

6 Review Standards

As stated at the start of the previous chapter, the services offered by MusiQuE are conceived as offering an important support and benefit to higher music education institutions, aimed at assisting them in their quality enhancement activities. Nevertheless, its accreditation procedures necessarily involve evaluating institutions impartially in relation to a set of standards. This chapter briefly describes those standards and presents the procedures whereby they themselves are periodically reviewed and, where necessary, revised. Finally, this chapter briefly presents how MusiQuE standards relate with the European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance.

Three sets of standards have been designed to meet different institutional needs:

- A set of *Standards for Institutional Review*, to be used for reviews covering the whole institution (IR)
- A set of *Standards for Programme Review*, to be used for the evaluation of one or more programmes within an institution (PR)
- A set of *Standards for Joint Programme Review*, to be used for the evaluation of a study programme jointly developed by several partner institutions from different countries (not necessarily leading to a joint degree) (JPR)

All three sets of standards can be found online at <http://www.musique-qe.eu/documents/musique-standards>.

Depending on the context and aim of the review procedure, one of these three sets of standards will apply. This set will then be used by the institution to write its self-evaluation report and compile supportive evidence, by the Review Team during the site-visit to structure and inform its fact-finding exercise and by the Review Team after the site-visit as a basis on which to assess the institution / programme / joint programme and build the review report.

All three sets of standards share a common philosophy and address similar areas; their differences lie in the way that they are specifically tailored to the review task in question.

The document *MusiQuE Standards for Institutional, Programme and Joint Programme Review* includes a general introduction presenting the standards and their rationale and explaining this common philosophy. It also includes the three sets of standards.

Each set of standards is divided into three columns:

- The first column '*Standards*' lists the standards to be met for each type of review. There are 17 standards in total, distributed across 8 primary domains of enquiry. The domains are as follows:
 1. Institutional Mission, Vision and Context/Programme's Goals and Context
 2. Educational Processes
 3. Student Profiles
 4. Teaching Staff
 5. Facilities, Resources and Support
 6. Communication, Organisation and Decision-making
 7. Internal Quality Culture
 8. Public Interaction

- The second column '*Questions to be considered when addressing this standard*' includes, for each standard, a series of questions relevant to the identification of good practice in the area of that standard. These questions are aimed at encouraging the institution to look into the issue raised, and to reflect on its own practice and on the possible need to improve in this area.
- The third and last column '*Supportive material/evidence*' gives an indication of the kinds of supporting material which an institution or programme team is advised to provide to the peer-reviewers as evidence of good practice.

Institutions and programmes to be reviewed will receive an indicative template for their self-evaluation report based on the MusiQuE standards (available online at <http://www.musique-ge.eu/documents/templates>). Each of the 17 standards listed in the first column needs to be addressed, while the second and third columns are meant as guidelines for the self-evaluation process (see clauses 8.2.2.1 and 8.2.2.2 for more information on the self-evaluation report and the supportive material/evidence).

6.1 Review and revision of Standards and Procedures

It is crucial that the standards and procedures employed by MusiQuE should undergo continuous development to ensure that they remain reflective of the current reality of higher music education and of the artistic professions, respond to any further evolution of the Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and answer the changing needs of institutions and of society. The MusiQuE Board is responsible for the regular revision and updating of the standards and procedures in order to ensure this.

The following process is in place to guarantee that review and updating are done in an appropriate and transparent way, which balances the independence of MusiQuE against its obligation to act in ways that carry the confidence and support of its key stakeholders – the conservatoires and the music profession:

- Any member of AEC, EMU and Pearle*-Live Performance Europe (or any other organisation that may subsequently join the Board of MusiQuE) will be able to suggest changes. Proposals for change can also arise from experiences encountered during a MusiQuE review
- Proposals are submitted to the MusiQuE Board, which must then consider all these proposals and may, in addition, propose further changes of its own
- All proposals sent in before January 31st each year are addressed as an agenda item within the MusiQuE Board meeting following that date, usually held in February
- Based on the proposals received, the MusiQuE Board prepares a composite proposal of its own for changes to the standards and procedures and sends this to the AEC Council before its March meeting, as well as to the Boards of EMU, PEARLE* and any other organisations that may subsequently join the MusiQuE Board
- In the case of AEC, the AEC Council receives the proposal and sends it, normally without alteration, to the membership for consultation, with a deadline of June 30th for responses. If Council feels it necessary to question any aspect of the proposal, this is done as soon as possible through correspondence with the MusiQuE Board
- EMU, PEARLE* and any other organisations that may subsequently join the MusiQuE Board make their own arrangements for gathering feedback from their memberships and for reporting on this to the MusiQuE Board

- Any amendments to the proposal suggested by the various memberships are considered by the Board of MusiQuE and a final proposal is sent in early September to the Boards of all organisations represented on the MusiQuE Board
- In the case of AEC, the AEC Council considers the final proposal for changes to the standards and procedures at its September meeting
- The AEC Council brings the final proposal to its General Assembly in November for adoption by the members. Because of the earlier process of consultation, it is the presumption that the changes will be adopted by the General Assembly; should this not be the case, the matter will be referred back to the MusiQuE Board for its next meeting in February of the following year
- EMU, PEARLE* and any other organisations that may subsequently join the MusiQuE Board make their own arrangements for gaining adoption by their memberships and for reporting on this to the MusiQuE Board
- In the event of the AEC General Assembly or the memberships of other organisations opposing certain aspects of the proposed changes, it is expected that this will be given due weight by the MusiQuE Board in its deliberations before introducing any changes to its standards and procedures. Ultimately, though, it is the MusiQuE Board that decides on such changes, always bearing in mind the need, emphasised above, for it to continue to command the confidence and support of its key stakeholders

6.2 MusiQuE standards and the European standards for internal quality Assurance

Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) have been developed in 2005 and revised in 2015 by the key stakeholders in the field of quality assurance at European level: the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the European Students' Union (ESU), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE) and the European University Association (EUA). A major goal of these Standards and Guidelines is to contribute to the common understanding of quality assurance for learning and teaching across borders and among all stakeholders. One of the principles they are based on is the primary responsibility of higher education institutions for the quality of their provision and its assurance.

The first part of these standards (Part 1) aims to provide higher education institutions with standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance. When the first set of criteria for institutional review in higher music education was developed in 2007, Part 1 of these standards and guidelines were considered as a reference tool (in their 2005 version). More recently, the MusiQuE standards, which are meant to guide the institutions/programmes in their self-evaluation process and are used by the MusiQuE Review Team both for its fact-finding exercise and to build its report, have been mapped against Part 1 of these standards and guidelines (in their 2015 version). This way, institutions/programmes reviewed by MusiQuE are ensured that all European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance (Part 1) are addressed in MusiQuE review procedures.

MusiQuE also aims to operate in full compliance with Part 2 and 3 of European standards and guidelines, respectively for external quality assurance and for quality assurance agencies.