

4 Peer-Reviewers Register

MusiQuE works with a pool of competent review and accreditation experts in the field of higher music education, listed in the MusiQuE Peer-Reviewers Register.

4.1 Criteria for acceptance onto the Register

Each reviewer listed on the Register should have:

- an appropriate qualification (degree or professionally-oriented diploma) and recognised expertise in areas relevant to higher music education
- broad knowledge of the teaching and learning models and methods relevant to higher music education

Beyond this, potential members of the Register should ideally meet one or more of the following requirements:

- have experience in quality assurance in higher music education,
- have been trained through a training for peer-reviewers delivered by MusiQuE or other quality assurance and accreditation agencies
- have international experience that provides a basis for making international comparisons
- have experience in the development, design, provision and evaluation of higher education programmes in music.

In addition, existing members of the Register should update their familiarity with MusiQuE's standards and procedures by taking part periodically (preferably no less frequently than every five years) in the training for peer-reviewers regularly offered by MusiQuE.

4.1.1 Admission procedure

Interested individuals who meet the above requirements and are willing to act as Peer-Reviewers for Quality Enhancement Reviews, accreditation procedures and joint collaborative reviews fill in the Template for Peer-Reviewers (available online at <http://www.musique-qe.eu/documents/templates>) and send it to the MusiQuE staff.

The MusiQuE Board advertises every year across the AEC, EMU and PEARLE* memberships for new individuals to come forward to be considered for inclusion on the Register, normally in connection with a training session on the day preceding the AEC General Assembly. MusiQuE can also recruit outside AEC, EMU and PEARLE* memberships if a certain competence not otherwise available is needed.

All profiles will be considered by the MusiQuE Board during its meeting following the yearly call for reviewers (or possibly by email in the case of procedures when reviewers are invited in specialised areas who are not listed – yet – on the Register).

The Board will evaluate the suitability of the applicant's profile based on the criteria set out above as well as on the needs of maintaining a balanced Register (in terms of gender, geographical spread, languages spoken, etc.). Ideally, at least two of the criteria should be met. Peers can be listed on the Register even when they do not have experience in all fields mentioned in the Register. It will then be the responsibility of the MusiQuE staff (supported by the Board) to ensure that when Review Teams are assembled, they are competent as a whole.

Applicants will be informed by email about the decision reached by the Board within three weeks after its meeting.

4.1.2 Data collected and data confidentiality

The Register for Peer-reviewers contains the following data collected for each person:

- Country and Position (including freelance or retired status)
- Field(s) of musical expertise
- Other fields of non-musical/organisational expertise
- Degree or professionally-based diploma qualification(s)
- Knowledge/experience in teaching and learning in higher music education
- Experience in the development, design, and provision of higher education programmes in music
- Experience/Knowledge in QA in Higher Music Education (including experience with AEC reviews and active participation in QA within own institution)
- Other international experience
- Language skills
- Contact details

Data provided by applicants will be made available to the MusiQuE Board members and the MusiQuE staff only, and will be kept confidential.

In the case of bilateral cooperation procedure with national quality assurance and accreditation agencies, the full profile of reviewers may be provided to the national agency.

4.1.3 Maintenance of the Register

The entire Register is reviewed by the MusiQuE Board every three years (including in terms of evaluating the continuing suitability of individuals).

As a preliminary to this exercise, all peer-reviewers listed in the Register will be asked by email once every three years if they wish to remain on the Register and (in that case) to review their profile. If no answer is received, this will be considered as a wish to be taken out of the Register.

All peer-reviewers listed in the Register are encouraged to update their profile at any time if changes occur.

When the results of the feedback questionnaire sent to peer-reviewers after a review visit indicate that there might have been some problems within a review team, the Committee will seek confidential feedback from Chairs of review teams and/or the secretary appointed by the MusiQuE staff on the performance of individuals within the review teams and on any recommendations they have that might flow from this for additional training, briefing before visits, etc.

4.2 Training for peer-reviewers

Training for peer-reviewers is regularly offered by MusiQuE in workshops usually scheduled immediately before the start of the AEC Annual Congress. Workshops are delivered by MusiQuE Board members, MusiQuE staff members and by some experienced MusiQuE reviewers.

All representatives of AEC's 300 member institutions receive an invitation to this training together with the invitation to the Congress and can register for this optional activity. In addition, applicants for the MusiQuE peer-reviewers register who have not been immediately entered on the register because they had not previously attended MusiQuE peer-reviewers training are specifically contacted and encouraged to attend the session.

The training sessions aim at offering elements of training and professional development to potential and confirmed MusiQuE peer-reviewers. They are open to all staff members of higher music education institutions - experienced or not - who are a) interested in becoming peer-reviewers for MusiQuE in the future, b) motivated to reflect on their experience and practice as peer-reviewers or c) have a general interest in quality assurance and accreditation in conservatoires.

Each training session starts with a general introduction to MusiQuE, its structure and its review procedures, as well as to the notion of "peer" in peer-review.

This introduction is followed by the "3Ps" plenary session ("Preparations, Procedures and Paperwork") which provides participants with an overview of their role and responsibilities during the whole review procedure. The session is divided into three parts:

- Part A - "Before the review" addresses the preparation of the review. Documents received by the reviewers (including the MusiQuE standards, the self-evaluation report and the visit schedule) are presented to the participants, guidance on how to read a self-evaluation report is provided by an experienced reviewer and a practical exercise is undertaken to train reviewers for the preparation of the first review meeting.
- Part B - "During the review" addresses the role of the Secretary, the role of the Review Team Chair and the role of the Other Reviewers (Peers and Student) and the MusiQuE code of conduct is presented.
- Finally, Part C - "After the review" presents the writing report process and the final outcome of the review.

Two sessions are then offered successively to small groups of participants:

Acting as Peer-Reviewer (Role-Play): this session involves participants undertaking a mock institutional review visit meeting, assuming the role of either staff from within the institution being reviewed or members of the review team. The aims of this session are as follows:

- To understand the institutional review procedure.
- To ensure that review team members understand their roles and tasks, the importance of team working and the rules of conduct/behaviour during a review visit.
- To reflect on what makes an effective meeting during a review visit.
- To have the opportunity to explore the techniques and skills required to be an effective review team member.

Working as part of a team: this session is based on the "World Café" method wherein the large group is divided into several smaller groups who each sit at tables (café style) and discuss a number of questions posed by the session leaders. Each smaller group is

asked to produce summary statements responding to each question discussed, which are then collected, displayed and discussed by the larger group.

Sample questions used in previous training sessions have included:

1. "How might a review team deal with confrontation and surprise?"
2. "In order to create a good team, what needs to happen the night before the review?"
3. "How can the review team quickly establish an atmosphere of trust with the institutional groups?"

Each smaller group elects a Chair who takes responsibility for leading the discussion and for writing the summary statements. Once all summary statements have been collected and displayed, they are discussed by the larger group with a view to highlighting the main topics that have emerged from the smaller group "café" chat.

The experience of being divided up into these smaller groups, which aim to be representative of a typical review group structure (in that they should include a good balance between junior/senior faculty, have appropriate gender balance, have a student representative and so on). Having to discuss real issues quickly, and without a previous working relationship with the other members of the group, is quite intentional as it mimics the exact experience of most review teams.

Part of the larger group discussion at the end of the session tackles not just the issues/topics raised in relation to the questions asked, but also the experience of having to develop almost instantaneously a working relationship with previously unknown individuals and develop into a good team in a very short period of time.

The training session ends with a presentation of the MusiQuE Board and a session where there is an opportunity for the participants to offer their own feedback on the session.