scheduled to prepare all the meetings during the site-visit. During this meeting the panel was instructed by the Secretary and the Chair about the accreditation process in general and about the specific aspects of the accreditation of the programme under review. Specific themes of inquiry and the distribution or roles within the team was established with this occasion.

### **Process of verification**

A preliminary site visit was organised on 12 – 13 June 2019 to enable two members of the panel to attend and observe final student examinations, since no assessments were taking place at the time of the main site visit, on 27 – 29 November 2019. This visit resulted in a separate interim report, which remained internal to the review team. Based on the self-evaluation report and the additional documentation provided by the programme (e.g. student portfolios and video recordings of final examinations), and the interim report of the panel members who attended the preliminary site visit, the review team made a first analysis of the programme. These first findings were converted into a set of questions which were discussed during the main site visit, in meetings scheduled with the programme's internal and external stakeholders such as the management team, teaching and artistic staff, students, senior administrators, representatives of the profession and the programme's alumni.

The schedule of the main site visit is provided in Annex 1, above. During the site visit the panel observed classes and facilities, asked for information or additional materials to clarify or complement the documentation already provided by the programme. The panel formed its opinion on the achievement of the learning outcomes achieved based on viewing 13 recordings of final exams including the assessment results, as well as on the direct observation of five student final examinations and their subsequent feedback session. Next to the recorded material and the interim report concerning the direct observations of exams, the panel decided to attend classes during the main site visit in order to verify their quality by joined observation. Furthermore, the panel studied the provided written material and student portfolios.

### **Realisation of the report**

The panel decided during the site-visit on the general conclusions. The Secretary made a first version based on the findings of the panel, the interviews and the material provided by the programme. After consultation of all panel

members the draft version was accorded by all panel members. The institution was offered an opportunity to comment on the draft report before it was finalised.



## Annex 5. NVAO judgement and assessment rules for limited programme assessments (existing programmes)

<b>Judgement per standard</b>
<p>The panel scores each standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Meets the standard. The programme meets the generic quality standard*.</li><li>· Partially meets the standard. The programme meets the generic quality standard to a significant extent, but improvements are required in order to fully meet the standard (see Additional assessment rules regarding conditions).</li><li>· Does not meet the standard. The programme does not meet the generic quality standard.</li></ul> <p><i>*Generic quality: the quality that, from an international perspective, may reasonably be expected from a higher education Associate Degree, Bachelor's or Master's programme.</i></p>
<b>Final conclusion</b>
<p>The panel recommends a weighted and substantiated final conclusion regarding the programme, based on the following assessment rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Positive. The programme meets all the standards.</li><li>· Conditionally positive. The programme meets standard 1 and partially meets a maximum of two standards, with the imposition of conditions being recommended by the panel (see Additional assessment rules regarding conditions).</li><li>· Negative. In the following situations:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ The programme fails to meet one or more standards;</li><li>○ The programme partially meets standard 1;</li><li>○ The programme partially meets one or two standards, without the imposition of conditions being recommended by the panel;</li><li>○ The programme partially meets three or more standards.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Additional assessment rules regarding conditions</b>
<p>A score of “partially meets the standard” means that a programme meets the generic quality standard to a significant extent, but improvements are required in order to fully meet the standard. To this end, conditions will be imposed.</p> <p>When presenting a final conclusion of “conditionally positive”, a panel must review whether it is feasible for the programme to demonstrate its realisation of such improvements within a period of two years. Only if it determines that achieving such an improvement is a realistic goal will the panel recommend the imposition of conditions. In such cases, the panel will set down the conditions to be imposed in concrete terms. If the panel deems achievement of the necessary improvements within two years not feasible, the final conclusion will be “negative”.</p> <p>NVAO decides on the imposition of conditions for the programme. If it determines that is not realistic for the conditions to be satisfied within two years, it will refrain from setting down conditions and award a final conclusion of “negative”.</p>

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