

**EXTERNAL EVALUATOR'S REPORT
FOR ARACIS OF
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MUSIC BUCHAREST**

2016



Introduction

I was appointed as a Foreign External Evaluator for the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS) and was consequently invited to join the evaluation team for the institutional evaluation process of National University of Music Bucharest (UNMB). I have participated in quite a number of accreditation procedures but it was the first time that I evaluated a university which has very strong tradition and has a very special characteristic. The audit took place between Wednesday 23 November and Friday 25 November 2016.

The evaluation team consisted of the following members, in addition to myself:

Prof. univ. dr. Lucian Georgescu ("Dunarea de Jos" University of Galati) – Mission Director

Prof. univ. dr. Nicolae Todea ("1 Decembrie 1918" University of Alba Iulia) – Coordinator of the Experts Evaluator Team

Prof. univ. dr. Mircea Ivanescu (University of Craiova) – Advisory Commission Expert
Assoc. Prof. dr. Adriana Giurgiu (University of Oradea) – Institutional Commission Expert

Prof. univ. dr. Doru Albu (University of Arts "George Enescu", Iasi) – Program Expert

Prof. univ. dr. Felician Rosca (West University of Timisoara) – Program Expert

Roxana Florea – Technical Secretary

Georgiana Dorascu ("Dunarea de Jos" University of Galati) – Student Evaluator (Aliantei Nationale a Organizatiilor Studentesti din Romania)

Daniel Dumitru Grigoriu ("Petru Maior" University of Tirgu-Mures) – Student Evaluator (Uniunea Nationala a Studentilor din Romania)

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The evaluation process began on Wednesday the 23rd of November at 9 a.m. in the Opera Studio (A1 building) with the welcoming speech of the rector. Prof. univ. dr. Asinefta Diana Mos asked her colleagues (the management of UNMB) and the representatives of the students to introduce themselves. Then Prof. univ. dr. Lucian Georgescu told the introductory statements of the mission and he also asked the members of evaluation team to introduce themselves. This was followed by a tour at the university to see the infrastructure and special facilities of the institution.

Between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. the group of experts was working on different aspects of the evaluation. In my role as Foreign Expert Evaluator, I was responsible for establishing an overview of the whole university and was allowed to move freely, talking to members of staff, students of the university.

In the morning I visited the Community Programmes (currently ERASMUS +) Office and Student Dormitory. At 5 p.m. we had an appointment with a group of 8 former students of UNMB and at 6 p.m. there was a one hour meeting with a group of 25 undergraduate students.

The team continued the evaluation process on Thursday the 24th of November. In the morning I had an appointment with Prof. univ. Dr. Corina-Antigona Rădulescu (vice-rector) Prof. univ. dr. Olguța-Carmen Lupu (dean, Faculty of Composition, Musicology and Musical Pedagogy). In the afternoon I had the occasion to meet the representative of one of the students' organizations. At 5 p.m. we had a one hour meeting with a group of 7 graduates' employers.

The evaluation process was finished on Friday the 25th of November when the team of experts prepared the final report. The evaluation process was conducted in open and collegial manner.

General Statements

National University of Music Bucharest is a public higher education institution, operates according to the Constitution, the laws that govern the higher education system in Romania and also on the basis of the University Charter and of its own

internal regulations. UNMB is an important representative of the Romanian music education, its tradition extending over 150 years.

In 2010 the institution was evaluated by ARACIS. As a result of the evaluation the institution was awarded the "High Degree of Confidence" qualification.

UNMB has a structure with two faculties: the Faculty of Musical Performing; the Faculty of Composition, Musicology and Musical Pedagogy. The faculties are further subdivided into departments.

The Faculty of Musical Performing has two BA (Musical Interpretation – Instruments; Musical Interpretation – Singing) and one MA (Instrumental and vocal performance stylistics) programmes. The Faculty of Composition, Musicology and Musical Pedagogy has five BA (Musical composition; Musicology; Conducting; Music; Religious music) and also five MA (Compositional Style and Language; Musicological Synthesis; Conducting Stylistics; Contemporary Music Education and Religious Music Cultures; Jazz and Pop Music Cultures) programmes. The university is recognized as an institution with the right to organize PhD studies too. All study programmes of the university have been accredited/reaccredited to operate.

The Teaching Staff Training Department of UNMB mission is to assure education competences in the specialised fields which prepares graduates, assuming an essential role in the professional education of the future and present music teachers.

The university has 829 enrolled students, out of which: 646 undergraduate students; 161 master's degree students; 22 doctoral students. There are 760 students whose studies are financed by the state; the others are paying fees for their studies.

Comment: I have read quite a number of self-assessment reports since I began taking part in institutional evaluation processes but UNMB's evaluation report was one of the best because it was lack of frills.

Managerial Structure

The leadership of the university is organised in accordance with its legal obligations, which are stated in the university's charter and the structure can be followed very clearly in the organogram of UNMB. In terms of structure, the university is led by the Rector, who is supported by three Vice-Rectors.

This year the new rector and also the University Senate was elected as the collective management structure of UNMB. The election mechanisms follow the principles of academic democracy. The Senate of UNMB consisting of teaching and research staff and the representatives of the students (25%). I was informed that the positions of the students' representative are not totally loaded. (I could sense during my visit that there was a tension between the two students' organizations!)

I could not find out how much the students are involved in decision making.

Comment: UNMB has a coherent, integrated, transparent management system, based on an efficient and effective administration.

I recommend the real involvement of students in decision making in those matters they are affected.

Teaching Staff

The university employs a mixture of full-time and part-time academic staff, supported by a team of administrators. In the academic year of 2016-2017 UNMB employs 201 teaching staff (113 tenured and 88 associated). The UNMB teaching staff are well known and prestigious personalities in the field of music with important distinctions awarded both in Romania and abroad, many of them being members of the Union of Composers and Musicologists in Romania, the Union of Romanian Performers etc. Non-permanent staff are often active practitioners in different music artistic organizations.

The structure of the teaching staff seems to be balanced; the university might persuade the experienced lectures to become associate professors and the experienced associate professors to become professors in order to maintain the

academic quality. There are also an additional three scientific researches with Ph.D employed by the Research, Innovation and Information Division centres.

Due to the nature of teaching, which is practical and personal-based, the ratios between staff and students are necessarily small and it is important for the UNMB to be able to maintain these ratios in order to continue to deliver high-quality education to its students.

Comment: The quality of human resources and the scientific potential at UNMB is on a good level. The human resource development plans were realized systematically. The ratio of students to teaching staff is very good. It is in accordance with the ratio existing in most of the music universities in Europe.

Facilities

UNMB's campus includes 5 buildings (A, B, C, D, E), a media library and a student dormitory about 500m from the campus. I experienced that the condition of the buildings are on different levels but most of the educational and research spaces fulfil every requirement of the European standards and they are well equipped, containing also quality musical instruments, IT and audio-video equipment, books, musical scores etc. Only the students' hostel is overcrowded and needed restoration and re-equipment. UNMB also has a good canteen. The new building of the media library is very impressive which should be equipped completely and filled with more activities. UNMB has no good sport facilities at the moment. The reconstruction is still in progress.

UNMB ensures the printing of the lecture notes, textbooks and of the necessary documents for the implementation of the curricula by its own publishing house.

Comment: UNMB holds enough spaces for teaching, artistic creation and research activities within its campus. Facilities are well used and most of the educational spaces, what I have seen, fulfil every requirement of the European standards. It can be seen that UNMB invested in its physical infrastructure when funds allowed. It is

important to continue this procedure and renovate, re-equip the dormitory and the gym as soon as possible.

Students

The number of students at UNMB is just over 800 in the academic year 2016/17 but the figures are decreasing. Each type of study program (BA/BSc, MA/MSc and PhD) is available for the candidates. There are only a few foreign students at UNMB, typically in the PhD programme.

Comment: I suppose that the number of students could be increased a bit if UNMB would also have study programmes conducted in English or other foreign languages.

Study result could be read on the news-boards which might violate individual rights of students.

Comment: I would rather suggest using the intranet system to announce study results with the personal passwords of the students.

During the discussion with the *former students* they seemed pleased with the members of the academic staff and the university. The lack of sufficient artistic management studies and training was mentioned. Those who had study experience abroad mentioned that there were no differences between UNMB and foreign universities. It was emphasized that as UNMB had very good professional relationship with different artistic organizations the best students could get a job easily. Some of them also expressed that research in music was very restricted.

At the appointment with the *students*, they seemed fairly pleased with UNMB, the education, the circumstances and the infrastructure, although the rooms for practice are very overwhelmed. They said that the professors were very helpful and they dealt much more with the students than it was obligatory for them. I felt tension between the representatives of the two student organizations. It weakened the student representation in the university's decision making bodies.

There are around 50 Erasmus Mobility agreements at UNMB and they are also taking part in CEEPUS. The number of the students participating in Erasmus Program could be more.

Comment: Smoothing of opposites between students' associations should be done as soon as possible. It is the interest of UNMB.

It is recommended to increase the number of students taking part in mobility activities especially doing a traineeship abroad. It will help the students to gain some practical experience abroad and it is also suits to EU recommendations.

At the meeting with *employers*, they seemed very satisfied with those students who graduated from UNMB.

Most of the employers were representatives of different fields of music (e.g. Adrian Iorgulescu the president of the Union of Romanian Composers and Musicologists; Marin Cazacu the artistic director of the Romanian National Symphony Orchestra; Mihai Constantinescu the general manager of ARTEXIM etc.). They also mentioned that subjects related to management should be increased in the curriculums.

Research

UNMB feels great responsibility for the support of scientific research and artistic creations. Research activity within the university is managed by the Research, Innovation and Information Division which includes four centres: Multimedia and Electroacoustic Music Centre; Artistic projects and Scientific Research Centre; Old Music Centre and Romanian Musical Information Centre.

The scientific research/artistic creation activity is permanently monitored by Research, Innovation and Information Division. The vice-rector in charge for research agrees about the scientific research/artistic creation strategy and coordinates all centres and publications under Research, Innovation and Information Division. There is also a Scientific Council and an Artistic Council that ensures the connection between the research departments or the artistic initiatives and the management of the university. Both councils have the duty to establish the research and artistic

strategies, to supervise the research topics and all artistic activities suggested by all members of the academic community.

Research in UNMB is oriented both on theoretical matters and practical matters. Research is materialised in specific directions: articles, studies, books, compositions, participation in symposiums, conferences, concerts, scientific research/artistic creation projects etc.

All scientific research and artistic creation activities have increased not only by number but also in quality between 2011 and 2016. The grants were better managed; the artistic activities have increased and have been better promoted and better received by the public.

Quality Management

UNMB has a Quality Evaluation and Assurance Commission (CEAC) which sets quality and quantity criteria, implements and applies the procedures and activities for the quality evaluation and assurance.

The information and evaluation results are processed annually in order to collect the Yearly Quality Evaluation Report. There is also a Management Control System Development Program which is applied in UNMB.

Besides the transparent quality assurance structure of UNMB, the university concentrate on the different fields of quality assurance: quality assurance for management processes, quality assurance in teaching and scientific research.

Comment: In my opinion the structure and the procedures of quality assurance at UNMB are well organized. There is also internal and external control of quality assurance.

I am happy to declare my full and complete confidence in the quality assurance processes at UNMB, as well as the quality of its programs.

Conclusion

I was very much satisfied what I have experienced; seen, read and heard at the university. I propose a "High confidence rating".

I hope that some of the comments which I made will help the university Management in the process of continual improvement.

Finally I would like to express my thanks to the Rector, Vice Rectors, Deans and all the University staff for the pleasant atmosphere and the support during my stay in Bucharest. Also much gratitude to my colleagues from the evaluation team for the professional, open and gentle way in which the audit was conducted.

At last but not least special thanks to ARACIS for giving me the opportunity to participate in this evaluation process in Romania.

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