

STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Lietuvos muzikos ir teatro akademijos *KOMPOZICIJOS PROGRAMOS (62401M110, 621W32001)* VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT of *COMPOSITION (62401M110, 621W32001)* STUDY PROGRAMME at Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre

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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Kompozicija</i>
Valstybinis kodas	62401M110
Naujas valstybinis kodas	621W32001
Studijų sritis	meno
Studijų kryptis	muzika
Studijų programos rūšis	universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	antroji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinė (4)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais ¹	80 (120 ECTS)
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	muzikos magistras, kompozitorius
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	

¹ – vienas kreditas laikomas lygiu 40 studento darbo valandų

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAM

Name of the study program	<i>Composition</i>
State code	62401M110
New state code	621W32001
Study area	Arts
Study field	Music
Kind of the study program	university studies
Level of studies	second
Study mode (length in years)	full-time (4)
Scope of the study program in national credits ¹	80 (120 ECTS)
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	master of music, composer
Date of registration of the study program	

¹ – one credit is equal to 40 hours of student work

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CONTENTS

CONTENTS	3
I. INTRODUCTION.....	4
II. PROGRAM ANALYSIS	4
1. Program aims and learning outcomes.....	4
1.1. Program demand, purpose and aims.....	4
1.2. Learning outcomes of the program.....	5
2. Curriculum design	6
2.1. Program structure	6
2.2. Program content.....	6
3. Staff	7
3.1. Staff Composition and turnover	7
3.1.1. <i>Rationality of the staff Composition</i>	7
3.2. Staff competence	7
4. Facilities and learning resources.....	8
4.1. Facilities.....	8
5.1. Student admission.....	9
5.2. Study process	10
5.3. Student support.....	11
5.4. Student achievement assessment	12
5.5. Graduates placement.....	13
6. Program management	13
6.1. Program administration	13
6.2. Internal quality assurance	13
III. RECOMMENDATIONS.....	14
IV. GENERAL ASSESSMENT	15

I. INTRODUCTION

The visiting experts hand over this Evaluation Report, based on the Self-Assessment of the Art of Performance Master program submitted by the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (LMTA Vilnius) and on information gathered during the site visit of September 20-21, 2010 from the various bodies of the institution (administration, authors of the Self-Assessment report, staff, students, graduates and employers). The experts found the SA clearly written with significant detail concerning the education and training of music students from recruitment and admission through the completion of studies. On behalf of the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, they thank the institutions submitting assessments for their welcome and the CQAHE for the careful preparation of the process.

The Introduction to the Composition Master degree Self-Assessment Report gives the visiting experts a clear picture of the organizational structure of the LMTA-Vilnius in general and of the Self-Assessment process and its personnel in particular. The experts note the institution's own recommendations for improvement as a result of this self-assessment effort and will comment on them in the course of this evaluation.

II. PROGRAM ANALYSIS

1. Program aims and learning outcomes

1.1. Program demand, purpose and aims

1.1.1. Uniqueness and rationale of the need for the program

According to the Self-Assessment (SA) of the Master Composition program, composers with degrees from the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre make absolute majority of members of the Lithuanian Union of Composers, the country's main composer's organization. It is also noteworthy as this is the only institution in the country where Composition is taught. The creative musical scene in Lithuania is becoming quite lively, with several festivals being organized and the cultural industries in rapid development. In the first formal survey tracking graduated students, conducted in 2009-2010, composers, stakeholders and graduated students were interviewed. Of graduates, 100% responded that they had a job in line with their professional qualifications which must indicate that the situation for graduates in the labour market is good and that the program is necessary.

Employers representing the sector of cultural industries noted the lack of qualified music Composition specialists, forecasting that the shortfall would continue in the nearest future. The experts note with concern that, according to the SA, the Composition program does not appear to be responding very fast to the potential demand of the labor market, calling for composers with broader competences, particularly in the field of computer music and technologies. The visiting experts therefore noted with interest that the curriculum is being reevaluated and a substantial grant has recently come for creating a electronic media lab which will enhance the instructional possibilities in the areas currently lacking.

The visiting experts conclude that while the labour marked situation appears very favorable, they would also like to encourage the LMTA to take into consideration the changing profession of composers, particularly concerning their work with other arts and the media. Cooperation between the different departments of the LMTA might be an interesting venue to explore. (see recommendation III, 3.1)

1.1.2. Conformity of the program purpose with institutional, state and international directive

As stated in the SA: *'The Composition program is closely related to the mission and the strategic objectives of the institution to influence a progressive development of the countries culture in training specialists in music, theatre, dance, audiovisual art and art criticism of highest qualification, to develop artistic musicology and teatrology, to implement the criteria of European Higher Education Area in the process of educology and the creative activity.'* The visiting experts concur that this stated purpose is congruent with the institutional mission of the LMTA. Since the institution is governed by national legislation, it appears that the purpose of this program conforms with those guidelines.

Given the LMTA's membership in various organizations of international scope including the Association of European Conservatoires (AEC) and, according to the SA, the focus on the long tradition of artistic training in the country's institutions of higher education in the arts as well as on European and international standards of artistic training, the visiting experts feel that the stated purpose of the Composition Master program of LMTA conforms with institutional, state, and international directives.

1.1.3. Relevance of the program aim

The relevance of the aims of the program is evident to the visiting experts based on the information provided. A clear progression exists toward the desired subject outcomes, which clearly relate to the programmatic outcomes and the institutional mission. The site visit confirmed this relevance of the program aims.

1.2. Learning outcomes of the program

1.2.1. Comprehensibility and attainability of the learning outcome

Lithuania does not have documents which specifically regulate musical higher education but the LMTA has found that the set of criteria and key characteristics of higher education for music professionals developed by the AEC Bologna working group correlates directly with the objectives and aims of the Composition masters program at the LMTA and act within the framework of the documents developed by the Bologna working group. The visiting experts found the learning outcomes clearly stated and divided into three categories: practical achievements (skills), theoretical knowledge (related to music Composition) and general competences. The second cycle studies require a more complex structure and forms, deeper knowledge and a higher degree of artistry. The experts commend the institution for these efforts.

1.2.2. Consistency of the learning outcomes

The objectives and outcomes of the individual subjects appear to be consistent to the desired learning outcomes for the Composition program. The visiting experts found the table no. 5 on page 11 in the SA report helpful for clarifying the relationship between the learning outcomes and program subjects. It is clear that all the learning outcomes are covered within the curriculum, and that "independence" and "critical thinking" is addressed in the various subjects.

1.2.3. Transformation of the learning outcomes

Because the validity of learning outcomes is evaluated every two years by reviewing or updating the study program, there seems to be a mechanism in place to renew and/or transform the learning outcomes of the program and their relationship to broader institutional objectives. The visiting experts also note with interest that updating of outcomes is driven by the need to respond to changes in the musical/cultural life of Lithuania as well as the economic and political life. It is very good to see that former graduates are involved in the improvement process drawing on their experiences in the national and international context.

2. Curriculum design

2.1. Program structure

2.1.1. Sufficiency of the study volume

According to the SA report, the Composition program complies with all government mandated requirements concerning the course of study. Upon completion of the second cycle of studies, students receive a Master of Music in Composition and have the opportunity to proceed to a doctoral studies program.

2.1.2. Consistency of the study subject

In the Composition program the subjects of the study program are closely interrelated, and the sequence of the subjects based on the learning outcomes. Naturally the greatest attention is given to those subjects that aim at developing practical skills and the creative process. Professional practice is an integral part of the Compositional studies. The visiting experts felt that this plan for the organization of study subjects is consistent with nationally mandated and internationally accepted standards for such a program.

2.2. Program content

2.2.1. Compliance of the contents of the studies with legal acts

According to the submitted SA material and information obtained during the site visit, the experts understand that the Composition studies program is broadly consistent with "General requirements for study programs" confirmed by Minister of Education and Science on July 22, 2005, Order No. 1551 and newly accepted requirements in 2010 (April 9, 2010, Order No. V-501). The study plan includes 7 subjects per semester what is in correlation with the requirements. The program is 160 credits, and is divided into two different categories of units: Part A - items of general university education is 18 credits, i.e., 11,25% of the total study program (requirements of the volume shall be not less than 8% or minimum 10 credits in new regulations); part B - items of the fundamentals in the study field is 124 credits (2005 requirements specify 60 credits and 2010 requirements specify 110 credits). The separate practice subject is not included in the program but experts understand the composing practice is realised in subjects Composition (42 credits), Instrumentation and Score (10 credits) and Computer Music Writing (4 credits). Final Composition Project is 10 credits (requirements specify it must be at least 8 credits). Therefore the experts note that the program and its content appear in compliance with all legal acts as documented both in the text and by the footnotes of the SA.

2.2.2. Comprehensiveness and rationality of program content

There appears to be a logical progression of courses and subjects throughout the study. The Composition studies are individual and as the size of the department is small, students get lots of individual attention in the subjects that are taught in group lessons with group sizes ranging from 2 - 7. There are two concerts every semester with student Compositions, of which one is dedicated to electronic media.

The study plan given in the SA gives the experts a good overview of the pathway through the Compositional studies which is logical and meets external standards for comparable programs, though the visiting experts noticed that there is no reference in the SA to Composition students participating in joint and/or cross-arts projects as part of their study plan, no reference to the fact that they can opt to do independent work for credit, and electronic and computer music is given very little space in the study plan. This was verified on site though students reported that quite a bit of interdisciplinary work is happening on an informal level. On the other hand, the aim of developing practical skills and mastering small- and large-scale Composition is well addressed. The teachers

are working on a new study plan and the new electronic facilities will change the possibilities of studying and working through electronic and computer media. (see recommendation III, 3.1)

3. Staff

3.1. Staff Composition and turnover

3.1.1. Rationality of the staff Composition

The teaching staff is composed of highly certified and qualified professionals who hold various academic ranks. All have been certified and comply with the applicable requirements. The ratio of lecturers and students in the Composition department appears to be sufficient. Permanent teachers account for 57% of teachers working in the Composition study program. It is good that LMTA has the possibility and willingness to participate in teacher exchange programs of Erasmus and Nordplus, but unfortunately the funding does not allow for inviting teachers from foreign universities.

The visiting experts notice with appreciation that 90% of the program teachers are active as artists and scientists.

Teachers' qualifications are in accordance with *REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY STUDY PROGRAMS*, that “no less than half of the volume in every study program part should be taught by the higher education institution regular teachers who have a scientific degree or are recognised artists (for teaching art subjects).

i.

3.1.2. Turnover of teachers

According to the SA, the change in the academic staff at LAMT has been minimal. The natural sequence is that of older teachers retiring and young teachers being hired, this is viewed even more positively as the young teachers are active artists/specialists, speak foreign languages and already have good reputations. The experts feel that this limited but regular turnover is appropriate for the continued renewal of the institution.

3.2. Staff competence

3.2.1. Compliance of staff experience with the study program

Teachers involved in the Composition program comply with the minimum job qualification requirements to scientific employees, other researchers and teachers of public science and studies institutions¹ approved by LMTA Senate according to the SA. A teacher is permitted to continue pedagogic activity, provided his/her activity in the five recent years complies with the requirements. The visiting experts feel that the balance of longevity and competence as expressed in Chart No. 6 of the SA and the indication of the artistic achievements of the teachers and their students justify compliance with the needs of the Composition program.

3.2.2. Consistency of teachers' professional development

Table No. 7 (below) clearly indicates the scope and variety of the artistic activities and accomplishments of the Composition teaching staff.

Table No. 7. Teachers' Artistic Activity

N o.	Music Composition	I Performane in prestigious context (%)	II Performance in well-known foreign context (%)	III Performance in the Lithuanian nationwide context (%)	IV Performanc e in Lithuanian cities (%)
1.	Prof. Rytis Mazulis	9	1	-	-
2.	Prof. Osvaldas Balakauskas	2	6	2	-
3.	Prof. Vytautas Barkauskas	3	3	4	-
4.	Prof. Jonas Tamulionis	2	8	-	-
5.	Dr. Ricardas Kabelis	2	7	-	-
6.	Vaclovas Augustinas	4	5	1	-
7.	Marius Baranauskas	1	-	1	-
8.	Mantautas Krukauskas	-	1	-	-
	Total (mean average):	23	31	8	0

4. Facilities and learning resources

4.1. Facilities

4.1.1. Sufficiency and suitability of premises for studies

The facilities of the LMTA occupy 6 different sites in Vilnius and most are within reasonable walking distance of each other; and, the experts note that technical and hygienic conditions are suitable and meet current standards throughout all sites. The amount of instructional and performance space appears adequate to support the needs of the program. There does appear to be an occasional shortage of workspace for students in the evening because of increased demand. The LMTA has attempted to solve this problem by extending the business hours of the buildings. This problem becomes especially exacerbated during examination periods. Although a system of 3 consecutive hours maximum is in place per person per space, the experts encourage LMTA to find a more structured approach to the solution of this problem.

According to the SA, there appears to be sufficient Library workspace, reading rooms and equipment available across all sites during normal operating hours to meet the needs of students and teachers. The experts concur with this evaluation as a result of the site visit.

4.1.2. Suitability and sufficiency of equipment for studies

The SA indicates a catalogue of available equipment for student use including instruments, concert attire, and printed performance materials (scores and parts). The visiting experts question the balance in certain instrumental areas, noting especially the limited number of string instruments (3 violas) available in comparison to other areas (14 French horns, for example). The SA states that 30% of the instruments are unsuitable for student use in the Art of Performance program and are simply kept in storage. On site, the experts discovered that the inadequate condition of this equipment does not permit students to make regular use of school-owned instruments.

Computer hardware and software are adequate for current activities but a new technological grant will provide an upgrade of computer hardware, software and work space that will especially improve the equipment and facilities available for the Composition department. The experts agree that this grant will bring all the information technology equipment used for Composition studies up to current international standards, at least for the next few years.

4.1.3. Suitability and accessibility of the resources for practical training

The experts agree that accessibility and suitability of resources for practical training appear adequate as stated in the SA. Internal performance spaces and external halls are available for student performance projects and there is adequate opportunity for pedagogical practical training at local music schools in Vilnius.

As one of the most important elements of Compositional studies is the practical Compositional work itself and for many institutions performances of students' works can be less than ideal. However, the visiting experts note with appreciation that the opportunities for Composition students at the LMTA to have their works performed and hear those of their fellow students seem more than adequate. The close cooperation with the young division of the Lithuanian society of Composers, which organize two concerts a year specifically for student composers, besides the regular three concerts the Academy has (one of which is specifically electronic and computer music) would in itself appear enough for such a small department, but the SA mentions several other opportunities in the society at large for student works to be heard.

4.2. Learning resources

4.2.1. Suitability and accessibility of books, textbooks and periodical publications

Although suitability and accessibility of books, textbooks and periodicals appear adequate for the program, there are several issues which the SA brings to light. The availability of contemporary music performance material (scores and parts) appears to be a weakness of the Library system. (see recommendation III, 3.2)

There also appears to be a shortage of publications available to students in the area of Jazz, which is especially problematic because most recognized texts in this area are in languages other than Lithuanian. The LMTA acknowledges the shortage of texts in Lithuanian in this and other areas and has partially solved the problem by encouraging Composition teachers to create their own texts, several of which have become recognized, published and widely-used textbooks in Lithuania. The visiting experts commend the institution for this effort and encourage even further progress as financial conditions allow.

4.2.2. Suitability and accessibility of learning materials

As mentioned above in this report, the scholarly activities of the LMTA faculty have helped fill the publications deficiencies of quality texts in Lithuanian. According to the SA, the greatest current need is for textbooks that deal with Lithuanian contemporary music since 1950. The visiting experts encourage the LMTA to continue to find solutions, both internal and external, to reduce this shortage. The Library appears well stocked to meet student needs and has operating hours, which appear adequate, based on student traffic, faculty needs, and budgetary considerations. Access to electronic subscriptions including Jstor and Project Muse appears sufficient for the needs of the program. In the opinion of the experts, LMTA is well provisioned with methodological publications and provides access to necessary learning materials and aids.

From the SA it appears the suitability and accessibility of books, textbooks and periodicals is adequate for the Composition program. However, the lack of contemporary music scores for use in analytical classes and the lack of certain textbooks seems problematic besides the fact that such a situation can lead to illegal copying and distribution.

5. Study process and student assessment

5.1. Student admission

5.1.1. Rationality of requirements for admission to the studies

The LMTA is one of the leading institutions in professional musical education of Lithuania and belongs to the number of excellent Eastern-European music academies. Thanks to the high standards of the elementary and secondary schools, a heritage of the former Soviet system, students with

outstanding preliminary training can apply for admission to the Academy. The visiting experts were informed that, if the elementary musical training (music schools) still works well, the secondary level (conservatoires) is being harmed in the general process of political and social transformation. The students applying to musical performance majors may surmount the gap between secondary and university level by attending to private lessons, thus securing the international standards at their own expenses. The new admission system also leads to a decrease of the number of state-financed domestic students, but without the benefit of welcoming more international students since few of them have discovered yet the excellence of Lithuanian higher music education. For this reason, the question of international mobility should be a crucial part of an overall strategy and brand.

The visit of the Commission happens at a very specific moment since the assessed programs are under the process of heavy modifications to fit to the new law passed in 2010. Furthermore, new admission rules have been edited in May 2009 and already been applicable for the academic year 2009-10, with as a result some confusion and significant changes in the student's profiles and students number in the various programs. The Commission expresses concern about the weight of the general education scores compared to the artistic and pedagogical skills of potential students in the new system, which can indeed be discarded for irrelevant reasons. This may create discrepancies and negative tensions under the various fields of the institution, not to speak about the general quality level. Although the Commission is sure that the new regulations were applied on a fair and transparent basis, it encourages the partners to find specific regulations for the field of music in order not to bypass talented students. After talking to representative of the post-secondary and precollege level, it also encourages to tighten the links between the conservatoires and the higher-level music institutions.

5.1.2. Efficiency of enhancing the motivation of applicants and new students

Almost all the teachers of the Composition program are noted composers, with a high profile and know in Lithuania and abroad. It is natural that they motivate through their visibility and activities prospective students.

The visiting experts take notice of the fact that the lecturers of the program are in contact with the pre-college education of the art schools and conservatoires, and it will be interesting to see if the new creativity competition organized in cooperation with the Lithuanian Society of Composers will change the rate of applications.

The students of the Composition program have several opportunities to take part in projects, festivals and competitions. Also very important are the opportunities students have to participate in summer courses in various countries and the exchange programs of Erasmus and Nordplus. The visiting experts commend this openness to mobility on the part of the LMTA and encourage an increase in activities on both the student and faculty levels

5.2. Study process

5.2.1. Rationality of the program schedule

As the time table of the Composition students is made up of individual, group classes and seminars the schedules of students vary. According to the SA, the schedule appears to have a rational organization in terms of content with a clear progression by year of study. Composition students appear to have sufficient time for individual work and are very active. An electronic study accounting system is in place and expected to cover timetable compilation. The visiting experts encourage such innovation.

5.2.2. Student academic performance

Reasons for academic progress or dropout are analyzed once a year. The performance of students and the retention rate appear appropriate for this level of music program. A small percentage withdraws for reasons of academic failure, but the difference between admittance and final examination is usually because students did not take the examination due to illness or other personal

reasons. It is interesting to note that the Composition examination is taken on the premises of the Lithuanian Composer's Union.

The LMTA offers a wide and colorful range of opportunities to present students' creative, performing and research projects to the public and concert halls provide a suitable infrastructure for this. The visiting experts can acknowledge that many joint projects are taking place with the various musical production institutions in Vilnius. Much individual initiative made it clear that the students are very dynamic in presenting their skills and knowledge. One could wish the strategic and uniting role of the institute to be even stronger and helping organizing and publishing those events. The students' feedback system could also be improved by promoting the international projects developed inside the LMTA and by valorizing dissertations back into the educational flow

5.2.3. Mobility of teachers and students

Mobility in the Composition program has to be viewed as very good. The teachers are active in participating in mobility through Erasmus and Nordplus. The visiting experts notice that the rate has gone down in the last couple of years, and that of course raises the question of whether it is because of financial reasons, or simply a natural curve. It is also clear that LMTA benefits from a nice cooperation with the Lithuanian Union of Composers and different festivals, in the way that when noted composers visit and/or are invited, they lecture also at the Academy. The objectives for mobility are clearly stated as enhancing promotion, cooperation and learning experiences.

Student mobility in the Composition program is higher than the Academies goal of 5%. It depends on the funding and how active the students are, but student mobility is the main priority of internationalization and is observed to have very positive effect upon student's motivation to seek better performance. It is also considered a good tool in quality enhancement as returning students are able to take a critical view, which has a positive effect on the Composition program. Incoming students are offered a course in Lithuanian through the University and several electives are taught in English. (see recommendation III, 3.3)

5.3. Student support

5.3.1. Usefulness of academic support

In every musical institution, the traditional one-to-one tutorial workshop system in music education allows a personal and intimate relation between the teacher and the student. On the other hand, the student may remain very dependent on one person only and be prevented from being proactive enough in a complex and quickly changing environment. It is therefore crucial for the LMTA to be fully aware of the international evolution and to take full benefit of the new electronic communication means, thus helping every stakeholder to be a partner in the development of the global corporate institutional identity and strategy. The general effort towards free and open information must also be especially appraised in the context of post-Soviet transformations.

The first effort toward student support which the LMTA makes is communication of basic information about each study program including courses and financing, expected outcomes, study structure and opportunities for mobility both on its website and during open-door sessions each Spring. According to the SA, new students have appropriate orientation meetings with Faculty Deans and administrators during which they reinforce the basic information and answer students' questions. There also appears to be appropriate, ongoing counselling, both oral and written, for students during their period of study at LMTA. Career counselling is an important part of the process with LMTA teachers serving as the primary conduit to the profession. At the end of 2009, the LMTA began a student career consulting service. By March 2010, a cooperative project in this area was expected to begin involving other institutions including Vilnius University.

5.3.2. Efficiency of social support

The LMTA has significant virtues in the social area. Institutional health care services, a physical education center and various free sporting opportunities are available. The students can rely upon state foundations for grants and benefits. Musical competitions' awards and scholarships are given to

the best students. The social allocations' system for the talented, indigent students is rational and transparent. There appears also to be psychological support available for students as needed but the experts encourage the expansion of this area through the development of resources, especially those available through other institutions of Higher Education in Vilnius. The emphasis of this support appears to be for singers who can consult a medical specialist for vocal problems.

LMTA makes 188 places available in the student dormitory. According to the SA this satisfies 80% of student need. The experts found that this is sufficient based on information gathered during the visit because other students can rent accommodations at a reasonable rate nearby, although 12 places only for international students may seem too few.

There appears to be psychological support available for students as needed but the experts encourage the expansion of this area through the development of resources, especially those available through other institutions of Higher Education in Vilnius. The LMTA rents various facilities so that students have access to sports facilities. The emphasis of this support appears to be for singers who can consult a medical specialist for vocal problems.

5.4. Student achievement assessment

5.4.1. Suitability of assessment criteria and their publicity

According to the SA, there is an ongoing assessment system in place and the criteria are directly related to the projected learning outcomes. The grading system is on the scale 1 - 10 table and also with a "pass" and published in an official document. The common features of the assessment criteria for the Composition program are: Creativity, analysis, synthesis, assessments and professionalism

Assessment criteria

Passed / failed	Assessment system	Description
PASSED	10 (excellent)	Excellent, exceptional knowledge and abilities
	9 (very good)	Profound, thorough knowledge and abilities
	8 (good)	Better than mediocre knowledge and abilities
	7 (average)	Mediocre knowledge and abilities, there are non-essential mistakes
	6 (satisfactory)	Knowledge and abilities (skills) lower than mediocre, some mistakes
	5 (poor)	Knowledge and abilities (skills) comply with minimum requirements
FAILED	4, 3, 2, 1 (unsatisfactory)	Minimum requirements not met

5.4.2. Feedback efficiency

According to the SA all criticism and explanation of assessments happen in the informal setting of teacher-student. Conflicts are usually resolved in this way, which is not unusual given the small number of students in the Composition program. The visiting experts suggest that LMTA take measures to develop a way for students to have more formal and anonymous methods available to bring feedback. A new system of publicly discussing the Composition exam results is hoped to have a positive impact.

5.4.3. Efficiency of final thesis assessment

There appears to be an efficient process of final project assessment described in the SA. A jury of experts assesses the performance including someone who has not worked in the department for at least 3 years serving a chairperson. The visiting experts feel that this is an example of the typical internationally recognized system of evaluating graduation concerts using a jury of experts, some or all of whom have no direct connection with the candidate, to validate the course of study toward the second cycle diploma (Master of Music, in this case).

5.4.4. Functionality of the system for assessment and recognition of achievements acquired in non-formal and self-education

The SA indicates a suitable process for the assessment of achievements acquired in non-formal or self-education. The total credits may not exceed 20% of the total required for graduation. Although this system appears fair and thorough, the visiting experts caution the LMTA to be especially vigilant in the administration of this process, which is based primarily on the evaluation of documents including credits earned through mobility activities.

5.5. Graduates placement

5.5.1. Expediency of graduate placement

According to the SA nearly all graduates of the Composition department in a recent study (2010) are working in the field of music and active in their creative work as well. The main reasons for unemployment are related to the financial situation in the country or the student's deciding to continue their studies in a different masters program. Because national funding is declining and the state remains the principal employer of performing artists in Lithuania, a strategic plan which deals with this issue and the placement of future graduates would be a helpful exercise for the LMTA in the opinion of the experts. (see recommendation III, 3.4 and 3.5)

6. Program management

6.1. Program administration

6.1.1. Efficiency of the program management activities

Although the LMTA does not have a specific manager in place for program implementation and quality assurance, the state issued Statutes under which the LMTA and Composition program are organized appear to provide a structure sufficient to accomplish these goals. These duties are distributed from the Rector through various administrators and to the faculties in a clear and organized manner as viewed by the visiting experts. As seen in the SA and during the discussion with the various stakeholders, the coordination of collegiality with personal responsibility in decision making inside the program and in connection with others is working well. All data are transparent and available to the relevant partners thank to the new academic information system implemented in 2009 and to modern medias (e-mail, intranet). The internal communication between the various institutional bodies is satisfactory.

6.2. Internal quality assurance

6.2.1. Suitability of the program quality evaluation

The SA states: *The current LMTA internal quality assurance system hasn't been formalised. The entire activity and processes related to study quality improvement are distributed among different divisions, commissions, task forces, etc. (see paragraph 2.6.1). In 2010 LMTA started implementing an internal quality assurance system based on the experience of other higher education institutions in Lithuania and abroad.*

The experts strongly recommend the continuation and development of this recent internal quality assurance effort. (see recommendation III, 3.6)

6.2.2. Efficiency of the program quality improvement

The examples of usefulness of assessment for quality improvement are convincing and well published (material improvements, agreements with various institutions, hiring of new teachers and

artists, etc.), although the experts recommend that more means and more speed can be dedicated to this important issue.

6.2.3. Efficiency of stakeholder's participation.

The SA indicates some progress in involving the primary stakeholders, the students, in the process of improving their program, and the Commission enjoyed the vivid discussions with them during the visit. To the experts, the process at this point appears mainly reactive to problems and difficulties. A more proactive approach will be important for future improvements and quality assurance. One way to accomplish this is to formulate a plan that includes strategies for the future with input from all stakeholders: students, faculties, administrators, graduates and the members of the profession who are the primary consumers of the institution's most important product: its well-trained and educated composers.

7. Influence on cultural life

The visiting experts question this statement in the SA: *The involvement of external stakeholders has little influence on study quality. LMTA Council has been formed in 2005 by Order of the Minister of Education because of the contradictory statement which follows under the next paragraph: Positive changes are stimulated by close ties of LMTA with the LNOBT, the National Philharmonic, Kaunas, Klaipėda and Šiauliai city Philharmonics, orchestras, choirs and other concert organisations and societi*

Perhaps the difference is that the ties between the institution and these external stakeholder organizations has been cultivated for many years at the personal and artistic level. If the first statement above were to be true, the fault might be the lack of contact with the administrators and officials of these organizations. It is obvious to the visiting experts that the LMTA has great impact and influence on the cultural life of its cities and on the cultural life of Lithuania. During the meeting with external stakeholders, the experts noticed a disconnect between the expectations of older, more traditionally oriented stakeholders and the needs of the current profession, especially graduating students. The experts recommend that LMTA take steps to remedy this situation. (see recommendation III, 3.4)

8. Interaction with the profession

The SA report shows interaction on several levels with members of the professional music community of Lithuania, performing and educational institutions as well as the close connection with the Lithuanian Composers Society. The teachers and students of the Composition program are also active participants in various projects and festivals involving mobility through Erasmus, Nordplus and other organizations. This is good and should be an encouragement to other departments of the LMTA.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1.

The experts recommend that the LAMT consider carefully the opportunity to take advantage of the fact that is an institution of music, theatre, dance and film and consider developing new interdisciplinary programs and/or modules. (II, 2.2.2)

3.2.

The experts recommend a systematic plan for solving the lack of materials (score and parts) especially in the area of printed contemporary music. (II, 4.2.1)

3.3.

The experts think it might prove helpful for the institution to develop an international strategy plan regarding visiting artists in the field of Composition, and aiming towards establishing permanent ties to institutions and/or artists that would fit into the over all policy and objectives of the course. (II, 5.2.3)

3.4.

The experts recommend the continuation of the annual survey begun in 2009 to poll graduates and recommend the use of the results to influence curricular decisions and counselling efforts for students about to enter their final year of study in the Master cycle of Composition program in order to prepare them for post-graduate study and career entry. (II, 5.5.1)

3.5.

The experts recommend the development of a new comprehensive strategic plan with a scope of at least 5 years to address the issue of declining national funding for the arts since the state remains the principal employer of performing artists (and graduates of LMTA) in Lithuania. This plan would also deal with admissions and enrolment projections that will result from mandated national standards, and other issues such as overcoming restrictions to art programs that occur within the framework of general national regulations. This long-range strategic plan would also address the need to build stronger ties with the external stakeholders; especially those bound by traditions that no longer appear relevant to the current needs of LMTA graduates and the music profession in the 21st century (II, 1.1.1, 5.5.1, 7). The experts feel that this presents a challenging opportunity for institutional growth.

3.6.

The experts recommend the continuation, further development, formalisation and implementation of the internal quality assurance process begun in 2010. (II, 6.2).

IV. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study program *Composition* (state code 61401M110, 621W32001) is given positive evaluation.

Table. *Study program assessment in points by evaluation areas.*

No.	Evaluation area	Assessment in points*
1	Program aims and learning outcomes	4
2	Curriculum design	4
3	Staff	4
4	Facilities and learning resources	3
5	Study process and student assessment (student admission, student support, student achievement assessment)	4
6	Program management (program administration, internal quality assurance)	4
	Total:	23

*1 (unsatisfactory) - there are essential shortcomings that must be eliminated

2 (poor) - meets the established minimum requirements, needs improvement

3 (good) - the area develops systematically, has distinctive features

4 (very good) - the area is exceptionally good

ASSESSMENT FORM

Criterion	Assessment*				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Program aims and learning outcomes					
<i>1.1. Program demand, purpose and aims</i>					
1.1.1. Uniqueness and rationale of the need for the program					x
1.1.2. Conformity of the program purpose with the institutional, state and international directives				X	
1.1.3. Relevance of the program aims					x
<i>1.2. Learning outcomes of the program</i>					
1.2.1. The comprehensibility and attainability of the learning outcomes					x
1.2.2. Consistency of the intended learning outcomes				X	
1.2.3. Transformation of the learning outcomes					x
2. Curriculum design					
<i>2.1. Program structure</i>					
2.1.1. Sufficiency of the study volume					x
2.1.2. Consistency of the study subjects					x
<i>2.2. Program content</i>					
2.2.1. Compliance of the contents of the studies with legal acts					x
2.2.2. Comprehensiveness and rationality of the program content				x	
3. Staff					
<i>3.1. Staff Composition and turnover</i>					
3.1.1. Rationality of the staff Composition					x
3.1.2. Turnover of teachers					x
<i>3.2. Staff competence</i>					
3.2.1. Compliance of staff experience with the study program					x

3.2.2. Consistency of teachers' professional development					X
4. Facilities and learning resources					
<i>4.1. Facilities</i>					
4.1.1. Sufficiency and suitability of premises for studies				X	
4.1.2. Suitability and sufficiency of equipment for studies			X		
4.1.3. Suitability and accessibility of the resources for practical training				X	
<i>4.2. Learning resources</i>					
4.2.1. Suitability and accessibility of books, textbooks and periodic publications					X
4.2.2. Suitability and accessibility of learning materials					X
5. Study process and student assessment					
<i>5.1. Student admission</i>					
5.1.1. Rationality of requirements for admission to the studies				X	
5.1.2. Efficiency of enhancing the motivation of applicants and new students					X
<i>5.2. Study process</i>					
5.2.1. Rationality of the program schedule					X
5.2.2. Student academic performance					X
5.2.3. Mobility of teachers and students					X
<i>5.3. Student support</i>					
5.3.1. Usefulness of academic support				X	
5.3.2. Efficiency of social support			X		
<i>5.4. Achievement assessment</i>					
5.4.1. Suitability of assessment criteria and their publicity					X
5.4.2. Feedback efficiency					X
5.4.3. Efficiency of graduation papers assessment					X
5.4.4. Functionality of the system for assessment					X

and recognition of achievements acquired in a non-formal and self-study way.					
<i>5.5 Graduate placement</i>					
5.5.1 Expediency of graduate placement					X
6. Program management					
<i>6.1. Program administration</i>					
6.1.1. Efficiency of the program management activities					X
<i>6.2. Internal quality assurance</i>					
6.2.1. Suitability of the program quality assessment			X		
6.2.2. Efficiency of the program quality improvement					X
6.2.3. Efficiency of stakeholders' participation					X
7. Influence on cultural life					X
8. Interaction with the profession					X

* – **Values of scores:**

1 – based on this criterion the program is unsatisfactory, as there are essential shortcomings that must be immediately eliminated;

2 – based on this criterion the program is poor, as there are a lot of shortcomings which are not essential;

3 – based on this criterion the program is satisfactory; the program meets the established minimum requirements and has one or two shortcomings which are not essential;

4 - based on this criterion the program is good; the program meets the requirements higher than those established by legal acts;

5 – based on this criterion the program is excellent; the quality of program implementation is of an exceptionally high level.