

Executive summary

Report

Programme accreditation

Doctor of Music Program (D.M.)

Doctor of Philosophy Program (PhD)

College of Music, Mahidol University (Salaya, Thailand)

Site-visit: 21-24 June 2021

Introduction

Background and context

Music courses were offered for the first time at Mahidol University in 1987 as elective courses for undergraduate students. In 1989 this was developed into a Master of Arts in Cultural Studies with emphasis on music. In 1994 the College of Music was established, offering a Master of Arts in Music with majors in music education and musicology. A Bachelor of Music program was introduced in 1998 with majors in classical music performance, jazz studies, Thai and oriental music, and music technology. In 2001 a three-year Pre-College program was introduced.

The first doctoral program was introduced in 2005, a PhD with majors in musicology and music education. This was the first of its kind in Thailand. The Doctor of Music with majors in music performance, composition and conducting, was introduced in 2014, being the first of its kind in the region. The College of Music hence offers music education from the pre-college level to the doctoral level within several specialisations.



The College of Music has its own campus with several buildings with dedicated rooms for teaching, practicing, laboratories, library, and several concert venues. In addition, the College operates three music campuses for the general public for different outreach projects.

In 2005 the College of Music established the Thailand Philharmonic Orchestra (TPO) as a resident professional orchestra. The orchestra is increasingly utilised as a teaching and learning resource.

There are comprehensive national and university-wide quality assurance procedures in place. All higher education institutions must follow the Thailand Qualification Framework (TQF). One of the criteria in the framework concerns structuring the curriculum according to five domains of learning outcomes: knowledge and cognitive skills, numerical analysis, communication and IT skills, interpersonal skills and responsibility, and ethics and morals. In this context, the College of Music saw a need for more music-specific reviews and accreditations of the institution and its programs. MusiQuE was therefore approached and carried out an institutional review in 2017 which concluded that the institution fully complies with all the standards. In 2018 and in 2019 respectively, the Bachelor of Music program and the Master of Arts programs participated in the MusiQuE program reviews and were both accredited.

Review Process

In 2020, the College of Music commissioned MusiQuE to organise an accreditation procedure for the two doctoral programs, Doctor of Music (D.M.) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).

The procedure for the review of the doctoral programmes followed a four-stage process:

- The College of Music prepared a *Self-evaluation Report (SER)* and supporting documents, based on the *MusiQuE Standards for Programme Review*.
- An international review team composed by MusiQuE studied the *SER* and documentation provided in preparation for the site visit.
- An online site-visit was carried out on 21-24 June 2021. The site-visit comprised of Zoom meetings with representatives of College of Music management team, teaching and support staff, students, alumni, employers and external stakeholders (see program in Annex 1). Videos of classes and performances were also studied as well as a virtual tour of the campus. The Review Team used the *MusiQuE Standards for Programme Review* as the basis of its investigations.
- The Review Team produced the review report that follows, structured along the *Standards* mentioned above.

The Review Team

The Review Team consisted of:

- Robert Cutietta (Chair of the Review Team), Thornton School of Music, University of Southern California, USA
- Tiago Neto (peer), Escola Superior de Música de Lisboa, Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa, Portugal
- James Lee Slimings (student peer), Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, UK



- Ingrid Maria Hanken (secretary, acting as a peer), Norwegian Academy of Music, Norway.



Summary of the compliance with the Standards and recommendations

The review team concludes that both programmes Doctor of Music (D.M.) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) comply with the *Standards for Programme Review* as follows:

| 1. Programme's goals and context | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Standard 1. The programme goals are clearly stated and reflect the institutional mission. | Fully compliant |
| <p>Commendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A clear connection between the vision, mission and the strategic goals. - A willingness to think forward and continue to develop the programs <p>Suggestions for enhancement;</p> <p>The Review Team has the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To develop a research strategy; b) To strengthen the “brand” of the doctoral programs by celebrating the location in Southeast Asia and the strong connection to Thai culture; c) To consider offering an English language PhD, especially within the musicology major. | |
| 2. Educational processes | |
| Standard 2.1. The goals of the programme are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its methods of delivery. | Substantially compliant |
| <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>The Review Team has the following recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To incorporate international standards in programs on the 3rd cycle level concerning independence, student initiative and critical reflection; <p>Suggestions for enhancement:</p> <p>The Review Team has the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) To systematically utilise peer learning; c) To increase the connection between the two doctoral programs; d) To standardise syllabi to a greater extent; e) To further integrate TPO into the curriculum | |
| Standard 2.2. The programme offers a range of opportunities for students to gain an international perspective. | Fully compliant |
| <p>Commendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An international learning environment | |

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| Standard 2.3. Assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes. | Fully compliant |
| Suggestions for enhancement; The Review Team has the following suggestions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To consider changing the composition of the dissertation assessment panel to ensure a majority of outside members b) To reconsider the requirement to publish an article before graduation. | |
| 3. Student profiles | |
| Standard 3.1. There are clear criteria for student admission, based on an assessment of their artistic/academic suitability for the programme. | Fully compliant |
| | |
| Standard 3.2. The programme has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students. | Fully compliant |
| Suggestions for enhancement; The Review Team has the following suggestions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To standardise and clearly state expectations concerning regular supervisory contact in the Graduate Handbook or syllabi. | |
| 4. Teaching staff | |
| Standard 4.1. Members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/pedagogues/ researchers. | Fully compliant |
| Suggestions for enhancement; The Review Team has the following suggestions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To offer training and/or mentoring for advisors. b) To create arenas where teachers and advisors can share best practices. c) To publish the faculty members' research interests on the website of the College of Music. d) To continue the efforts to have artistic research acknowledged as equal to academic research. | |
| Standard 4.2. There are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programme. | Fully compliant |
| | |
| 5. Facilities, resources and support | |
| Standard 5.1. The institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programme. | Fully compliant |

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| Commendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outstanding facilities Suggestions for enhancement; <p>The Review Team has the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To employ a full-time music librarian. b) To allocate a designated collaborative space for doctoral students | |
| Standard 5.2. The institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the programme. | Fully compliant |
| | |
| Standard 5.3. The programme has sufficient qualified support staff. | Fully compliant |
| | |
| 6. Communication, organisation and decision-making | |
| Standard 6.1. Effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the programme. | Fully compliant |
| Commendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An international student service center - A comprehensive Graduate Handbook Suggestions for enhancement; <p>The Review Team has the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To revise the Graduate Handbook to become more user-friendly for students. b) To revise COMMAS to become more user-friendly for students. | |
| Standard 6.2 The programme is supported by an appropriate organisational structure and decision-making processes. | Fully compliant |
| Suggestions for enhancement; <p>The Review Team has the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To allow students a more formal role in the organisational structure. | |
| 7. Internal quality culture | |
| Standard 7. The programme has in place effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures. | Fully compliant |
| Commendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An embedded quality culture. | |

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| Suggestions for enhancement; The Review Team has the following suggestions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To consider ways to decrease the amount of paperwork involved in quality assurance for both administrative and teaching staff. | |
| 8. Public interaction | |
| Standard 8.1. The programme engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts. | Fully compliant |
| Commendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A commitment to benefit the wider society. | |
| Standard 8.2. The programme actively promotes links with various sectors of the music and other artistic professions. | Fully compliant |
| Suggestions for enhancement; The Review Team has the following suggestions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To consider how to support life-long learning among graduates and other members of the music profession. | |
| Standard 8.3. Information provided to the public about the programme is clear, consistent and accurate. | Fully compliant |
| | |

Conclusion

The College of Music at Mahidol University has emerged as a leader among institutions of higher education in Southeast Asia and is well on its way to being recognized as being among the leading institutions of the world. This accomplishment is even more impressive when considered against the relative youth of the institution. We feel this has been accomplished as a result of a stated focus on attaining international status and the Universities' financial and administrative support of the College of Music to achieve this goal.

Overall, we found an institution well run with a unity of vision among staff, students, and alumni. This unity of vision was complimented with a willingness to look to the future and challenge itself to constantly improve. This is a winning formula and one we feel will lead to continued success.

Specifically, we found the doctoral programs, while still relatively young, are of very good quality. We found that both the Ph.D. and the D.M. programs fully comply with all but one of the examined standards.

The College of Music is commended for the care it has taken to provide high quality instruction in beautifully designed and maintained facilities. Further, the systematic and progressive approach it has taken on achieving goals is a model for other institutions to emulate. It should be especially noted that this review of the doctoral programs completes a multi-year review of all aspects of the College of Music. Their response to suggestions from earlier reviews was thorough and expedient and has helped them to achieve their goals.

The committee has made recommendations in response to several standards. However, we feel the most significant suggestions that will help the College achieve its goal of having a seat among the world's best institutions can be found in the recommendations for Standard 2.1; Educational Processes. These recommendations each deal with some aspect of the curriculum and its delivery. Examining and acting upon these suggestions will bring the programs even more in line with accepted international standards.

The Review Team congratulates the administration and faculty of the College of Music on the vision, quality, commitment, and excitement evident throughout the review document and during our virtual visit. We anticipate a continued bright future for their programs.

