



# **Report**

## **Bachelor of Dance**

**University of Arts The Hague – Royal Conservatoire**

**(The Hague, The Netherlands)**

**Limited programme review**

**Site-visit: 17-18 June 2019**



**Royal  
Conservatoire  
The Hague**

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## Summary

The Dance department of the Royal Conservatoire (Koninklijk Conservatorium, hereafter: KC) is a specialised and internationally recognised institute that provides training in academic theatre dance for a small group of exceptionally talented students between ages of 10 and 20 whose ambition (or dream) is to become a dancer in a company with a repertoire based on academic theatre dance. The Bachelor of Dance is a 2-year full time course which follows on an eight-year programme of the Interfaculty School for Young Talent that provides courses for pupils who combine preparatory training in dance with regular primary and secondary education. Its aim is to train versatile dancers of the future as self-assured and independent artists who combine an open, creative mind with professional skills, passion and ambition. To this purpose, the programme has been designed to provide students with the knowledge and training they need to master both classical and modern techniques, building towards a versatile profile that facilitates graduates working in a large variety of classical and contemporary dance styles. (Source: *Study Guide 2019 – 2020*, pp.5 – 15). In this context, the term “neo-classical” dancer was referenced on several occasions during the interviews, across various layers of the programme’s community – from the level of management to that of external stakeholders. The panel notes that the abstract notion of the “neo-classical dancer” lacks any clear or universally accepted definition by the programme. The panel was not able to identify a common conceptual thread throughout all the interviews, and the KC has confirmed that a debate on an actual definition is still ongoing. In this report, the panel will adopt henceforth this terminology to reflect its widespread informal use across the programme, highlighting that a prevalent understanding of this profile seems to lean towards the unique combination of classical and contemporary dance training that the programme aims to provide.

The Bachelor of Dance programme focuses on the practical aspects of a career as a dancer. A special feature is the cooperation with the dance company Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT). In 2021 KC, including its Dance department, will move to a new building in the centre of The Hague. This new building will house KC, Nederlands Dans Theater and the Residentie Orkest (The Hague Philharmonic), sharing concert halls, studios, rehearsal rooms and other facilities.

For the assessment of the programme the panel used the limited programme assessment framework (for existing programmes) of NVAO (version September 2018) to serve as the basis for the assessment process. The NVAO standards for limited programme assessment were mapped against the MusiQuE standards for programme review. As a result, the MusiQuE standards and areas of inquiry were added under each NVAO standard in order to both express and reinforce the correspondence between both sets of criteria and to complete the NVAO framework with criteria relevant for performing arts programmes. The report is structured according to the mapped NVAO-MusiQuE standards. The panel judgment as expressed in the present report is based on the assessment rules for limited programme assessments (existing programmes), which are further detailed in Annex 5.

### **NVAO Standard 1: Intended learning outcomes**

The programme receives the following assessment on NVAO Standard 1: the programme meets the standard.

The Bachelor of Dance programme at KC subscribes to the *Dutch professional and educational profiles for bachelor dance 2017*, a set of subject-specific requirements that describe the educational profiles of a dancer and were developed in close collaboration with representatives of the dance profession. The intended learning outcomes therefore comply with both international and national standards for a Bachelor programme in dance.

The programme has an association with NDT, one of the leading dance companies in the Netherlands. This is a real asset of the programme. Students follow classes twice a week on NDT repertoire. In addition, students have possibilities for attending the three month-long Young Talent Programme which is offered annually in cooperation with NDT. Another strong point is the effort of the programme in preserving the Dutch repertoire.

The choice for training neo-classical dancers with strong reflective skills is promising. At the same time, a clearer profile and further support by the KC for targeted marketing would enable the programme to attract a larger pool

of talented students. The development and the delivery of the programme could be based in an even more structural way on the intended learning outcomes to enhance a more distinct profile of the programme.

### **NVAO Standard 2: Teaching-learning environment**

The programme receives the following assessment on NVAO Standard 2: the programme meets the standard.

The curriculum is closely linked to the professional practice of professional dance. Strong emphasis is laid on training in both classical ballet and modern dance. Furthermore, students are trained in classical ballet repertoire and repertoire of the 'Dutch School'.

The programme has a curriculum that reflects the intended learning outcomes. During the last five years the programme implemented measures to train more all-round students. Strong points are the NDT Young Talent project and the course Dance Now. The programme could strengthen the curriculum by elaborating reflective skills in a more methodical and comprehensive way and transferring this into the physicality of the students. More emphasis on contemporary and modern technique in relation to a firm classical basis could serve to further stir the curriculum towards the neo-classical direction that the programme's community seemed to aspire to throughout the interviews.

Staff and teachers are qualified, very motivated and dedicated. Keeping with the fast developments of the professional world of dance represents a continuous challenge for the teaching staff. In this regard, the panel finds the programme Artist as Teacher to be an asset regarding staff policy from an educational viewpoint.

The resources and facilities enable student learning and delivery of the programme in a sufficient way. Regarding student support the panel advises further development of the preventive aspects of (mental) health to help students to prevent injuries and mental problems instead of curing them. Investing in a contemporary way of scheduling would help students to be more effective in their study. Being part of University of Arts The Hague is a great asset, and students could increase their benefit if more interdisciplinary projects were initiated with the other departments within the University of Arts The Hague.

### **NVAO Standard 3: Assessment**

The programme receives the following assessment on NVAO Standard 3: the programme partially meets the standard.

The Bachelor of Dance programme has done work to develop a system of assessment that fits to the aim of the programme: training professional dancers. Assessment is strongly based on the way how professional dance companies work in combination with tailor made feedback of staff and company members. Assessment of ballet classes is well defined and transparent.

However, the assessment of the student's self-choreographed solo, modern techniques and reflective skills is not clearly defined. For these aspects, criteria are limited and not clearly related to the learning outcomes. Instead of the formative way of assessment currently in place, the assessment of the internship could contribute more strongly to the professional quality of the students if clear criteria were defined and explicitly linked to learning outcomes.

External examiners taking part in the assessment of the ballet classes is a strong point, but the assessment of the overall quality of the students seemed inconsistent and was not immediately evident to the panel. In the view of the panel, the programme could be enhanced by considering an integrated and specific product to demonstrate that students explicitly achieve the Bachelor level on all intended learning outcomes. Based on the interviews held on site and the documents provided by the programme, it became evident to the panel that the informal feedback the students receive is relevant for their development and supportive of their becoming professional dancers. At the same time, the formal assessment, especially in the solo and contemporary dance, could benefit from further fine-tuning. The KC is encouraged to consider how it could further support the programme to become more engaged in

monitoring the quality of the assessment process by, for example, a more systematic approach towards formal feedback. In this regard, the panel highlights the need for a more coherent set of criteria used for assessment, and for explicit guidelines by which these criteria are employed and become part of a formal evaluation or mark. Given the above made remarks the panel advises to reflect on the task and responsibility of the exam committee and to expand its working methods and locus of engagement with the quality of the assessment process. The programme has already undertaken a first step in this direction, as it has been described in the memo sent to the panel after the audit.

A strength regarding intake is that the majority of Bachelors come from the own School for Young Talent. These candidates are well prepared for the 2-year Bachelor programme. For the intake of external candidates, the criteria for exemptions to fit them into the programme as observed by the panel in the student's files are not as well developed as for the internal students. The panel advises the programme to define these criteria in a more elaborated way so that the incoming students are able to meet the international standard after finishing the 2-year curriculum.

There is clear evidence of good practice, including the assessment process in place for the classical ballet classes and the quality of feedback that students receive. However, this was not consistently observed across the programme, and the programme team is required to elaborate clear and coherent assessment criteria for all courses based on the learning outcomes. As a condition for further improvement the panel recommends that the programme draw up a 4-year plan to strengthen the quality of the assessment process including an integrated method to assess the Bachelor level and to let the exam committee comment yearly on the effect of the measures taken.

#### **NVAO Standard 4: Achieved learning outcomes**

The programme receives the following assessment on NVAO Standard 4: the programme meets the standard.

The programme's objective is to deliver self-assured dancers with a broad training in classical and modern techniques, able to apply them to contemporary dance styles and influences, and to adapt to the continuously evolving dance profession (*Source: Study Guide 2019 – 2020 p.5*). Good work has been done regarding training the work ethic of the students and their versatility. The panel was impressed by the self-reflective skills of the students. Students do get jobs as dancers, but the interviewed students and graduates presented it as a challenge to get a job at a dance company after the internship. The panel has seen the results of work in progress, and commends the programme for laying solid foundations with regard to the students' classical training. Regarding the overall technical standard and especially the acquisition of contemporary and modern techniques, the programme is encouraged to undertake further steps to attain the level of versatility that the profile seeks to achieve. The panel advises to define a more comprehensive final assessment to help students in reaching this goal. Considering the extent to which graduates of the programme find employment in the Dutch professional field, the panel concludes that the standard is met with the reservation that further enhancement of the training in contemporary and modern dance technique, combined with the work lying ahead for reaching full compliance with Standard 3 above, are necessary milestones that the programme is encouraged to strive towards.

The 2-year curriculum is a challenge. The Young KC Dance Company is a positive concept which could help in bridging the still existing gap between professional dance companies and the curriculum. Its position between school and company is, nevertheless, delicate and forms a critical success factor. In reinforcing the bridge that the Young KC Dance Company represents, the KC and the programme are encouraged to define the Company's position more clearly, and to implement the concept in close cooperation with their alumni network and with the dance companies. For this purpose, the panel advises both the programme and the KC to expand the pool of professional experts involved therein and to advance a realistic development plan.

It is beyond the panel's doubt that the programme is moving in the right direction. The progress already made since the previous review is evident. While work still lies ahead, it can be argued that within the Dutch higher education

landscape in which the KC is embedded, the Dance programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved. However, given the intrinsic international dimension of the dance profession, the panel strongly encourages the programme to strive beyond its national context and aim to meet the competitive international standard circumscribed to by the profession. To this purpose, it would be essential that students entering the programme are of an international standard. As such, an improvement of the recruiting process, both nationally and internationally, may be an important aspect to consider. Likewise, the KC could help expand their international position towards the Dance department by, for example, increasing marketing and recruitment resources.

The panel is aware that raising the overall technical standard to a level that is compliant with the requirements of both national and international companies takes time. However, the programme is encouraged to consider developing a comprehensive 4-year plan including yearly milestones to achieve this goal. The panel urges both the programme and the KC to consider the following recommendations as significant priorities in such a plan for further improvement, in order to increase the employability of graduates:

- To better balance the two year curriculum by ensuring a more diversified training in contemporary and modern dance technique;
- To establish a strategic development plan for the Young KC Dance Company, one that takes into account the design and implementation of a more comprehensive final assessment able to convey a more integrative view on the students;
- To better the premise for an enlarged and better qualified student intake by streamlining the description of the profile, expanding the reach and scope of marketing initiatives, and enhancing the recruitment process.

### **Final conclusion**

Given the outcomes of the above-mentioned standards the panel recommends as weighted and substantiated final conclusion regarding the programme: conditionally positive.

## Introduction

This is the assessment report of the Bachelor of Dance degree programme offered by KC of the University of Arts The Hague. The assessment was conducted by an audit panel compiled by MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement (MusiQuE) commissioned by KC. Prior to the assessment process the audit panel was approved by NVAO.

In this report the audit panel gives account of its findings, considerations and conclusions. The assessment was undertaken according to the *Assessment framework for the higher education system of the Netherlands* of NVAO (September 2018). The NVAO standards for limited programme assessment have been mapped against the MusiQuE Standards for Programme Review. As a result, the MusiQuE standards and areas of inquiry have been added under each NVAO standard in order to both express and reinforce the correspondence between both sets of criteria and to complete the NVAO framework with criteria relevant for music and performing arts programmes.

The site visit took place on 17 and 18 June 2019.

The audit panel consisted of:

- Mrs Pascale De Groot (Chair) – Principal Artesis Plantijn University College Antwerp, Belgium
- Mrs Amanda Bennett – director Ballettschule Theater Basel, Switzerland
- Mr Gianni Malfer – operative program director BA/MA Dance Zürich University of the Arts, Switzerland
- Ms Rosie Mackley (Student member) - Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, United Kingdom
- Mr Quinten Bunschoten (NVAO certified Secretary) – Qultura Management & Kwaliteit, The Netherlands

The study programme offered a critical reflection which in form and content corresponds to the requirements of the appropriate NVAO assessment framework and according to the requirements of the MusiQuE Standards for Institutional Review, Programme Review and Joint Programme Review. The students of the Bachelor of Dance brought their own contribution to this critical self-reflection exercise through a short film which they produced and edited independently, without any involvement of the management. The audit panel studied the critical reflections and visited the study programme. The critical reflection and all other (oral, written, and digital) information made available to the Review Team, have enabled the panel to reach a considered judgement.

The panel experienced a positive atmosphere. All conversations were open, honest and constructive for the benefit of the development of the school both between the panel members and members of the institution.

The panel declares that the assessment of the study programme was carried out independently.

It is clear that the management took on the challenge and continues to make the programme more modern and up to date. While noting the advances made towards an enhancement-led approach to quality culture – e.g. the establishment of student panels, the implementation of more academic subjects, or the administrative support for the artistic management, the panel encourages the KC to increasingly support the programme towards the implementation of the recommendations received in the framework of the previous review, as well as the recommendations contained herein. In this regard, a more integrative approach by the KC could benefit the programme in reaching more consistency between the formal and informal understandings of the designed dancer profile, and increased clarity in the assessment system developed for this purpose.

Aalsmeer, September 2019

P. De Groot  
*Panel chairman*

Q.J. Bunschoten  
*Panel secretary*

## Key data on the programme

1. Nomenclature of the programmes in CROHO [central register of higher education programmes]: Bachelor of Dance
2. Orientation and level of the programme: Bachelor HBO (Hoger Beroepsonderwijs)
3. Number of credits: 240 ECTS
4. Location(s): Royal Conservatoire The Hague
5. Mode(s) of study: full time
6. CROHO registration number: 34798 (Bachelor Dans)
7. Number of students 2018-2019: 25
8. Name of the institution: Hogeschool der Kunsten, Den Haag, faculteit muziek en dans – Koninklijk Conservatorium/Royal Conservatoire
9. Status of the institution: publicly funded institution providing higher education
10. Outcome of the institutional quality assurance assessment: granted 2014

## Short outline of the programme

The Hogeschool voor de Kunsten Den Haag (University of Arts The Hague) has two Faculties: the Royal Academy of Art and KC. "The principal objective of KC is to train talented young musicians and dancers to the highest artistic and professional standards and provide them with the versatility they need to function in today's demanding, constantly changing and increasingly international professional environment" (Source: *SER* p.9).

The Dance department of KC is a specialised and internationally recognised institute that provides training in academic theatre dance for a small group of exceptionally talented students between ages of 10 and 20 whose ambition (or dream) is to become a dancer in a company with a repertoire based on academic theatre dance. The Bachelor of Dance is the final phase of the education for students who attended the Interfaculty School for Young Talent (Source: *SER* p.10).

Aim is to train neo-classical dancers for a future as independent artists who combine an open, creative mind with professional skills, passion and ambition.

The Bachelor of Dance programme focuses on the practical aspects of a career as a dancer. Special feature is the cooperation with the dance company Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT). In 2021 KC, including its Dance department, moves to a new building in the centre of The Hague in 2021. This new building will house KC, the Nederlands Dans Theater and the Residentie Orkest (The Hague Philharmonic), sharing concert halls, studios, rehearsal rooms and other facilities (Source: *SER* p.22).



## **Recommendations from the previous panel and developments since the last accreditation visit**

Based on the expert report of May 2013, the following recommendations were the result of the previous accreditation visit in 2013:

- The panel recommends the Dance programme to complete the Bachelor programme with more academic subjects next to the physical training. In order to achieve this the panel suggests to pay more attention to subjects such as theory of dance, choreographic composition, dance analysis, notation, music, dramaturgy, career management etc. The panel would like to stress the importance of these academic dance related subjects as a basis for reflection and, more concretely, for the students' study plans.
- The panel would like to recommend the programme to provide for clear student's dossiers from which the exemptions as well as the progress is transparent in relation to the intended learning outcomes and the ECTS.
- The panel advises the Dance programme to make more use of the exchange programme of ERASMUS for the teachers so they can relate to the (international) professional dance world in a more extensive way.
- Because of the many tasks the director has to fulfil the panel would like to advise the KC to appoint, if possible, an administrative assistant to support the director.
- The panel recommends the Dance programme to create a clear profile and to communicate it transparently in relation to other ballet schools and school for contemporary dance, including CODARTS.
- The panel would like to suggest to further enhance the links with the NDT as they will be sharing one facility in the future and explore the possibilities with CODARTS in view of the merger.

In its decision on accreditation, the NVAO also requested a midterm visit and report on the progress on the recommendations made. This interim visit took place on 22 March 2016, which resulted to a letter to the NVAO in which the visiting team (consisting of two members of the original review panel and one new member) confirmed that sufficient progress had been made on the recommendations. The new management has been working last five years implementing the recommendations of the 2013 panel by further development of the chosen profile, introducing new subjects, improving medical care and internal quality assurance and offering staff members opportunities for professional development.

## 1. Intended learning outcomes

**NVAO Standard 1. The intended learning outcomes of the programme have been concretised with regard to content, level and orientation; they meet international requirements.**

Corresponding MusiQuE standards:

- MusiQuE Standard 1: The programme goals are clearly stated and reflect the institutional mission.
- MusiQuE Standard 2.1: The goals of the programme are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its methods of delivery.
- MusiQuE standard 2.2: The programme offers a range of opportunities for students to gain an international perspective.
- MusiQuE standard 7: The programme has in place effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures.
- MusiQuE standard 8.1: The programme engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts.
- MusiQuE standard 8.2: The programme actively promotes links with various sectors of the music and other artistic professions.
- MusiQuE standard 8.3: Information provided to the public about the programme is clear, consistent and accurate

### Intended learning outcomes

The programme aims not only to train versatile and diverse dancers who meet the basic technical and artistic standards required in the field of academic theatre dance, but also to provide students with a clear idea what it will take to be a successful member of a professional dance company. Due to the fact that dance companies traditionally accept talented dancers at a young age the programme has a different structure to regular Bachelor courses in the sense that 120 ECTS are earned during an eight-year programme at the Interfaculty School for Young Talent prior to the two-year Bachelor programme (Source: *Appendix D – Study Guide Bachelor of Dance 2019-2020*).

The Network Dance of the Vereniging Hogescholen (the network of Dutch Universities of Applied Sciences to which the Hogeschool belongs) in close collaboration with representatives of the dance profession developed a set of subject-specific requirements that describe the educational profiles of a dancer (Dutch professional and educational profiles for Bachelor dance 2017). The last version of these subject-specific requirements was finalized in 2017.

The Bachelor of Dance programme at KC subscribes to these requirements laid down for the educational profile of a performing dancer. In the Study Guide of the programme, course descriptions are published with references to the numbers of the various competences described in the national profile.

The panel did observe the mentioned relationship in the module descriptions but missed the text of the national competencies in the study guide. Publishing these competencies offers students a more precise view into the intended learning outcomes of the programme.

The Dutch professional and educational profiles for Bachelor dance is fully compatible with the European-level 'Dublin Descriptors' for Bachelor programmes.

The panel observes that the intended learning outcomes for the Bachelor of Dance of KC comply to the (inter)national standards of a professional Bachelor programme.

## Profile and cultural/educational contexts

During the audit the panel discussed during all interviews the profile of the programme. The management wishes to train neo-classical dancers positioned “exactly between” the programmes of Amsterdam (focus on classical academic dance) and Codarts Rotterdam (focus on contemporary) dance. The course offers a BA graduation at the age of 19/20 by adding 120 ECTS for the last two years of its secondary level preparation course. This has the effect of shortening a BA Programme by two years. This is a solution that could follow the needs of the highly competitive working field in search of young highly professional trained dancers.

Furthermore, the programme intends to preserve the repertoire of the unique Dutch dance heritage. The panel is in favour of this emphasis on the Dutch repertoire and challenges the programme to keep this focus (Source: *Appendix D – Study Guide Bachelor of Dance 2019-2020*).

The panel notes that major steps have been taken in realizing the training of neo-classical dancers. In addition to a firm base in classical technique several courses in modern repertoire and technique have been added. The programme is encouraged to consider how the current mix of classical and modern training enables the students to become proficient in both techniques. The panel commends the programme for the modern repertoire selected and for the training provided by carefully chosen choreographers. It also highlights the need for similar care and attention towards enabling students to achieve a technique in contemporary and modern dance. A more systematic approach in the assessment of the contemporary solo would constitute a step forward in this direction. The students in the programme are really positive about the profile, but the number of applicants is relatively low compared to other dance programmes nationally and abroad. The panel notes that all companies present at the interview were contemporary ballet companies, and they all agreed with the chosen profile.

In the opinion of the panel, the profile of the programme can be sharpened so that it corresponds to what is presented verbally and in print. Doing this in close collaboration with the professional field, and taking into account the profile of other Dance Bachelor programmes nationally and internationally, would give an impulse to a strong and effective marketing of the new profile in order to increase the reputation of the programme and gain interest of national and international talented students. During the interview alumni underpinned the importance of making use of their experiences in a more systematic way to further develop the profile of the programme.

The programme has an association with NDT, one of the leading dance companies in the Netherlands. This is a real asset of the programme. Dancers of NDT work during three months with students on NDT-repertoire, students have possibilities for attending performances and classes of NDT. NDT staff members are in close contact with the management of the Dance department. To the panel this association is one of the gems of the Bachelor of Dance programme offering students such direct experiences and insights in the repertoire and functioning of a world leading dance company.

The panel on the other hand has the impression that the association with NDT and the other Dutch companies can be even further developed in order to raise the profile of the school internationally.

The Bachelor of Dance programme is part of KC, which also includes an outstanding music academy. The panel was made aware, during the interview with the management, of the commitment that the management of the conservatoire and of the university of the arts manifest towards the Dance department. The panel also noted during the interviews that the marketing of the Dance programme could be enhanced, with the support of the KC. In the panel's view, full support by the KC to the marketing and positioning of its Dance department would provide a strong impulse for the further development and clarification of the profile, and for the quality of the Dance Bachelor programme.

On the one hand, the Bachelor of Dance programme benefits from the position within the cultural context of University of the Arts The Hague as a whole. On the other hand, the panel experienced that there is room for

improvement regarding the cooperation between the Dance department and the other departments for music and visual arts.

### **Achievement of the educational goals of the programme**

The panel observed that already good progress has been made regarding the achievement of the educational goal training neo-classical dancers with good reflective qualities. Subjects like Creating a Solo, Dance Now and the NDT Young Talent Project are valuable examples. Based on the interviews with students and teachers, and on the module descriptions provided, the panel got the impression that the development of the programme until recently has been based on a more intuitive approach. A long term strategy at the level of the programme was not directly evident to the panel during the site-visit. While it seemed very efficient in its empirical approach towards addressing present needs, the programme is encouraged to further its reflection upon developing and owning a strategic plan aligned to its long-term objectives and priorities, but at the same time well integrated and attuned to KC's overall institutional strategy. Similarly, the panel urges the KC to deepen its integrative support and provide the programme with the structure it needs for fulfilling its stated goals.

The panel believes that the programme would benefit from an even more structured approach of the development and the delivery of the programme based on the Dutch professional and educational profiles for Bachelor dance 2017. For example, embodying the results of all of the "reflection" explicitly in the physical outcome would result in making the students better and more versatile dancers. Clarifying the position of the internship in the programme by linking the goals of the internship directly is another example of strengthening the achievement of the educational goals. The panel encourages the programme to continue on the path taken by introducing Dance Now, to give the students more context and thus ensuring that they can further develop their knowledge of context in order to reflect and formulate their opinion in a well-informed way.

### **International perspective**

The panel has noted that several aspects of the programme contribute in offering students an international dimension. The programme is taught in English, the lingua franca in dance. The professional dance world is strongly international, competition is global. Teachers have international experience as dancer and teacher, the programme invites guest teachers from different countries and cultures, the student population itself is diverse and teaching staff is encouraged to participate in international exchange projects. KC Dance is part of the Prix de Lausanne and has collaborations with schools in Canada, Japan, Korea and Italy. Based on these collaborations KC Dance offers options for international student mobility (Sources: *SER* p.12 and p.21, *Appendix I – Curriculum Vitae teaching staff*, *Appendix J – Curriculum Vitae guest teachers*).

Based on the interviews with students and teachers the panel concludes that the international perspective of KC Dance is well developed.

### **Internal quality assurance**

The KC has participated in several European initiatives in the field of quality assurance in higher (music) education. The KC now uses a concept of quality which addresses both artistic standards and educational quality. For the Dance department this results in an approach of a quality-based student panel meeting per semester, inviting 'Critical Friends' from abroad to reflect on the quality of the programme as a whole and using the international standards of MusiQuE for the external quality assurance system (Sources: *SER* p.13 and *Appendix L – 'Quality Culture at the Royal Conservatoire: 2016 and beyond'*).

Based on the interviews with students and teachers the panel takes note that KC Dance uses a quality approach that fits well to the distinctive aspects of the programme. The 'Critical Friend' approach is a true asset of the quality assurance system.

#### **Reflection of the panel regarding NVAO Standard 1**

The intended learning outcomes comply with both international and national standards for a Bachelor programme in dance. Strong points are the association with NDT and the effort of the programme in preserving the Dutch repertoire.

The choice for training neo-classical dancers with strong reflective skills is promising, but the profile could be sharpened and marketed with sufficient support on behalf of KC, and thus prompted to gain more interest among talented students. Development and the delivery of the programme could be based in an even more structural way on the intended learning outcomes to enhance a more distinct profile of the programme.

#### **Compliance with NVAO Standard 1**

On the basis of the information in the *SER*, further documentation including annexes and the meetings during the site-visit, the panel finds the programme meets the NVAO standard 1.

## 2. Teaching-learning environment

**NVAO Standard 2. The curriculum, staff and programme-specific services and facilities enable the incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.**

Corresponding MusiQuE standards:

- MusiQuE Standard 2.1: The goals of the programme are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its methods of delivery.
- MusiQuE standard 4.1: Members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/pedagogues/researchers.
- MusiQuE standard 4.2: There are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programmes.
- MusiQuE standard 5.1: The institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programme.
- MusiQuE standard 5.2: The institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the study programmes.
- MusiQuE standard 5.3: The programme has sufficient qualified support staff.
- MusiQuE standard 6.1: Effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the programme.
- MusiQuE standard 6.2: The programme is supported by an appropriate organisational structure and clear decision-making processes.

### The curriculum

The Bachelor programme is a 2-year full time course which follows on an eight-year programme of the Interfaculty School for Young Talent which provides courses for pupils who combine preparatory training in dance with regular primary and secondary education. Students who are admitted to the Bachelor programme are exempted for 120 EC based on previous study within the School for Young Talent or a similar programme abroad. The curriculum is taught during six days a week. Students experience this as intense but balanced (Source: *SER* p.11).

The curriculum is closely linked to the professional practice of professional dance. Strong emphasis is laid on training in both classical ballet based on the recognised Vaganova method and modern dance. Next to this training, students are trained in classical ballet repertoire and repertoire of the 'Dutch School' consisting of works by choreographers such as Hans van Manen, Jiří Kylián and Nils Christie. The programme has a close cooperation with the world famous Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT). Dancers of NDT work during a period of three months a year with the students on repertoire from the Dutch School and give them feedback afterwards. Students have to interview the choreographer of the repertoire performed to get better insight in his/her artistic drives (Source: *Appendix D – Study Guide Bachelor of Dance 2019-2020*).

In addition to the dance technical classes and the learning of repertoire, the focus lies in the preparation to become a professional dancer. For this the curriculum includes elements which focus on personal professional preparation, preparation for audition and individual study. Basic research skills are covered by the course Dance Now. A professional journalist in dance trains the students in how to watch live performances, recordings and documentaries from an analytical perspective and how to use professional vocabulary to reflect on it. Students have to write 14 reviews on performances they visited over a period of two years. A personal study plan is an aid to systematic reflection on the student's personal development towards independent learning and reflection (Source: *Appendix D – Study Guide Bachelor of Dance 2019-2020*).

An internship at a professional dance company is also included in the programme. Students do auditions in the final year, which is also a part of their preparation for the professional practice.

The programme recently has set up the Young KC Dance Company to bridge the gap between the professional practice and the programme. Young KC Dance Company aims to offer the same possibilities as a professional company (Source: *SER* p.19).

The programme offers several occasions to gain stage experience by organising studio evenings twice a year, End-of-year performances and performances as conclusion of the Young Talent project in association with NDT. Students also get stage experience when performing during their internship (Sources: *Appendix U – Season's Brochure Royal Conservatoire 2018-2019*, *Appendix AH – List of productions and external performances*).

The objectives of the courses are linked to the learning outcomes of the Dutch professional and educational profiles for Bachelor dance 2017. The programme covers all intended learning outcomes (Source: *Appendix D – Study Guide Bachelor of Dance 2019-2020*).

The panel experienced the effects of the implementation of measures to train more all-round students in the last five years. Students report their enthusiasm for the programme focusing on both classical and modern repertoire. Feedback from students doing auditions indicates that these new elements do help them during auditions. Courses like Creating a solo, Career planning and Dance Now have been implemented in recent years and contribute in training dancers with a more reflective inquisitive mindset. Students mention that they have to write and think in a different way. Another example of this policy is also the introduction of a new form of the 'profielwerkstuk' for students in the last year of the School for Young Talent where they will organise and perform a production together with students from music and visual arts.

A significant strength is the close collaboration with NDT, which has been developed in the last years into a solid collaboration and which can only be strengthened by the cohabitation in the future. This cooperation makes the school truly unique and the students really benefit from this opportunity to work for three months with NDT dancers.

The panel encourages the programme to continue on the path it embraced through the introduction of Dance Now: it offers students more context about the profession and thus enables them to further develop their knowledge, reflect, and formulate their opinion in a well-informed way. The panel underpins that elaborating reflective skills in a more methodical and comprehensive way has a physical dimension which should not be overlooked (e.g. tools that students can use to become better dancers). For instance, the programme could benefit further from using reflection tools developed for other programmes ( e.g. social care education, or education programmes) to ensure the achievement of an even higher professional standard with regards to students' reflexivity towards their study and career.

As the new emphasis of the programme is the achievement of dancers with high technical skills both in classical academic dance (ballet) and modern/contemporary techniques, the offer of contemporary/modern/improvisation classes must be augmented seriously. The panel challenges KC to let this result in enhancement and intensification of the training in modern and contemporary dance technique, based on a clear plan in function of the KC profile dancer's needs.

The Dance department is part of KC, an outstanding institute in the field of music. The benefits of being part of this institute are clear regarding resources and facilities. However, the panel observed that the artistic cooperation between the music and dance is limited. In relation to the goal of training more versatile dancers the Dance department could initiate more interdisciplinary projects with the other departments within University of Arts The Hague. The asset of sharing the campus and joining forces could emerge from the beginning in the organization of projects in which the students should have to cooperate with students from other departments.

To the panel the position of the internship within the programme was not completely clear. Students confirm that the internship offers a really good way for them to get professional experience although the place of the stage within the Bachelors programme seems a little unclear. Also, the relationship of the internship with the intended learning outcomes can be more strongly elaborated. Additional remarks regarding this topic will be made in standard 3. Students said that they could be aided more in acquiring an apprenticeship and get more supervision throughout it when they are away from the school.

To the panel the development of the Young KC Dance Company is an interesting initiative. It can certainly help students in gaining professional and stage experience. However, setting up such a company should according to the panel be done in close collaboration with the profession to ensure an environment that offers a professional standard.

### **Teaching staff**

The majority of the teaching staff has enjoyed a career as a professional dancer. The staff is a mix of more experienced teachers and some relatively young teachers who just finished working as a dancer. For specific courses teachers with according specialism are hired such as body training, Dance Now and nutrition. Each group has a regular teacher who trains and advises them. The director is personally involved in the course Career planning. The total amount of teaching staff for the programme is 11,75 FTE. For the supportive staff and the management 6 FTE is available (Sources: *Appendix I – Curriculum Vitae teaching staff*, *Appendix J – Curriculum Vitae guest teachers*).

KC offers a program for continuing professional education for staff members: 'Artist as Teacher'. Various issues such as one-to-one teaching, group teaching, assessment, research and entrepreneurship are being discussed during eight seminars over a one-year period. Up to now eight staff members have participated in this program (Sources: *SER p.21*, *Appendix I – Curriculum Vitae teaching staff*).

Guest teachers are hired nationally and internationally to bring in specific expertise regarding repertoire or dance techniques. Already mentioned above is the regular cooperation with NDT from which dancers of NDT work for a longer period with students on NDT-repertoire (Sources: interview work field representatives), *Appendix J – Curriculum Vitae guest teachers*).

The panel encountered a team of teachers and staff members who are very motivated and dedicated. The students confirmed that they are really focused on working as a team, which is a great asset for a programme like this. An example is teachers watching each other's classes. The team is qualified and the programme has sufficient teaching staff to deliver the programme effectively.

The Artist as Teacher programme is an asset of KC. The panel is convinced that this programme can also play an important role in the further development of the programme. The teaching staff is very positively engaged, but it is important that they keep up with the ever-changing landscape of the professional dance world. The fast developments of the professional world should get a place in the programme for continuous professional development of the Dance department.

### **Resources and facilities**

Student supervision is offered by the director of the programme discussing the student's progress based on the individual study plan and the academic results. During the weekly sessions on career planning (60 minutes every week), many issues related to the dance programme and their future career is being discussed. The students have twice a year a personal interview with the director. Several times a year the director conducts a group interview with all of the Bachelor students to discuss the annual schedule, guest teachers, what is expected of students and any occurring problems. Apart from this supervision within the department students can consult the student



counsellor from KC and the international student's advisor specialised on advising international matters (Source: *SER* p.20).

The Dance department has its own medical team, consisting of a physiotherapist, two orthopaedists, a medical specialist, a dietician and a sports dietician. The Dance department cooperates closely with the orthopaedists at the Juliana Children's Hospital and the Haga Ziekenhuis in The Hague and Leidschendam, and can also rely on a network of medical practitioners. The department has its own room where medical treatments can take place and for each student a confidential electronic medical file is kept. A designated staff member supervises and coordinates all medical activities. Two to three times a year a meeting takes place with the director, the coordinator and the full medical team (Source: *SER* p.20).

The design and construction of the current building of KC took account of the demands made on the quality of the materials and spatial facilities for a professional dance course. The Bachelor of Dance programme has 5 large ballet studios with a piano and audio equipment, 2 dressing rooms for teachers, 5 dressing rooms for students (2 for boys and 3 for girls), a room for medical treatments, a common room for teachers (shared with the Interfaculty School for Young Talent) and a small room for watching DVDs. The KC library possesses the most important works as well as magazines about dance. Furthermore, the Dance department makes frequent use of the Kees van Baarenzaal, a fully equipped theatre in KC (Source: *SER* p.22).

New opportunities will emerge when KC, including its Dance department, moves to a new building in the centre of The Hague in 2021. This new building will house KC, the Nederlands Dans Theater and the Residentie Orkest (The Hague Philharmonic), sharing concert halls, studios, rehearsal rooms and other facilities. With the Dance department under the same roof as a top dance company this situation will create new dynamics for the department in terms of even closer cooperation with the Nederlands Dans Theater. For the Dance department it is to be expected that the current provision in terms of number of studios and other facilities will be retained if not improved (Source: *SER* p.22).

The programme's resources to support student learning and delivery of the programme are appropriate. Students benefit from supervision both individual and group wise. A system for physical health care is operational. During the audit the students made clear that they would benefit from a policy that is more directed towards prevention that would help them to avoid injuries and mental problems. Students did not mention any strong evidence of useful body conditioning/injury prevention in physical practice. Offering mental health care is essential for a programme that operates in the strongly competitive world of dance.

Scheduling in any school is difficult, but the panel felt that the weekly/daily scheduling could be more consistent and structured. Students offered help finding computer applications that could support in leaving (in their words) 'archaeological' ways of scheduling behind. The panel is convinced that KC can support in this matter.

Recently an assistant has been appointed to support the management. The panel did not experience any lack of support staff anymore. The recommendation in earlier audits has been followed properly. The self-evaluation did not mention any problems in funding for the programme and also during the interview with the management no financial thresholds were addressed. The panel concludes therefore that the financial resources enable successful delivery of the study programmes.

### **Internal communication and organisation**

The Bachelor of Dance programme is a small and highly specialised training programme with a director and deputy director, teachers, musical accompanists, a coordinator for auditions, medical staff and a coordinator medical staff, and administrative support. The director is responsible for the overall artistic and educational policy and reports to the director of KC, who is also vice-chair of the Board of Management of the Hogeschool. The director and deputy director also hold staff appraisal interviews with all teachers and chairs the staff meetings, which take place

approximately once a month and give the teachers the opportunity to discuss current issues relating to the programme. In addition to teaching issues, regular items on the agenda of the staff meetings are an analysis of the assessment policy, curriculum development, student supervision and long-term issues. Artistic matters such as the programme and choice of music for the end-of-year performance are also discussed. Reports are made of all staff meetings.

For all needs in terms of support staff, the department works closely with the Interfaculty School for Young Talent and KC (Source: *SER* p.22).

During the interview with the students it became clear that student participation is well developed. The student panel meets every semester with the director in an open and constructive atmosphere. Students appreciate this direct way in which they are involved in the policy of the programme.

The panel experienced a small-scale programme with a strongly committed team. Communication lines within the programme are short and effective. The panel would like to comment on the position of the Dance department within KC.

Being part of this leading institute, it struck the panel that the Dance department appears to be removed from the general positioning of the KC. Regarding marketing comments will be made under standard 4. Here the panel, in line with comments from the representatives of the professional work field, would like to challenge the institute in using the asset of having several disciplines (by example music and fine arts) in KC and in stimulating interdisciplinary collaboration in a structural and systematic way. Given that the Dance department is part of a reputable conservatoire it is certainly possible to make more of inter-departmental collaboration between students. The Artist as Teacher course seems to do this well with the staff.

#### **Reflection of the panel regarding NVAO Standard 2**

The programme has a curriculum that reflects the intended learning outcomes. Last five years the programme implemented measures to train more all-round students. Strong points are the NDT Young Talent project and the course Dance Now. The programme could strengthen the curriculum by elaborating reflective skills in a more methodical and comprehensive way and transferring this into the physicality of the students. More emphasis on modern and contemporary dance technique in relation to a firm classical basis is necessary to sharpen the curriculum into a neo-classical direction.

Staff and teachers are qualified, very motivated and dedicated. Keeping with the fast developments of the professional world of dance represents a continuous challenge for the teaching staff. In this regard, the panel finds the programme Artist as Teacher to be an asset regarding staff policy from educational viewpoint.

The resources and facilities enable student learning and delivery of the programme in a sufficient way. Regarding student support the panel advises further development the preventive aspects of (mental) health to help students to prevent injuries and mental problems instead of curing them. Investing in a contemporary way of scheduling would help students to be more effective in their study.

Being part of University of Arts The Hague is a great asset, and students could increase their benefit if more interdisciplinary projects were initiated with the other departments within University of Arts The Hague.

#### **Compliance with NVAO Standard 2**

On the basis of the information in the *SER*, further documentation including annexes and the meetings during the site-visit, the panel finds the programme meets the NVAO standard 2.

### 3. Assessment

#### **NVAO Standard 3. The programme has an adequate assessment system in place.**

Corresponding MusiQuE standards:

- MusiQuE standard 3.1: There are clear criteria for student admission, based on an assessment of their artistic/academic suitability for the programme.
- MusiQuE standard 2.3: Assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes.

#### **Assessment**

The rules relating to assessments and examinations are laid down in the Education and Examination Regulations of KC ('Onderwijs- en Examenregeling – OER'). The Regulations are revised on an annual basis in consultation with the Education Committee, the Examination Committee and the Representative Advisory Board (Source: *Appendix D – Study Guide Bachelor of Dance 2019-2020*).

According to the Dutch law on higher education, the Examination Committee plays a central role in the monitoring of all assessment and examination processes. The Examination Committee includes members from all programmes offered by KC, including the Dance department. The Committee has devised an annual observation schedule for the examinations taking place in the April – June periods, when members of the Examination Committee visit examinations in the departments other than their own as observers. In this way, the Committee wants to achieve consistency in assessment and the exchange of good practices between departments (Sources: *SER p.24, Appendix AK – Internal Regulations Examination Committee*).

The assessment within the Bachelor of Dance is described by the institution is as follows (Sources: *SER p.26, Appendix AM – Assessment Policy Dance Department*).

Shortly before Christmas, an assessment takes place based on observations made during the lessons until Christmas by the teacher of the group. Every student receives a report (the Christmas report) written by the dance teachers in consultation with the department's director. The director then makes an appointment with each student to discuss the report.

A second assessment takes place in March/April of each academic year, during which a committee of examiners (which includes all dance teachers as well one or more external examiners) assesses the students' technique, coordination, feeling for dance, musicality and interpretation. The results of this assessment are reported in a written Easter report.

In preparation for the assessment in March/April, a guest teacher from the international dance circuit is invited to give the daily lessons in classical dance for two weeks. The director of the Dance department consults the guest teacher in advance about the competences that will be evaluated during the assessment. A few days before the assessment the guest lecturer practices the combinations that have to be performed with the students. The short period of preparation is important because it shows the students' ability to demonstrate the competences prescribed for that year of the course.

During the second assessment the course *Creating a solo* is also assessed.

More formative ways of assessment are being used for courses like repertoire, career planning and study plan. Assessment for these courses leans heavily on feedback given by either professionals from for example NDT or the director. Many courses are being assessed on basis of 100% attendance.

In the study guide each course description refers to the intended learning outcomes.

One of the members attended the second assessment in March/April in person and made observations of the assessment procedure. A report with observations was shared with the other panel members and taken into account while evaluating the assessment process. All panel members have observed video recordings of the second assessment and studied written reports by jury members. The panel also studied written material such as study plans, reviews for Dance Now and internship reports and the corresponding feedback forms.

Based on own observation during the second assessment in March/April and after studying student's files the panel evaluates the assessment of ballet classes as well defined, reliable and transparent. The management has done an excellent job of organising the beginnings of a better assessment process. The panel finds on many occasions tailor made feedback of staff and company members. The students are fortunate to have the experience of the internships and the feedback of the professionals from these companies.

During the interviews with students and staff members it became clear that there is a serious lack of assessment criteria for Creating a Solo. Students reported that they do not understand where the marks are coming from although feedback is valuable when given. The assessment form for Creating a Solo is not giving information on the assessment criteria. Only a mark is given. To the panel this is a strange situation given the importance the programme wants to give to training more versatile dancers.

Also, regarding the assessment of modern techniques there is scope for enhancement. Students told the panel that they are not clear how their grades are arrived at.

The panel recommends the programme to raise the level of assessment of the whole programme to the already existing standard in ballet. The suggestion is to codify the assessment of the modern/contemporary dance classes, solos and demonstrations to correspond to the assessment of classical dance.

While studying reports on study plan, auditions done and internship, it struck the panel that on one side valuable feedback is given, but for these courses no clear assessment criteria are being used for the reflective skills of the students. Also, the criteria for the internship are not clear. Criteria could be linked to the learning outcomes defined in the Dutch professional and educational profiles for Bachelor dance 2017 to get an even more strong focus towards these professional standards. This could also help to clarify the position of the internship within the programme. Representatives of the professional work could help in defining these criteria. During the interview, the teaching staff already mentioned good criteria they used themselves to assess the students when participating in, for example, the Young Talent Project.

During the audit the panel was still a bit puzzled where to find the final Bachelor level within the system of assessment. Given the objective of the programme (training versatile dancers with good reflective qualities) in accordance to intended learning outcomes, the panel advises the programme to consider an integrated and specific assessment mode to prove that students have achieved the Bachelor level. For instance, by asking to incorporate all the valuable feedback and the performances into a portfolio and assessing this by a criteria-based interview.

Great work is done by the exam committee in sending teachers of other departments to observe the second assessment. Given the above-mentioned comments, the panel encourages the Exam Committee to reflect further on the assessment system by, for example, assisting the programme in formulating assessment criteria aligned to the intended learning outcomes, and ensuring that these criteria are used consistently in the students' assessment. Clear guidelines to serve this purpose should constitute a priority for the programme.

## **Intake**

Students wishing to participate in the programme must first pass an audition. The entry level for the Bachelor of Dance programme is the same as the graduation level for students of the Interfaculty School for Young Talent. Candidates seeking admission to the Bachelor of Dance programme via an audition are selected not only on the

basis of technique, coordination and musical potential, but also their physical fitness and potential for a career in a company with repertoire based on classical and modern dance (Source: *SER* p.24, *Appendix AL – Admission Policy for Dance Programme*).

As applicants are entering a two-year Bachelor programme, exemptions are given for a number of ECTS credit points so that the total of 240EC will be reached at the end of the two-year programme. The applicants coming from the School of Young Talent are given exemptions for the first and second year of the Bachelor on the basis of the years of ballet training in the School. For external applicants, the director of the programme writes a report about each applicant, in which it is confirmed that the entrance level is similar to the internal applicants, i.e. that applicants possess the learning outcomes of Group 8 of the Interfaculty of the School for Young Talent as a minimum. Information about the previous training of the applicant (e.g. transcripts of records or qualifications) is also included. On the basis of this report, the Examination Committee then grants the exemption of the first two years to the applicants (Source: *SER* p.25).

A strong point regarding the intake is that a majority of Bachelors is coming from the own School of Young Talent. There is strong vertical line between the programme and the curriculum of the School. For the Dance department there is no separate team for the dance education in the Bachelor or the School of Young Talent.

The panel studied several files of external candidates who were admitted to the programme. The information in the files was not completely clear and gave to the panel the impression of a rather opaque procedure of exemptions in relation to the procedure for the students coming from the School of Young Talent which is transparent and clear. The panel advises the exam committee to define transparent criteria for external students based on which decisions on admission can be based and exemptions can be granted.

Given the objective of the institution and the attractiveness of the profile, the number of applicants is relatively low. Due to the process of changing directors and adapting to a new profile, unfortunately other more clearly defined dance programmes in the Netherlands attract the national and international dance talents.

A review of the recruiting process for the school would be helpful to achieving the goal of training a dancer of international standards. The panel believes that the concept of a two-year Bachelor programme based on admittance of exceptionally talented youngsters will work only when made possible by professional marketing and professional scouting. Only then it will be possible to select the top-level students. For this a big investment in the enhancement of national and international talent scouting is likely to be necessary.

### **Reflection of the panel regarding NVAO Standard 3**

The Bachelor of Dance programme has done work to develop a system of assessment that fits to the aim of the programme: training professional dancers. Assessment is strongly based on the way how professional dance companies work in combination with tailor made feedback of staff and company members. Assessment of ballet classes is well defined and transparent.

However, assessment of the student's self-choreographed solo, modern techniques and reflective skills is not clearly defined. For these aspects criteria are limited and not clearly related to the learning outcomes. Assessment of the internship could contribute more strongly to the professional quality of the students by defining clear criteria linked to learning outcomes instead of the formative way of assessment used now.

External examiners taking part in the assessment of the ballet classes is a strong point, but the assessment of the overall quality of the students seemed inconsistent and did not become immediately evident to the panel. In the view of the panel, the programme could be enhanced by considering an integrated and specific product to demonstrate that students explicitly achieve the Bachelor level on all intended learning outcomes. Based on the

interviews held on site and the documents provided by the programme, it became evident to the panel that the informal feedback the students receive is relevant for their development and supportive for their becoming as professional dancers. At the same time, the formal assessment, especially in the solo and contemporary dance, could benefit from further fine-tuning. The KC is encouraged to consider how it could further support the programme to become more engaged in monitoring the quality of the assessment process by, for example, a more systematic approach towards the formal feedback. In this regard, the panel highlights the need for a more coherent set of criteria used for assessment, and for explicit guidelines by which these criteria are employed and become part of a formal evaluation or mark. Given the above made remarks the panel advises to reflect on the task and responsibility of the exam committee and to expand its working methods and locus of engagement with the quality of the assessment process. The programme has already undertaken a first step in this direction, as it has been described in the memo sent to the panel after the site-visit.

A strong point regarding intake is that the majority of Bachelors come from the own School for Young Talent. These candidates are well prepared for the 2-year Bachelor programme. For the intake of external candidates, the criteria for exemptions to fit them into the programme as observed by the panel in the student's files are not as well developed as for the internal students. The panel advises the programme to define these criteria in a more elaborated way so that the incoming students are able to meet the international standard after finishing the 2-year curriculum.

There is clear evidence of good practice, including the assessment process in place for the classical ballet classes and the quality of feedback that students receive. However, this was not consistently observed across the programme, and the programme team is required to elaborate clear and coherent assessment criteria for all courses based on the learning outcomes. As a condition for further improvement the panel recommends that the programme draw up a 4-year plan to strengthen the quality of the assessment process including an integrated method to assess the Bachelor level and to let the exam committee comment yearly on the effect of the measures taken.

### **Compliance with NVAO Standard 3**

On the basis of the information in the *SER*, further documentation including annexes and the meetings during the site-visit, the panel finds the programme partially meets the NVAO standard 3.

## 4. Achieved learning outcomes

### NVAO Standard 4. The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Corresponding MusiQuE standard:

- MusiQuE standard 3.2: The programme has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students.

The programme aims not only to train versatile and diverse dancers who meet the basic technical and artistic standards required in the field of academic theatre dance, but also to provide students with a clear idea of what it will take to be a successful member of a professional dance company.

The institute has kept track of its alumni since 1970. Records show that of 30 alumni in the period 2016 – 2019, 22 have been employed by professional dance companies, including junior companies, spread over Europe and sometimes overseas (Source: *Appendix AP – Overview engagements alumni*); of the remaining eight, four have found work as freelance dancers and four have gone on to pursuing further study opportunities.

Internships tend to be found more with Dutch companies. Introdans and Scapino are quite regular in taking interns, NDT only now and then.,

One of the members attended the second assessment in March/April in person and made observations of the assessment procedure. A report with observations was shared with the other panel members and taken into account while evaluating the assessment process and the achieved learning outcomes.

To get an impression of the achieved learning outcomes the panel studied videos of the most recent assessment in Spring. These videos showed students performing a classical variation and their self-composed modern solo. The students were introducing their own solo in their own words. Furthermore, the panel visited some classes during the audit. Also reports of internships, study plans and written work for the course Dance Now were studied.

The panel discussed with the representatives of the professional field their experiences with interns and students from the programme. Alumni shared with the panel what experiences they had after finishing the programme.

The companies endorsed the concept of training neo-classical dancers. The companies confirmed that the management is listening to their feedback regarding developments in the professional world. They were positive about the work ethic of the alumni of the Bachelor of Dance programme. However, according to the companies the overall technical standard of the alumni can be improved. In the view of the companies, more work has to be done regarding training students in modern techniques.

The programme recently started the initiative of setting up a Young KC Dance Company. The objective is that students can get professional experience in this internal company. During the interview the companies underlined the necessity of a KC Dance company to bridge the gap between the profession and the programme (Sources: meeting with Management Team and meeting with representatives of the profession, *SER* p. 19).

The panel advises the programme to research possibilities of incorporating into the curriculum an extra year in the Young KC Dance Company to offer students an even better starting point for their professional career. The panel is positive regarding the concept of the Young KC Dance Company and the bridge it creates between the curriculum and the professional dance companies. Its position between school and company is, nevertheless, delicate and forms a critical success factor. In reinforcing this bridge, the KC and the programme face the task to define this position more clearly and to implement the concept in cooperation with the companies. For this purpose, the panel advises both the programme and the KC to expand the pool of professional experts involved therein and to advance a realistic development plan.

The panel observed that good work is being done regarding the training of more versatile and self-reflective dancers. The panel is highly impressed by the confidence of the students to present themselves verbally and on stage. The panel experienced in full the openness of the students, and the ability and the confidence the students have in expressing their opinions. It was a pleasure meeting articulate students who were able to speak for themselves and able to communicate critically regarding the programme. Students see the positive qualities but also the room for improvement in the programme.

The panel takes the opportunity to note that the apparent discrepancy between the written and verbal descriptions of the programme (as revealed through the interviews) propounds an ambiguity that may ultimately leave its mark on the results seen in the studio. The concept of the 'neo-classical dancer', referenced regularly throughout the interviews, is interesting. However, a coherent and shared understanding of the concept across the programme was not clearly evident to the panel. Following the site-visit, it was confirmed that the internal debate on the actual definition of the term is still ongoing. Should the programme choose to make this concept a unique selling point, the panel advises the programme to channel their reflection towards developing the profile further, both in the technical basis and in the artistic element.

The programme prides itself for moulding its students into self-assured dancers with a broad training and mastery of both classical and modern techniques, ready to practise their craft with dedication and discipline in an ever evolving worldwide profession (*Source: Study Guide 2019-2020 p.5*). In this context, the panel finds it appropriate to stress that the dance profession is intrinsically international. The KC's membership in strong international networks like that of the Prix de Lausanne is further testimony to this evidence. Consequently, the panel strongly encourages the programme to aim beyond its national context in ensuring the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. Should the KC and the programme aspire to nurture and enhance their reputation worldwide, the very competitive international standards in this profession require that further steps be implemented in order to enable graduates to access internationally renowned dance companies. To this purpose, an improvement in the recruiting process for the School of Young Talent is an important aspect to be considered by the KC and the programme. It would be essential that students entering the Bachelor programme are of an international standard. In this regard, the panel stresses once more that enhanced clarity in defining the profile should result in an exponentially positive effect – both in terms of student intake, and in terms of increased coherence of the assessment system in place.

Students do secure work as dancers after finishing their studies. From the information provided, it was not evident to the panel whether these jobs reflect the profile aimed for. During the interviews, the students confirmed the impression of the panel that the final requirements of the programme are not completely clear to them. Therefore, the panel encourages the programme to consider a new final assessment for the final year which would provide students with a goal to strive for – it could summarise the work they have achieved during the Bachelor, give them a sense of pride, and strengthen the profile of the graduating students.

#### **Reflection of the panel regarding NVAO Standard 4**

The programme's declared objective is to deliver versatile dancers proficient in both classical and modern dance techniques, thus able to access broad employment and further development opportunities upon graduation. Good work has been done regarding training the work ethic of the students and their versatility. Furthermore, the panel was impressed by the self-reflective skills of the students: they can recognise and analyse problems and issues specifically related to dance; and they are able to capitalise on their personal insights, knowledge and skills in order to build a technique in core dance styles offered by the programme. As graduates, they have proved able to secure work in the profession, whether through employment in junior and professional dance companies, or through pursuing further freelance or study opportunities. The panel thus commends the



programme for the progress it has made in providing its students with the technical, musical and artistic knowledge they need to join a contemporary ballet company. The panel therefore has reason to conclude that the programme meets the standard in terms of achievement of the intended learning outcomes. At the same time, it is the panel's duty to make the programme aware that, whilst it meets Standard 4, further effort is required to maintain and reinforce this achievement. In this regard, increased clarity, consistency and coherence between the official and the informal descriptions of the profile should be among the programme's significant priorities. The ambiguities intrinsic to the concept of "neo-classical dancer" referenced across different layers of the programme's community translate in practice into a perceived lack of balance between the classical and the contemporary dance styles offered. While a strong foundation for training in classical ballet has been ensured, the programme would benefit from further enhancement of the contemporary dance styles offered not only in terms of training and technique, but also in terms of assessment.

The assessment system has been analysed under Standard 3 above. It is not the panel's intention to repeat that assessment here, except to state that an appropriate assessment system is intricately linked with the achievement of intended learning outcomes. In the framework of Standard 4, the panel encourages the programme to keep overall technical standards subject to continuous enhancement, especially in terms of modern and contemporary techniques, to ensure that graduates are equipped for employment in the highly exacting and competitive arena of international dance.

The panel finds the 2-year curriculum to be a challenge for the students in terms of developing a technical and artistic standard adapted to the demands of the professional field. The Young KC Dance Company has been a positive development which helps bridging the still existing gap between the curriculum and the dance companies. The panel encourages the programme to continue work on this path. To this end, the panel stresses that the Young KC's position in between school and company is critical, and may be better supported by strengthening its profile. For the students to benefit as much as possible from this initiative, both the programme and the KC are advised to define the Company's profile more clearly and to involve the dance companies in its implementation.

In the view of the panel, it is beyond doubt that the programme is moving in the right direction. The progress made since the previous review is evident. While work still lies ahead, it can be argued that within the Dutch higher education landscape in which the KC is embedded, the Dance programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved. Given the intrinsic international dimension of the dance profession, the panel strongly encourages the programme to strive beyond its national context and aim to meet the competitive international standard of the profession. To this purpose, it would be essential that students entering the programme are of an international standard. As such, an improvement of the recruiting process, both nationally and internationally, may be an important aspect to consider. The KC could help expand their international position towards the Dance department by, for example, increasing marketing and recruitment resources.

The panel is aware that raising the overall technical standard to a level that is compliant with the requirements of both national and international companies takes time. However, the programme is encouraged to consider developing a comprehensive 4-year plan including yearly milestones to achieve this goal. The panel urges both the programme and the KC to consider the following recommendations as significant priorities in such a plan for further improvement, in order to increase the employability of graduates:

- To better balance the two-year curriculum by ensuring a more diversified training in contemporary and modern dance technique;
- To establish a strategic development plan for the Young KC Dance Company, one that takes into account the design and implementation of a more comprehensive final assessment able to convey a more integrative view of the students;

- To better the premise for an enlarged and better qualified student intake by streamlining the description of the profile, expanding the reach and scope of marketing initiatives, and enhancing the recruitment process.

#### **Compliance with NVAO Standard 4**

On the basis of the information in the *SER*, further documentation including annexes and the meetings during the site-visit, the panel finds the programme meets the NVAO standard 4.

## Final conclusion

In the past six years the programme had to find and define a new profile reacting to the development of the Dutch dance education scene and has recently started to implement some of the changes according to this new profile. The management has undertaken significant work in leading a programme in transition and developing an open and positive relationship with students and staff. The panel met a highly motivated management and team, that achieved a visible change in the output of self-reflective and articulate students.

The choice for training versatile and diverse dancers with strong reflective skills is promising. The profile could benefit from a clearer description and from improved recruitment with sufficient support by the KC to attract more interest among talented applicants. The development and the delivery of the programme would benefit from an even more structured approach to the intended learning outcomes which would translate directly into a more distinct profile for the programme.

Meanwhile, the programme should cherish its strengths: preserving the repertoire of the unique Dutch dance heritage and maintaining a strong cooperation module with one of the most successful dance companies in the world, the NDT. The review panel notes that, in the near future, the KC will share premises with this company.

Bearing all of this in mind, there are lots of “unique selling points” that make it worth investing further effort to develop this programme, and the review panel believes that through the implementation of these changes the Dance Programme will benefit strongly from a methodical approach in combination with systematic implementation supported by the KC.

There is clear evidence of good practice, including the assessment process in place for the classical ballet classes and the quality of feedback that students receive. The programme team is encouraged to elaborate clear and coherent assessment criteria for all courses in the curriculum. To this end, the panel encourages the Exam Committee to reflect further on the assessment system by, for example, assisting the programme in formulating assessment criteria aligned to the intended learning outcomes, and ensuring that these criteria are used consistently in the students’ assessment. Clear guidelines to serve this purpose should constitute a priority for the programme.

To support the programme in its further development the panel recommends the programme to draw up a multiannual plan to strengthen the quality of assessment and raising the overall technical standard as mentioned by the companies. The panel is aware that such transitions take time. The programme is encouraged to consider developing a comprehensive 4-year plan including yearly milestones to achieve this goal. A yearly assessment of the implementation results in cooperation with the examination committee and representatives of the professional field will support the management and the team to fulfil this challenge within the competitive field of professional dance.

Therefore, the panel recommends its weighted and substantiated final conclusion regarding the programme: conditionally positive.

## Overview of compliance with the standards and recommendations

The panel concludes that the programme meets the standards as follows:

NVAO Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes	The programme meets the standard.
<p>Corresponding MusiQuE standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· MusiQuE Standard 1: The programme goals are clearly stated and reflect the institutional mission.</li> <li>· MusiQuE Standard 2.1: The goals of the programme are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its methods of delivery.</li> <li>· MusiQuE standard 2.2: The programme offers a range of opportunities for students to gain an international perspective.</li> <li>· MusiQuE standard 7: The programme has in place effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures.</li> <li>· MusiQuE standard 8.1: The programme engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts.</li> <li>· MusiQuE standard 8.2: The programme actively promotes links with various sectors of the music and other artistic professions.</li> <li>· MusiQuE standard 8.3: Information provided to the public about the programme is clear, consistent and accurate</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Sharpen the profile even more to bring it into line with the ambitions of the institute</li> <li>· Market the profile with strong support of KC, also developing the association with NDT and the other Dutch companies</li> <li>· Anchor the development and the delivery of the programme in an even more structural way on the intended learning outcomes to enhance a more distinct profile of the programme</li> </ul>	
NVAO Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment	The programme meets the standard.
<p>Corresponding MusiQuE standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· MusiQuE Standard 2.1: The goals of the programme are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its methods of delivery.</li> <li>· MusiQuE standard 4.1: Members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/pedagogues/researchers.</li> <li>· MusiQuE standard 4.2: There are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programmes.</li> <li>· MusiQuE standard 5.1: The institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programme.</li> </ul>	

- MusiQuE standard 5.2: The institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the study programmes.
- MusiQuE standard 5.3: The programme has sufficient qualified support staff.
- MusiQuE standard 6.1: Effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the programme.
- MusiQuE standard 6.2: The programme is supported by an appropriate organisational structure and clear decision-making processes.

### Recommendations

- Elaborate reflective skills of the students in a more methodical and comprehensive way into the physicality
- Put more emphasis on modern technique in relation to a firm classical basis
- Support teaching staff to keep up into the fast developments of the professional world
- Further develop the preventive aspects of (mental) health
- Invest in a contemporary way of scheduling
- Initiate more interdisciplinary projects with the other departments within University of Arts The Hague

### NVAO Standard 3. Assessment

**The programme partially meets the standard.**

Corresponding MusiQuE standards:

- MusiQuE standard 3.1: There are clear criteria for student admission, based on an assessment of their artistic/academic suitability for the programme.
- MusiQuE standard 2.3: Assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes.

### Condition

There is clear evidence of good practice, including the assessment process in place for the classical ballet classes and the quality of feedback that students receive. However, this was not consistently observed across the programme, and the programme team is required to elaborate clear and coherent assessment criteria for all courses based on the learning outcomes. As a condition for further improvement, the panel recommends that the programme draw up a 4-year plan to strengthen the quality of the assessment process including an integrated method to assess the Bachelor level and to let the exam committee comment yearly on the effect of the measures taken.

### Other recommendations

- define clear criteria for assessment of solo, modern techniques and reflective skills
- define clear criteria to assess the internship linked to learning outcomes
- consider an integrated and specific product to proof that allow students to demonstrate that they have achieved the Bachelor level
- reflect on the task and responsibility of the exam committee
- define criteria (for exemptions) for external candidates to fit them into the programme

<b>NVAO Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes</b>	<b>The programme meets the standard.</b>
<p>Corresponding MusiQuE standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MusiQuE standard 3.2: The programme has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The panel has reason to conclude that the programme meets the standard in terms of achievement of the intended learning outcomes. At the same time, it is the panel's duty to make the programme aware that, whilst it meets Standard 4, further effort is required to maintain and reinforce this achievement. In this regard, increased clarity, consistency and coherence between the official and the informal descriptions of the profile should be among the programme's significant priorities. Furthermore, given the intrinsic international dimension of the dance profession, the panel strongly encourages the programme to strive beyond its national context and aim to meet the competitive international standard circumscribed to the profession. In the framework of Standard 4, this implies that the programme keep the overall technical standards subject to continuous enhancement, especially in terms of modern and contemporary techniques, to ensure that graduates are equipped for employment in the highly exacting and competitive arena of international dance.</p> <p>The panel is aware that raising the overall technical standard to a level that is compliant with the requirements of both national and international companies takes time. However, the programme is encouraged to consider developing a comprehensive 4-year plan including yearly milestones to achieve this goal. Thus the panel urges both the programme and the KC to consider the following recommendations as significant priorities in such a plan for further improvement, in order to increase the employability of graduates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To better balance the two year curriculum by ensuring a more diversified training in contemporary and modern dance technique;</li> <li>To establish a strategic development plan for the Young KC Dance Company, one that takes into account the design and implementation of a more comprehensive final assessment able to convey a more integrative view of the students;</li> <li>To better the premise for an enlarged and better qualified student intake by streamlining the description of the profile, expanding the reach and scope of marketing initiatives, and enhancing the recruitment process.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Final conclusion</b></p> <p><i>The panel recommends its weighted and substantiated final conclusion regarding the programme, based on the assessment rules of NVAO:</i></p>	<p><b>Conditionally positive</b></p>
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Note: the NVAO assessment framework 2018 states that in the case a panel gives a final conclusion of conditionally positive, the institution is requested to draw up a response addressing the improvements to be made. The institution

is asked to attach the response to the assessment report when submitting it to NVAO. NVAO will subsequently decide on the conditional accreditation of the programme, on the conditions to be met, and on the timeframe in which the conditions should be implemented. The maximum timeframe will be two years.

## Annex 1. Site-visit schedule

Monday 17 June

Time	Session	Names and functions of participants from the visited institution	Venue
14:30	Welcome of the review team	By director Dance department and assistant-director Dance department	Entrance of the Royal Conservatoire
14:30 - 15:30	<b>Review team meeting</b>		AVO room 203
15:30 - 16:30	<b>Meeting 1: meeting with the Management Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Principal Royal Conservatoire and vice-chair Board of Management Hogeschool der Kunsten Den Haag</li> <li>· Vice-principal Royal Conservatoire</li> <li>· Director Dance Department</li> <li>· Assistant director Dance Department</li> <li>· Director School for Young Talent</li> </ul>	M 103
16:30 - 17:15	<b>Meeting 2: guided tour of facilities</b>		Royal Conservatoire
17:15 - 18:15	<b>Meeting 3: meeting with students</b> <i>Including a presentation of the students' contribution to the self-evaluation process.</i>	20 students (HBO 3 and 4)	Kees van Baaren Theatre



18:15 - 20:00	<b>Review team meeting</b>	AVO room 203
20:00	Review team working dinner	Bar & Restaurant Pavlov (private meeting room on second floor)

## Tuesday 18 June

Time	Session	Names and functions of participants from the visited institution	Venue
08:30 - 09:45	<b>Review team meeting</b>	<i>[Time for open consultations, as requested]</i>	AVO room 203
09:45 - 11:45	<b>Meeting 4: meeting with alumni and representatives of the profession</b>	Representatives of the profession: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Artistic director NDT2</li> <li>· NDT dancer, repetitor NDT repertoire, choreographer</li> <li>· Balletmaster Scapino Ballet Rotterdam</li> <li>· Ex-National Ballet dancer</li> <li>· Manager Talent development &amp; Education NDT</li> </ul> Alumni	AVO room 203
11:45 - 12:00	Break		
12:00 - 13:00	<b>Meeting 5: meeting with teaching staff</b>	<i>Lunch meeting, together with the 11 teachers</i>	AVO room 203

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13:00 - 13:15	Break		
13:15 - 14:00	<b>Meeting 6: meeting with support staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Dietician</li> <li>· Head theatre</li> <li>· Coordinator medical staff</li> <li>· Examination committee</li> <li>· Study programme committee</li> <li>· Quality Culture coordinators</li> <li>· Coordinator auditions</li> <li>· Physiotherapist</li> <li>· Accompanist and coordinator accompanists</li> </ul>	Teachers' room
14:00 - 16:00	<b>Meeting 7: visit to classes</b>	<p>[A list of scheduled classes has been made available]</p> <p>[The Review Team can split up to see more classes]</p>	
16:00 - 17:30	<b>Review team meeting – preparation feedback session</b>		AVO room 203
17:30 - 18:00	<b>Meeting 8: feedback session</b>	[Session open to all interested stakeholders]	AVO room 203

18:00 - 19:00	<b>Development dialogue</b>	Conversation between members of the management team, teaching staff, support staff, students and the review team <i>Including dinner buffet</i>	Kees van Baaren Theatre
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## Annex 2. Review team composition

Name of panel member	Brief job description
Pascale De Groot	Pascale De Groot is since 2012 Vice-chancellor of the Artesis Plantijn University College Antwerp, Belgium.
Amanda Bennett	Amanda Bennett is Director of the Ballettschule Theater Basel in Switzerland since 2001.
Gianni Malfer	Gianni Malfer is since 2014 the Operational Director of the Bachelor and Master programmes at the Department of Performing Arts & Film at the Zurich University of the Arts, Switzerland.
Rosie Mackley	Rosie Mackley is currently a 2 <sup>nd</sup> year student on the Bachelor of Modern Ballet programme at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, United Kingdom.

Secretary (certified by NVAO):	Quinten Bunschoten, free-lance interim manager in higher education at Qultura Management & Kwaliteit
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All review team members and the Secretary signed a declaration of independence and confidentiality prior to the accreditation process.

### **Annex 3. List of documents provided to the review team**

The following documents were provided by the programme to the review team in advance of the site-visit:

- *Self-evaluation Report (SER)*
- *Appendix A – Decision NVAO accreditation Bachelor of Dance 23 April 2014*
- *Appendix B – Letter to NVAO 11 May 2016*
- *Appendix C – Letter from NVAO 29 June 2016*
- *Appendix D – Study Guide Bachelor of Dance 2019-2020*
- *Appendix E – Institutional Plan University of Arts The Hague 2019-2024*
- *Appendix F – Number of students and country of origin*
- *Appendix G – Table with teaching hours entire Dance programme*
- *Appendix H – Dutch professional and educational profiles for Bachelor dance 2017*
- *Appendix I – Curriculum Vitae teaching staff*
- *Appendix J – Curriculum Vitae guest teachers*
- *Appendix K – ‘Internationalisation at the Royal Conservatoire – A Status Report’*
- *Appendix L – ‘Quality Culture at the Royal Conservatoire: 2016 and beyond’*
- *Appendix M – Annual Plan Dance Department 2019-2020*
- *Appendix N – Handbook Critical Friend 2019*
- *Appendix O – Results Student Survey Dance 2017*
- *Appendix P – Results Semester Evaluation Dance 2017-2018*
- *Appendix Q – Reports Student Panel Meetings 2018-2019*
- *Appendix R – Report Critical Friend Mavis Staines 2018*
- *Appendix S – Response to Critical Friend report Dance Department*
- *Appendix T – Study guide Royal Conservatoire 2018-2019*
- *Appendix U – Season’s Brochure Royal Conservatoire 2018-2019*
- *Appendix V – Flyers Dance Department*
- *Appendix W – Syllabus classical*
- *Appendix X – Syllabus modern*
- *Appendix Y – Format for a CV*
- *Appendix Z – Format for Young Talent project report*
- *Appendix AA – Formats for audition and internship reports*
- *Appendix AB – Audition plan HBO 2018-2019*
- *Appendix AC – Format for creating your own solo*
- *Appendix AD – Table with teaching hours Bachelor programme*
- *Appendix AE – Study Plan year 3*

- *Appendix AF – Study Plan year 4*
- *Appendix AG – Example of weekly timetable*
- *Appendix AH – List of productions and external performances*
- *Appendix AI – Brochure Artist as Teacher*
- *Appendix AJ – List of teaching staff with ftes & student/teacher ratio*
- *Appendix AK – Internal Regulations Examination Committee*
- *Appendix AL – Admission Policy for Dance Programme*
- *Appendix AM – Assessment Policy Dance Department*
- *Appendix AN – Sample Assessment Sheets*
- *Appendix AO – Report External examiners Bachelor of Dance 17-18*
- *Appendix AP – Overview engagements alumni*

## **Annex 4. Clarification concerning the approach adopted by the review team**

### **Framework, criteria and assessment rules**

For the assessment of the programme the panel used the limited programme assessment framework (for existing programmes) of NVAO (version September 2018) to serve as the basis for the assessment process. The NVAO standards for limited programme assessment were mapped against the MusiQuE standards for programme review. As a result, the MusiQuE standards and areas of inquiry were added under each NVAO standard in order to both express and reinforce the correspondence between both sets of criteria and to complete the NVAO framework with criteria relevant for performing arts programmes.

The panel judgment was based on the assessment rules for limited programme assessments (existing programmes) in the abovementioned framework.

### **Preparation of the panel**

Before the start of the review process MusiQuE organised an online session for the peer-reviewers to prepare them for their role in the assessment process. This session took place on Monday 20 May 2019. All panel members have been asked to prepare a written analysis of the self-evaluation report and appendixes in advance of the site-visit. The preparations of the individual team members were made available to the entire review team.

A private review team meeting on the first day of the site-visit was scheduled to prepare all the meetings during the site-visit. During this meeting the panel was instructed by the Secretary about the accreditation process in general and about the specific aspects of the accreditation of the programme under review.

### **Process of verification**

Based on the analysis of the documents provided and other material such as video recordings and the findings of the panel member that attended the exams in person, the panel members made a first analysis of the programme. These first findings were converted into a set of questions which were discussed during the site-visit.

The site-visit took place on 17-18 June 2019. During the site visit the panel held interviews with different stakeholders such as the management, teachers, students, supporting staff, representatives of the working field and alumni. The schedule of the site-visit schedule is provided in annex 1. During the site-visit the panel observed classes and facilities. The panel also studied written material such as study plans, reviews for Dance Now and internship reports and the corresponding feedback forms.

The panel has formed its opinion of the learning outcomes achieved based on viewing 17 recordings of final exams including the assessment results. One of the panel members conducted an additional site-visit to attend final assessments on 9 April 2019, since no assessments were taking place at the time of the site-visit. This visit resulted in a separate report, which remained internal to the review team. Next to the recorded material and the report the panel decided to attend classes during the site visit to verify the quality by joined observation. Furthermore, the panel studied different written material and portfolios.

### **Realisation of the report**

The panel decided during the site-visit on the general conclusions. The Secretary made a first version based on the findings of the panel, the interviews and the material provided by the programme. After consultation of all panel members the draft version was accorded by all panel members. The institution was offered an opportunity to comment on the draft report before it was finalised.

## Annex 5. NVAO judgement and assessment rules for limited programme assessments (existing programmes)

<b>Judgement per standard</b>
<p>The panel scores each standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Meets the standard. The programme meets the generic quality standard*.</li><li>· Partially meets the standard. The programme meets the generic quality standard to a significant extent, but improvements are required in order to fully meet the standard (see Additional assessment rules regarding conditions).</li><li>· Does not meet the standard. The programme does not meet the generic quality standard.</li></ul> <p><i>*Generic quality: the quality that, from an international perspective, may reasonably be expected from a higher education Associate Degree, Bachelor's or Master's programme.</i></p>
<b>Final conclusion</b>
<p>The panel recommends a weighted and substantiated final conclusion regarding the programme, based on the following assessment rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Positive. The programme meets all the standards.</li><li>· Conditionally positive. The programme meets standard 1 and partially meets a maximum of two standards, with the imposition of conditions being recommended by the panel (see Additional assessment rules regarding conditions).</li><li>· Negative. In the following situations:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ The programme fails to meet one or more standards;</li><li>○ The programme partially meets standard 1;</li><li>○ The programme partially meets one or two standards, without the imposition of conditions being recommended by the panel;</li><li>○ The programme partially meets three or more standards.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Additional assessment rules regarding conditions</b>
<p>A score of “partially meets the standard” means that a programme meets the generic quality standard to a significant extent, but improvements are required in order to fully meet the standard. To this end, conditions will be imposed.</p> <p>When presenting a final conclusion of “conditionally positive”, a panel must review whether it is feasible for the programme to demonstrate its realisation of such improvements within a period of two years. Only if it determines that achieving such an improvement is a realistic goal will the panel recommend the imposition of conditions. In such cases, the panel will set down the conditions to be imposed in concrete terms. If the panel deems achievement of the necessary improvements within two years not feasible, the final conclusion will be “negative”.</p> <p>NVAO decides on the imposition of conditions for the programme. If it determines that is not realistic for the conditions to be satisfied within two years, it will refrain from setting down conditions and award a final conclusion of “negative”.</p>





## VERBETERPLAN TOETSING EN BEOORDELING BACHELOR DANS KONINKLIJK CONSERVATORIUM

In het kader van een beperkte opleidingsbeoordeling heeft een panel onder voorzitterschap van Pascal De Groote op 17 en 18 juni 2019 de Bachelor Dans van het Koninklijk Conservatorium gevisiteerd. In haar rapport oordeelt het visitatiepanel als volgt: "The programme receives the following assessment on NVAO Standaard 3: the programme partially meets the standard". Zijn oordeel baseert het visitatiepanel op informatie verkregen uit lesbezoeken, gesprekken met diverse actoren en bestudeerde documenten, waaronder het zelfevaluatierapport van de opleiding zelf.

Dit verbeterplan is in opdracht van de NVAO opgesteld en gaat uitsluitend over standaard 3 vanwege de voorwaarde die de opleiding heeft gekregen.

*STANDAARD 3 TOETSING: De opleiding beschikt over een adequaat systeem van toetsing. De beoordeling is valide, betrouwbaar en voldoende onafhankelijk. De eisen zijn helder voor de studenten. De kwaliteit van de tentaminering en examinering wordt voldoende gewaarborgd en voldoet aan de wettelijke deugdelijkheidsvereisten. De toetsen ondersteunen het eigen leerproces van de studenten.*

Het visitatiepanel onderbouwt het oordeel als volgt:

*The Bachelor of Dance programme has done work to develop a system of assessment that fits to the aim of the programme: training professional dancers. Assessment is strongly based on the way how professional dance companies work in combination with tailor made feedback of staff and company members. Assessment of ballet classes is well defined and transparent. However, the assessment of the student's self-choreographed solo, modern techniques and reflective skills is not clearly defined. For these aspects, criteria are limited and not clearly related to the learning outcomes. Instead of the formative way of assessment currently in place, the assessment of the internship could contribute more strongly to the professional quality of the students if clear criteria were defined and explicitly linked to learning outcomes. External examiners taking part in the assessment of the ballet classes is a strong point, but the assessment of the overall quality of the students seemed inconsistent and was not immediately evident to the panel. In the view of the panel, the programme could be enhanced by considering an integrated and specific product to demonstrate that students explicitly achieve the Bachelor level on all intended learning outcomes. Based on the interviews held on site and the documents provided by the programme, it became evident to the panel that the informal feedback the students receive is relevant for their development and supportive of their becoming professional dancers. At the same time, the formal assessment, especially in the solo and contemporary dance, could benefit from further finetuning. The KC is encouraged to consider how it could further support the programme to become more engaged in monitoring the quality of the assessment process by, for example, a more systematic approach towards formal feedback. In this regard, the panel highlights the need for a more coherent set of criteria used for assessment, and for explicit guidelines by which these criteria are employed and become part of a formal evaluation or mark. Given the above made remarks the panel advises to reflect on the task and responsibility of the exam committee and to expand it's working methods and locus of engagement with the quality of the assessment process. The programme has already undertaken a first step in this direction, as it has been described in the memo sent to the panel after the audit. A strength regarding intake is that the majority of Bachelors come from the own School for Young Talent. These candidates are well prepared for the 2-year Bachelor programme. For the intake of external candidates, the criteria for exemptions to fit them into the programme as observed by the panel in the student's files are not as well developed as for the internal students. The panel advises the programme to define these criteria in a more elaborated way so that the incoming students are able to meet the international standard after finishing the 2-year curriculum. There is clear evidence of good practice, including the assessment process in place for the classical ballet classes and the quality of feedback that students receive. However, this was not consistently observed across the programme, and the programme team is required to elaborate clear and coherent assessment criteria for all courses based on the learning outcomes. As a condition for further improvement the panel recommends that the programme draw up a 4-year plan to strengthen the quality of the assessment process including an integrated method to assess the Bachelor level and to let the exam committee comment yearly on the effect of the measures taken.*

Het management van de Dansvakopleiding wil op korte termijn NVAO Standaard 3 op orde krijgen. Daartoe zijn concrete stappen gezet, zoals het inschakelen van een onderwijskundig expert die bezig is met een uitgebreide analyse, een inventarisatie van noodzakelijke verbeteringen en mogelijke maatregelen daartoe en het opstellen van een planning.

De onderwijskundige zal samen met het management 2 sporen bewandelen. Het eerste spoor moet leiden tot verbeteringen op korte termijn (6 maanden) en het tweede spoor op verbeteringen op middellange termijn (1-4 jaar). De inzet is om op korte termijn duidelijke en herkenbare verbeteringen te bewerkstelligen voor alle actoren (zoals studenten en docenten).

Verder zal de samenhang tussen de onderwijsvisie, de eindtermen en de toetsing en beoordeling van de diverse onderdelen in kaart worden brengen. De bevindingen zullen besproken worden met het management, docenten, examencommissie, opleidingscommissie en andere relevante actoren. De onderwijskundige zal het management, de examencommissie, de opleidingscommissie en de docenten ondersteunen bij het in kaart brengen en implementeren van de verbeteracties, het plannen (SMART), de voorbereidingen, de uitvoering, de voorbereiding van de evaluatie van de verbeteringen (volgens de PDCA cyclus; als onderdeel van de kwaliteitszorg van de opleiding).

Het beoordelingsrapport van de NVAO dient als uitgangspunt voor de verbeteringen op korte termijn:

- *Toetsing en beoordelingscriteria voor Creating a Solo, Modern Techniques and Reflective Skills Dance Now, Careerplanning, Study Plan, Internship Intern/extern*
- *Integrale eindbeoordeling van de opleiding (op Bachelor niveau)*
- *De rol van de examencommissie*
- *Het vrijstellingenbeleid voor instromende studenten uit het buitenland*

*Acties op korte termijn (6 maanden):*

- Opstellen van passende toetsvormen en beoordelingscriteria die aansluiten bij de leerdoelen voor de volgende vakken: *Creating a Solo, Modern Techniques and Reflective Skills (Dance Now, Careerplanning, Study Plan, Internship Intern/extern)*. Hierbij wordt gebruik gemaakt van *Academic Theatre Dance/Classical Ballet* als 'best practice'. Het visitatiepanel beschrijft de toetsing en beoordeling van *Academic Theatre Dance/Classical Ballet* classes namelijk als 'well defined, reliable and transparent'.
- Introduceren van een graduation interview als integrale afsluiting op Bachelorniveau.
- Beschrijving van taken, bevoegdheden en verantwoordelijkheden van de examencommissie.
- Aanscherpen/herdefiniëren van het instroombeleid voor buitenlandse studenten.

*Acties op middellange termijn (1-2 jaar):*

Op middellange termijn (1-2 jaar) richt de Dansvakopleiding zich op het optimaliseren van het toetsing- en beoordelingssysteem. Deze grondige aanpak richt zich onder meer op verhoging van de kwaliteit van de toetsen, een goede aansluiting van de eindtermen en leerdoelen bij de toetsen, bewuste en beargumenteerde keuze voor adequate toetsvormen (die ook aansluiten bij de geest van de opleiding), en herkenbare en duidelijke beoordelingscriteria voor de studenten. Daarnaast wordt als onderdeel van het kwaliteitszorgsysteem het toetsing- en beoordelingssysteem systematisch en cyclisch geëvalueerd en waar nodig verbeterd. Op deze manier willen we de kwaliteit en verduurzaming van toetsing en beoordeling borgen

Op de volgende pagina zijn de verbeteracties op korte en middellange termijn in schema weergegeven.

## Verbeteracties

THEMA	DOELSTELLING	ACTOREN	2019- MRT 2020	2020	2021	2022	2023
Toets- en beoordelingsbeleid (toets- en beoordelingssysteem)	Beleidsdocument met alle vastgestelde afspraken, zowel inhoudelijk als procedureel over toetsen en beoordelen. Toetsing- en beoordelingsbeleid wordt gedragen door het management, de examencommissie, opleidingscommissie en docenten.	Onderwijskundige, examencommissie, management, docenten, vertegenwoordiging studenten	Met management en docenten uitgangspunten t.a.v. toetsen en beoordelen bespreken.	Opstellen van toets- en beoordelingsbeleid (met OER, toetsorganisatie, toetsprogramma en toetsen(vormen) en bespreken met alle relevante actoren (examencommissie, opleidingscommissie, management, docenten en vertegenwoordiging studenten).	Implementeren van toets- en beoordelingssysteem.	Evalueren van toets- en beoordelingssysteem. Analyseren en bijstellen van toets- en beoordelingssysteem.	Implementatie bijgestelde toets- en beoordelingssysteem.
Vakken Creating a Solo, Modern Techniques	Alle vakbeschrijvingen/ course-outline zijn voorzien van leerdoelen, toetsvormen, beoordelingscriteria die aansluiten bij de eindtermen en. Er zijn formats.	Docenten, management, examencommissie	Aansluiting tussen huidige doelen en beoordelingscriteria bekijken. Doorvertaling van eindtermen naar leerdoelen analyseren. Hierbij wordt gebruik gemaakt van 'Ballet als best practice. Samen met docenten bedenken van passende toetsvormen en beoordelingscriteria.	Ontwikkelen van toetsen die aansluiten bij de leerdoelen en het opstellen van transparante beoordelingscriteria.	Implementeren van de toetsvormen en beoordelingscriteria.	Evalueren, analyseren en bijstellen van de toetsvormen en beoordelingscriteria.	Implementatie van bijgestelde toetsvormen en beoordelingscriteria.
Examencommissie	Heldere taakverdeling examencommissie ten aanzien van de dansvakopleiding	Management, examencommissie	De huidige documenten (zoals huishoudelijk reglement examencommissie, toetsbeleid), bestuderen op samenhang, volledigheid, actualiteit en uitvoerbaarheid.	(Indien nodig) herschrijven, aanvullen m.b.t. taken, bevoegdheden en verantwoordelijkheden van de examencommissie. De taak- en rolverdeling en samenwerking tussen de examencommissie ten aanzien van de Dansvakopleiding concretiseren en vastleggen.	Implementeren van de herziene taken, bevoegdheden, verantwoordelijkheden en rolverdeling examencommissie.	Evaluatie van het functioneren examencommissie: huishoudelijk reglement. Analyseren van de resultaten uit de evaluatie en bijstellen van het huishoudelijk reglement indien nodig.	Implementeren van de herziene taken, bevoegdheden, verantwoordelijkheden en rolverdeling examencommissie ten aanzien van de dansvakopleiding.
Internship Intern/extern	Helder geformuleerde stagedoelen en beoordelingscriteria die aansluiten bij de eindtermen.	Studenten, management, werkveld en docenten.	Opstellen van stagedoelen en transparante beoordelingscriteria.	Implementeren van de stagedoelen en beoordelingscriteria	Evaluatie van de stagedoelen en beoordelingscriteria. Analyse van de resultaten uit de evaluatie.	Op basis van de analyse verbeteren.	Implementeren van de bijgestelde stagedoelen en beoordelingscriteria.
Reflective Skills	Alle relevante vakken hebben heldere beoordelingscriteria voor de reflectieve vaardigheden (study plan, stage, audition, enz)	Docenten, management examencommissie, studenten.	Bestuderen van doelen, toetsing en beoordelingscriteria van de reflectieve vaardigheden. Deze vervolgens, opstellen/bijstellen/aanscherpen.	Implementeren van de doelen, toetsing en beoordelingscriteria.	Evaluatie van de doelen, toetsing en beoordelingscriteria. Analyse van de resultaten uit de evaluatie.	Op basis van de analyse verbeteren.	Implementeren van de bijgestelde doelen, toetsing en beoordelingscriteria.
Bachelorniveau	De eindtermen worden aan het einde van de opleiding d.m.v. een 'graduation interview' getoetst. Er zijn heldere beoordelingscriteria die het eindniveau toetsen.	Management, docenten, examencommissie, studenten.	Introduceren van een 'graduation interview. Hiermee wordt bevestigd dat de student het Bachelorniveau heeft bereikt.	Implementeren van de eindtoets en beoordelingscriteria.	Evaluatie van de eindtoets en beoordelingscriteria. Analyse van de resultaten uit de evaluatie.	Op basis van de analyse verbeteren.	Implementeren van de bijgestelde eindtoets en beoordelingscriteria.

Instroom buitenlandse studenten	Helder beleid t.a.v. instroom van studenten, de procedure (bijvoorbeeld intake assessment).		Bestuderen van huidig instroombeleid. Vergelijken met andere hogescholen. De verbeterpunten in kaart brengen.	Ontwikkelen /verbeteren van het instroombeleid (inclusief vrijstellingenbeleid).	Implementeren nieuw instroombeleid.	Evaluatie, analyseren en verbeteren.	Implementeren bijgesteld instroombeleid.
Evalueren van alle vakken	Alle vakbeschrijvingen/ course-outline zijn voorzien van leerdoelen, toetsvormen, beoordelingscriteria die aansluiten bij de eindtermen. Er zijn formats.			Alle vakken evalueren op: aansluiting leerdoelen op toetsing beoordelingscriteria. Controleren op systematische doorvertalen van eindtermen naar leerdoelen; checken op consistentie.	Indien van toepassing: ontwikkelen van toetsen die aansluiten bij de leerdoelen en het opstellen van transparante beoordelingscriteria.	Implementeren van de toetsvormen en beoordelingscriteria	Evalueren, analyseren en bijstellen van de toetsvormen en beoordelingscriteria.