

M Design Sandberg Instituut

*Report of the limited programme assessment
21 and 22 March 2012*

Utrecht, The Netherlands
July 2012
www.AeQui.nl
Assessment Agency for higher Education


 *This document is best printed in duplex.*

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Summary

On March 21 and 22, 2012, an assessment committee of AeQui performed an assessment of the Master programme Design. The overall judgement of the committee regarding the quality of the programme is **good**.

The Sandberg Instituut offers four master degree programmes of the Rietveld Academie: Fine Arts, Applied Arts, Interior Architectural Design and Design. The mission of the Rietveld Academie is to educate and support talented young people in such a way that they are able to operate independently in the field of visual arts or design. The outward and practical orientation of the Master programmes at the Sandberg Instituut encourage and stimulate students to engage with the challenges of an active art or design studio practice. In this way the institute strives to deliver students who can sustain their work themselves and become sources of artistic inspiration in their area of specialisation.

The master, a two year programme (120 EC), has changed its name from Graphic Design to Design. This renaming is a response to what the department understands as a fundamental transformation of the professional field. As the course's evaluation report and the mission statement explain, the role of the designer has radically expanded and diversified in recent years. Being a designer is not so much about making 'a medium', for example a poster or book, but has become more directed at guiding or intervening in *media-processes* and about understanding how media structure and influence society. Designers these days can be involved in a wide array activities, ranging from research, teaching, filming, editing and curating; their work is not 'cut out', rather, designers are increasingly inclined and challenged to initiate their own projects and create hybrid forms of communication.

The intended learning outcomes

The assessment committee qualifies the intended learning outcomes as **good**. The competencies of the programme are in line with the (intern)national qualifications for a Master of Design.

Starting from an explicitly artistic and socially engaged approach to design, the programme is attuned to the shifting parameters of the design profession and the transformation of the role of design in contemporary society. The goals of the program are ambitious. It wishes to train designers who are able to position themselves within the field, maintain an independent practice, produce innovative forms of design and contribute to the discourse of the field in a theoretically informed manner. In short, graduates of the programme should strive to work at the vanguard of their profession. The evaluation committee is impressed by these ambitious aims.

The teaching-learning environment

The teaching-learning environment as qualified as **good**. The structure and content of the programme provide a challenging environment in which students learn to become independent and critical designers.

During the two years of the programme, students follow their own route by working intensively on projects and assignments. Although the department offers students concrete assignments in the first terms of the programme, the participants are expected to become increasingly independent during the following terms, creating and executing their own projects in line with their professional ambitions. In the public presentations of their work, students are expected to explain the conceptual background of their choices and to relate their own designs to the broader discourse on visual art, media and design.

The structure of the programme is flexible and tailored to the specific dynamics of the professional field of art and design, where the identity and role of the a designer is shifting and dependant on social, medial and cultural transformations. The committee appreciates the programme's deliberate openness and willingness to be disturbed by the unexpected. However, it thinks that the programme could benefit from a more structural approach to theory and methodology – as will be described in the recommendations.

The instructors responsible for the programme are all highly qualified; having successful independent

practices themselves and extensive networks in the professional field of design. They are motivated to offer the students the best learning environment possible, and frequently available for coaching, advice or feedback. Their relationship with the students is one of professional equality, based on a democratic understanding of education in which the role of teacher and student can be reversed according to the context. Students are in continuous dialogue with the team of instructors about their work and the role of design in society today. The committee therefore evaluates the non-hierarchical relation with the students – as **excellent**.

The facilities and space at the Sandberg Instituut are sufficient for what the programme has in mind. The programme invests in new technology and the facilities – such as computers and a media lab – are available around the clock and students are supported by a permanent technical instructor. The space at the Sandberg Instituut, though limited, is used in a creative way and as such meets the needs of the students for the moment. The institute is looking forward to the construction of a new building which will provide the participants with more working space.

Assessment and achieved learning outcomes

The assessment committee qualifies the assessment and achieved learning outcomes as **good**. The validity and reliability of the assessments is due to the vigorous, precise manner in which the progress and work of students is monitored and commented upon. The formal and informal assessments in the programme take the form of serious and invested discussions, and, in the case of formal assessments,

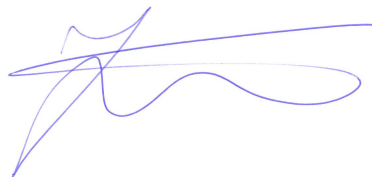
All three standards of the NVAO assessment framework are assessed positively and hence the review committee awards a positive recommendation for the accreditation of the programme.

On behalf of the entire review committee,

Utrecht, July 2012



René S. Kloosterman MSc
Chair



Jesseka M. Batteau MA
Secretary

are followed by an argued evaluation by the tutors involved. The committee thinks that the manner in which the programme assesses the students is in line with what the programme is trying to achieve. Students are made active and informed evaluators of themselves and their peers.

The international design community acknowledges the graduates of the programme as qualified, socially engaged and theoretically informed designers. The final essays and graduation projects the evaluation committee reviewed demonstrate this theoretical commitment and social engagement.

Recommendations

The evaluation committee is impressed by the ambitious aims of the Master programme to be artistically engaged with the profession and the world at large. In the same time, the committee would like to add that it would be helpful if the concepts (autonomy, theory, engagement, public space, etc) informing the educational vision of the programme would be made more explicit. By offering concrete interpretative frameworks, the discussions and projects issuing from these concepts might gain more depth and precision.

Additionally, the committee thinks the programme could benefit from a more structural approach to theory and methodology. By offering students generic courses in which relevant theories and/or methodologies are taught in depth and on a structural basis, the participants will be able to engage more fully with the issues at hand in their profession.

Colophon

Institute and programme

Sandberg Instituut Amsterdam (Gerrit Rietveld Academie)
Design Department
Fred. Roeskestraat 98
NL – 1076 ED Amsterdam
Telephone: (+ 31 20 –) 588 24 10
Status institution: publicly funded
Result of institutional assessment: applied for

Programme: Master Graphic Design
Level: HBO Master
Number of credits: 120 EC
Nomenclature: Master in Design (MDes)
Location: Amsterdam
Mode of study: fulltime
ISAT: 44758
For data on intake, graduates and drop-outs: see appendix 3.

Director responsible for quality: T. van Grootheest, chairman of the executive board of the Gerrit Rietveld Academie
Director of the Sandberg Instituut: J. Bey
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Assessment committee

ir R. Kloosterman, chair
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The Committee was presented to the NVAO for approval.

The assessment was conducted under responsibility of
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Introduction

The Sandberg Instituut offers four master degree programmes of the Rietveld Academie: Fine Arts, Applied Arts, Interior Architectural Design and Design. The mission of the Rietveld Academie is to educate and support talented young people in such a way that they are able to operate independently in the field of visual arts or design. The outward and practical orientation of the programmes at the Sandberg Instituut encourage and stimulate students to engage with the challenges of an active art or design studio practice. In this way the institute strives to deliver students who can sustain their work themselves and become sources of artistic inspiration in their area of specialisation.

The institute

The Sandberg Instituut was founded in 1995 out of an independent foundation for post-academic art education. Since then it has developed four professional master programmes. In addition, it is in the process of designing additional, temporary programs which address relevant issues with a broad social impact, the most recent example being a programme titled 'Vacant NL'. The Sandberg Instituut is the initiator of influential events and projects in the Netherlands, such as the One Minutes-foundation and the Kunstvlaai. Typical for the Sandberg Instituut is its strong social and political engagement and outward orientation.

The master programmes of the Sandberg Instituut stimulates young designers and artists to develop and reflect on their work in relation to the complex socio-cultural processes in the outside world and the shifting parameters of their own artistic discipline. Whereas the bachelor programmes of the Rietveld Academie are aimed at the acquisition of necessary skills and the formation of an artistic identity, the master programmes start from the assumption that the students are already autonomous, skilled and critical artists/designers. Students at the Sandberg Instituut are expected to be highly motivated to deepen the content of their work; they must be ready to explore, re-articulate and even reinvent their artistic identities in response to the developments in their discipline and the social, cultural and economic forces that it is subject to.

Headed by a new director since the academic year 2010-2011, the Sandberg Instituut has formulated a new mission for the future, which affects the institute as a whole and each of the individual pro-

grammes of the masters in various ways. The mission statement – articulated in *Manifest 2012* – demonstrates that, while the master programmes continue to be practice-oriented, the engagement with social reality has received renewed emphasis in an explicit *activist* interpretation of the role of the artist and designer in society. In other words, art must *connect* and *affect*. In addition, the Sandberg Instituut stresses the necessity of deliberate collaborations between the art disciplines as an important condition for bringing about change. Although the departments share an engaged involvement with the outside world, each programme has its own identity and goals particular to its discipline. The diversity of the programmes is what makes the institute an inspirational and innovative environment for the attending students.

The programme

The master, a two year programme (120 EC), has changed its name from Graphic Design to Design. This renaming is a response to what the department understands as a fundamental transformation of the professional field. As the course's evaluation report and the mission statement explain, the role of the designer has radically expanded and diversified in recent years. Being a designer is not so much about making 'a medium', for example a poster or book, but has become more directed at guiding or intervening in *media-processes* and about understanding how media structure and influence society. Designers these days can be involved in a wide array activities, ranging from research, teaching, filming, editing and curating; their work is not 'cut out', rather, designers are increasingly inclined and challenged to

initiate their own projects and create hybrid forms of communication.

The Design programme of the Sandberg Instituut aims to educate and support designers who are equipped with the necessary skills and intellectual capacities to produce and create in a rapidly changing professional field. This designer is not only skilled in the production-side of graphic design, but creates his or her work through an intellectual involvement with critical issues in contemporary society. This designer must operate as a highly capable communicator who, being attuned to different contexts and discourses, is able to enrich cultural visual repertoire and contribute to the discourse on design.

The department's curriculum has a deliberately open and flexible structure, taking the students' interests and critical sensibility as point of departure. Students are challenged to construct much of the program themselves, after submitting a project plan at the beginning of the master. This project plan serves as a frame of reference throughout the two years, and may be modified according to new insights acquired by the student along the way. Next to collective events (lectures, excursions, exhibitions and workshops), each student works on a series of projects and assignments, which are either self-initiated or offered via the department. In constant dialogue with the team of instructors, fellow students and

guest lecturers, students follow their own route towards the final graduation.

The programme is carried out by a department head and a coordinator, three permanent instructors and a media tutor. Guest lecturers are invited on the basis of specific expertise and come from a range of disciplines.

The assessment

The master programme Design of the Sandberg Instituut has assigned AeQui VBI to perform a quality assessment. In close cooperation with the department of design AeQui has convened an independent and competent assessment committee. A preparatory meeting with representatives of the programme has taken place; the meeting was meant for exchanging information and to plan the dates and the program of the site-visit.

The assessment was carried out according to the itinerary presented in appendix 2. The committee assessed in an independent manner; at the conclusion of the assessment the results were presented to representatives of the programme.

The concept of this report was sent to the representatives of the programme; their reactions have led to the final version of the report.

1. Intended learning outcomes

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

Explanation: As for level and orientation (bachelor's or master's; professional or academic), the intended learning outcomes fit into the Dutch qualifications framework. In addition, they tie in with the international perspective of the requirements currently set by the professional field and the discipline with regard to the contents of the programme.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee qualifies the intended learning outcomes as **good**. The competencies of the programme are in line with the (intern)national qualifications for a Master of Design. Starting from an explicitly artistic and socially engaged approach to design, the programme is attuned to the shifting parameters of the design profession and the transformation of the role of design in contemporary society. The goals of the program are ambitious. It wishes to train designers who are able to position themselves within the field, maintain an independent practice, produce innovative forms of design and contribute to the discourse of the field in a theoretically informed manner. In short, graduates of the programme should strive to work at the vanguard of their profession.

The competencies are a concrete translation of these ambitions and are articulated in such a way that they can be reinterpreted in the light of current developments. The relevance of the intended learning outcomes are evaluated regularly via students and alumni surveys, the consultation of external experts and via the maintenance of an extensive network with high profile institutes and actors in the professional field. The programme aims to be an inspiring, open space, in which students can develop and deepen their professional identities as designers. It wishes to prepare young designers for the complexities and dynamics of a profession 'on the move'. The evaluation committee is impressed by the ambitious aims of the Master programme to be artistically engaged with the profession and the world at large. The committee would like to add that it would be helpful if the concepts (autonomy, theory, engagement, public space, etc) informing the educational vision of the programme would be made more explicit. By offering concrete interpretative frameworks, the discussions and projects issuing from these concepts might gain more depth and precision.

Links with professional practice

The goal of the Master programme of Design is to prepare students for the dynamics of the professional field and help them develop autonomous forms of communication that will make a difference in the field of design. It maintains an international network with relevant institutes and design programmes; its national network is diverse and extensive and includes many high profile institutes and actors in the field.

The course's objectives are based on international developments around the qualification of the Master's degree in Visual Communication Design (MDes) and dovetails with the description drawn up by the 'Projectorganisatie Kunstvakonderwijs' (a Dutch organisation for Professional Art Education). This description served as the basis for the formulation of a national competency profile for graphic designers in 2002. The Sandberg Instituut has expanded upon

this description to formulate the competences for the Master's level of design.

The programme is highly aware of the shifting parameters in the professional field. The profession of designer has greatly expanded and diversified over the past years, and has come to overlap with many other related creative disciplines in the field, ranging from photography, journalism, editing and research, to software development, teaching and curating. This expansion of activities designers are involved in, is the reason why the department has changed its name from Graphic Design to Design in 2006.

The course wishes to distinguish itself from similar Master's courses in its concrete positioning of design in relation to current events, in short, its social engagement. In addition, it explicitly starts from an *artistic* approach to design, in which autonomy, authenticity and critical authorship of the maker play a central role. Where other Master programmes

might stress the process of production, or attempt to create an environment of isolation and concentration, the Sandberg programme deliberately seeks the confrontation with social reality. By constantly interrogating the role of the designer, the course wishes to train students who are critical and socially aware of their position and who are able to contribute in an innovative way to their profession. Given their artistic ambitions, graduates of the programme should be able to work as pioneers in the field of design.

As the interviews with students, alumni and experts in the field made clear, the goals of the programme are attuned to the present complexities of a creative practice. However, some of the experts the committee spoke to were of the opinion that the artistic-theoretical orientation of the programme might in some ways complicate the positioning of its graduates in the professional field. How do students wish to distinguish themselves after graduation: as artists or as designers working for clients? The department acknowledges this dilemma, but insists that the self-conscious investigation of, and oscillation between, various roles will in the end contribute to the further development of the field of design.

Up to date

Because of the open structure of the programme, the Master is able to flexibly respond to recent developments in society. Students initiate their own projects on the basis of relevant social and cultural issues; the projects and assignments offered by the department are always directly aimed at investigating current issues and problems, whether in the field of design or in other domains.

The competencies of the programme are maintained through consultations with experts in the field. Students and alumni are surveyed regularly to verify if the intended learning outcomes meet the requirements of the professional field.

The course maintains and updates the competencies in various ways:

1. By consulting its contacts in the field and external experts such as guest lecturers;
2. Through formal and informal surveys completed by students and graduates;
3. By following current developments in the field and at fellow institutes.

A major topical question at the Institute concerns the profession's relationship to the shifting status of the cultural sector, the creative industry and the current economic crisis. The programme investigates how designers should position themselves vis-à-vis economic, political and social changes, and questions the future role of the designer.

Concrete

The awareness of the changing profession and the necessity for new interpretations of the role of the designer has been translated to the competencies the participants are expected to develop during the two years of the Master. Participants must acquire competencies which enable them to maintain an independent practice and define their own conditions of invention and production in a complex professional environment.

The department aims to be a space in which students can develop new visual strategies in response to relevant social and political issues. This means that students are stimulated to investigate and research the social and cultural contexts in which the design exists, and thus to go beyond the design process or product itself.

Another pillar of the course – one which follows from its critical-reflective orientation and social engagement – is the emphasis on collaboration between designers and other creative disciplines. The programme expects students to take collaborative initiatives, seeking unexpected connections and new angles by working together with other artists, designers and social actors.

The programme has developed a set of final learning outcomes that define and articulate the specific qualifications students must acquire to be able to function as a professional designer at a Master's level. The competencies that make up the profile are grouped in to eight categories and reflect the critical, reflective nature of the programme, its flexibility as well as its outward orientation:

- Creative ability
- Research ability
- Capacity for critical reflection
- Ability to grow and change
- Ability to operationalize

- Ability to communicate
- Focus on the surrounding world
- Ability to collaborate

(For a more detailed description of the competencies and a description of the final qualification, see appendix 4.)

Since the competencies and final learning outcomes are formulated in a relatively open way, the assessment criteria for evaluating the students' work are the subject of constant reflection and dialogue. The department deliberately encourages students' to reflect on the criteria, and, together with the lecturers, to critique each other's work in an argued and convincing way. The students' progress and work is informally evaluated throughout their projects. Both students and instructors discuss how and to which degree the work reflects the competencies mentioned above. Three times a year, at the end of each term there is a formal assessment of the students, which consists of a presentation and a fifteen-minute meeting with each student individually.

The evaluation committee is impressed by the ambitious aims and the open character of the Master programme for Design. It is of the opinion that the pillars on which the programme is built – artistic

autonomy, social and theoretical engagement, interdisciplinary collaboration – demonstrate the sincerity with which the department wishes to make a difference in the field of design and society at large. The committee would like to add that it would be helpful for students if the concepts (autonomy, theory, engagement, public space, etc.) informing the educational vision of the programme would be made more explicit. By offering concrete interpretative frameworks (without prescribing one interpretation in particular), the discussions and projects issuing from these concepts might gain more depth and precision.

Dublin Descriptors

To ensure that the level of the Master course Design meets international standards, the final assessment criteria of the proficiencies have been compared with the Dublin Descriptors. The committee is satisfied that the intended learning outcomes regarding knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills meet the international standards of a Master's level of Design.

2. Teaching-learning environment

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

Explanation: The contents and structure of the curriculum enable the students admitted to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The quality of the staff and of the programme-specific services and facilities is essential to that end. Curriculum, staff, services and facilities constitute a coherent teaching-learning environment for the students.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee qualifies the teaching-learning environment as **good**. The structure and content of the programme provide a challenging environment in which students learn to become independent and critical designers. During the two years of the programme, students follow their own route by working intensively on projects and assignments. Although the department offers students concrete assignments in the first terms of the programme, the participants are expected to become increasingly independent during the following terms, creating and executing their own projects in line with their professional ambitions. In the public presentations of their work, students are expected to explain the conceptual background of their choices and to relate their own designs to the broader discourse on visual art, media and design. The structure of the programme is flexible and tailored to the specific dynamics of the professional field of art and design, where the identity and role of the a designer is shifting and dependant on social, medial and cultural transformations. The course is reflected upon continuously, by students as well as staff, and if needed redefined on the basis of contemporary discussions in the field. The committee appreciates the programme's deliberate openness and willingness to be disturbed by the unexpected. However, it thinks that the programme could benefit from a more structural approach to theory and methodology. By offering students generic courses in which relevant theories and/or methodologies are taught in depth and on a structural basis, the participants will be able to engage more fully with the issues at hand in their profession.

The instructors responsible for the programme are all highly qualified; having successful independent practices themselves and extensive networks in the professional field of design. They are motivated to offer the students the best learning environment possible, and frequently available for coaching, advice or feedback. Their relationship with the students is one of professional equality, based on a democratic understanding of education in which the role of teacher and student can be reversed according to the context. Students are in continuous dialogue with the team of instructors about their work and the role of design in society today. The committee therefore evaluates the non-hierarchal relation with the students – as **excellent**. Given the careful selection of students, most of the participants thrive in the relative open curriculum of the programme. The small scale and intensive collective projects and events ensure that students function as fellow critics and coaches. However, if students do seem to falter in their progress, adequate measures are taken to ensure the student gets back on track or finds a new direction. The facilities and space at the Sandberg Instituut are sufficient for what the programme has in mind. The programme invests in new technology and the facilities – such as computers and a media lab – are available around the clock and students are supported by a permanent technical instructor. The space at the Sandberg Instituut, though limited, is used in a creative way and as such meets the needs of the students for the moment. The institute is looking forward to the construction of a new building which will provide the participants with more working space.

Programme covers the learning outcomes

The Master programme of Design takes the student's own critical-artistic sensibility as its starting point. (See also 'Structure of the programme') With an open curriculum, students can build their own program in which they develop a professional identity in relation to the design field and contemporary society. The two-year programme consists of three

trimesters per year, all of which end with a formal evaluation of the students' work and progress.

The programme underwrites a democratic understanding of education in which the roles of tutors and students are fluid and interchangeable. It is interested in the students' background, expertise and goals, and wishes to investigate how the talent of its students can be shared and made productive

for others. Education takes place within a framework that can be constantly redefined. The programme aims to provide a flexible environment in which students are challenged to be creative, productive and self-critical, and thus to prepare them for a future in an unpredictable world. Students must learn who they are and how they relate to their own environment, their profession and society at large. In short, the programme tries as much as possible to reflect on the world as it is and to be responsive to cultural and medial transformations.

As part of the application process, each prospective student submits a project plan. This articulates the subjects, issues and questions the student wishes to address and investigate. This project plan is an indication of the direction the student will be taking, but can be revised along the way. Dialogue with a guest instructor, fellow students or supervisor about the route taken by the student constitutes an essential ingredient of the course. Throughout the duration of the course, each participant's progress is monitored and evaluated by the permanent tutors.

From 2009 onwards, each academic year began with an introductory weekend at the home of the department head in the Belgian hills. It contributes to a productive group dynamic and prepares the students for collaborative projects in the years to come. During the two years of the course, students work on multiple projects and topics at the same time, some of which are collaborative. At the beginning of the course, more emphasis is placed on projects and subjects proposed by the department. But as the year progresses, students are increasingly expected to initiate their own work and commit themselves to various cultural, visual, political and research-based projects. They are encouraged to formulate a practice that takes them outside the studio and brings them in contact with different communities. In the second year, students are involved in their own self-initiated projects as they prepare for and work on their final essay and graduation presentation.

Although it is not always easy for young designers to put their concepts and designs into words, the programme is well aware of the absolute importance of the ability of students to defend their work. This requires reflectiveness, perceptiveness and rhetorical talents. The students are given the opportunity to

develop these skills during presentations at the Institute and at external events.

With each subsequent trimester, the student is expected to further develop a self-critical awareness and to increasingly redefine and realise the professional goals formulated at the beginning of the course. First year students are encouraged to experiment and investigate as much as possible, whereas the emphasis during the second year lies on the theoretical underpinning and socio-political positioning of the students' individual identity as a designer.

Since the content programme of Design relies for the most part on the interests of the students, concrete products or working-methods of students may prompt the development of specific forms of education for individual students. In return, the programme expects the students to be involved and make an effort. Also, students are expected to contribute in various to the collective parts of the programme, which consist of group critiques, guest lectures, workshops, excursions and exhibitions.

During the tour of the Sandberg building, the assessment committee was given the opportunity to see some the work and installations of the students. So, for example, in one room the committee watched a video installation of a second year student which reflected on the visual relation of space and language. In another installation, the committee was led into a darkened room where a whispering voice could be heard. An I-pad glowed faintly on the floor, the shadows of the listeners hovered on the walls. The installation intended to address communality and communication, calling into mind a prehistoric scene – people gathered round a fire in the dark, telling each other stories.

The relation between theory and practice is of utmost importance in the realisation of the final qualifications in the Design Master programme. Next to the lectures and events organised across the departmental boundaries of the Sandberg Instituut, the tutors of the Design program initiate various discussions on social, historical and cultural subjects. Guest instructors are invited to address the relation between theory and a creative practice from different perspectives. The students are encouraged to work with these lectures, to convert these new insights into their own work. In addition, students are regularly asked to write reviews of the lectures and con-

ferences they have attended so that other students can benefit from their experiences. In October 2011, students started an online dropbox, in which they placed relevant articles for fellow students to read. Although it started out as a digital reader, it has now become part of the departments' library and is actively read and contributed to.

To graduate, all students must write a final thesis that is related to the issues that inform their self-understanding as a designer. The final essay, as part of the graduation project, is an important tool in developing critical and verbal skills. The essay is treated as an opinion piece that might appear in a newspaper, magazine or journal, and in it the student must take position as a designer in an argued and convincing manner. One of the permanent tutors, an independent curator and art critic, supervises the students in writing their final essays and reviews the texts they have suggested beforehand. She gradually prepares students for producing their essay by asking them to write reviews about other students or other students' essays. In this way, not only are students training their writing skills, they are also learning the challenges of evaluation and criticism. The writing of this piece is supervised by one instructor throughout the first two trimesters of the second year.

The programme works together with external parties in the development of its content. Students are put in touch with potential clients, relevant organisations, journals and cultural organisations. Many projects arise out of collaboration with external experts, such as philosophers, authors and programmers. Education therefore takes place partly through professional practice, and during the course students already forge qualitative networks and participate in discussions on the development of the field. So, for example, in 2011 the programme conducted a study of the city's Zuidas district in partnership with VU University Amsterdam and the Virtueel Museum Zuidas. Students investigated how the visual representation of the Zuidas relates to its liveability. In another collaborative assignment, students worked with the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam on a project titled 'Zichtbaar Afwezig' (2009), in which icons from the museum's art and design collection were presented at iconic public places in Amsterdam. During the visit of the evaluation committee, the committee was presented with the often impressive visual and material results of the collabo-

rative projects, varying from books, to posters, to installations.

Alumni and students of the programme confirm that the programme indeed offers the creative and inspiring environment needed to attain the final qualifications as a Master in Design. To quote an interview with one of the graduates in the self-evaluation written by the programme: '[...] The Sandberg Instituut was most valuable for her because of the time and space it gave her to experiment and find a voice of her own, combining the fields that she'd worked in – cultural studies, art and digital media.'

The evaluation committee is convinced that the programme's content and structure ensure that students acquire the same set of final qualifications. These qualifications relate to the development of a unique identity as designer and the ability of students to critically reflect on their position within the professional field and contemporary culture. Every student is given the opportunity to follow his/her own route towards professional maturity, on the basis of his/her own skills, interests and goals. In this manner, the Sandberg Instituut has managed to find a balance between a fixed set of qualifications on the one hand and the individual learning goals of its students.

Up to date

The content of the programme changes annually. In this way the students can fully benefit from current developments in the field. This approach also does justice to tutors' as well as students' changing interests.

The Sandberg Instituut aims to be at the forefront of discussions about the future position of designers and artists. A major topical question concerns what the profession's relationship should be to new attitudes towards the cultural sector, the creative industry and the current economic crisis. The programme manages to stay in touch with contemporary issues, by inviting guest lecturers who address these pressing issues, by collaborating with other parties in the field and through the extensive networks of the tutors involved. By keeping a close eye on issues the students are dealing with and questioning, the programme stays flexible and open to the future.

In addition, an international orientation and international collaboration take an important place in the programme. The programme strives to make connections abroad in several ways. Half of the participants are non-Dutch; the tutors themselves have strong international connections and practices, guest instructors are often not of Dutch origin. The departmental communication therefore takes place in English. Excursions regularly take place outside the national borders. In recent years, students have visited institutions and museums in Germany, Belgium, China and the USA. This year, students of the programme will visit Cape Town, South Africa. The programme has an exchange agreement with Otis college of Art and Design in Los Angeles: each year two students spend two months in the summer to study there, and two students of Los Angeles visit the Sandberg Instituut.

The programme makes its presence felt abroad at venues and symposiums, seeks dialogue with the international design community and actively encourages its students to adopt an explicitly international orientation.

The committee applauds this international orientation of the programme and underwrites its opinion that a designer can only be influential when he or she is able to position him- or herself within the international discourse on design. The students' responses to their international experiences also show how important it is for designers to look beyond the national scene. They indicate that their work has changed fundamentally after visits and collaborations abroad. The committee would however like to add that the programme could also benefit from connections closer to home, in the form of the existing Master departments (arts, applied arts and interior architecture) at the Sandberg Instituut. These programmes deal with similar questions of identity and positioning, and the committee is convinced that an interaction and dialogue between these programmes will contribute to the quality of the institute as a whole. The Sandberg Instituut realises this and has already incorporated plans for interdepartmental, collaborative projects in their policy for the near future.

With the arrival of the new director of the Sandberg Instituut in 2010 the outward focus of the Master programmes at the institute have received a new

impulse. More than ever, the programme wishes to engage with contemporary discussions on culture, media and identity, and to encourage students to translate these issues into their design practices and to actively engage with the shifting cultural dynamics.

Structure of the programme

The didactic concept of the programme is best captured by a quotation from the self-evaluation report. The Master strives to be: 'a school that is self-aware, responsive to its participants, and willing to consider the virtues of its own demise can contribute more to its overall goals, than one that is controlling, repetitive [and fearful of disturbance].'

The teaching takes place within a framework that can be modified and redefined according to the requirements of the design field. This framework consists of three trimesters per year, each of which concludes with a formal evaluation of the students' progress.

The flexibility of the programmes and study-routes at the Sandberg Instituut are tailored to the specific dynamics of the professional field of art and design, where the identity and role of the designer is shifting and dependant on social, medial and cultural transformations. The course is reflected upon continuously, by students as well as staff, and if needed redefined on the basis of contemporary discussions in the field.

The course has various work-forms in its educational model: (guest-) lectures, group critiques and -discussions, excursions, workshops and a wide variety of exhibits and projects through which the students must present themselves to the outside world, such as the Kunstvlaai and the One Minutes.

One of the main pillars of the course is its practical orientation as well as its relation with the professional field via an outstanding (international) network including journalists, designers, philosophers, critics, documentary makers and artists. The collaborative projects with other actors and institutes in the field are valued highly by students and graduates, as opportunities to develop their skills and professional identities in the 'real world'. They are also appreciative of the network of Sandberg, which they consider to be a gateway to institutes and designers at the forefront of their profession. In the talks with the

committee, alumni stressed how important Sandberg's outward orientation and network was for their later career as a designer.

The committee is of the opinion that the didactic concept is well tailored to the programmes goals. As described in the previous paragraphs, the Design course concentrates on the development of the participants' own identity as a designer. An open curriculum, the constructive dialogue between staff members and students about course, the profession and the progress of the students themselves, as well as the work on collaborative projects with actors in the field – all of these elements of the didactic concept of the programme contribute to a productive learning environment for ambitious designers who wish to distinguish themselves, according to the evaluation committee. The structure of the programme demonstrates much thought and a lot of hard work. The committee appreciates the programme's deliberate openness and willingness to be disturbed by the unexpected. However, it thinks that the programme could benefit from a more structural approach to theory and methodology. Students are not always aware of the knowledge or expertise they are missing. By offering them more in depth courses on (cultural, art, social, media, etc.) theory on a structural basis, students will be able to engage more fully – being better informed and aware of multiple points of view – with the relevant issues in their profession.

Coherence

The coherence of the programme is achieved in several ways. First of all, there is the correspondence between theory and practice. In the second place, the programme stresses the continuities between collective elements in the programme and the individual projects. Theory and critical reflection is an integral part of the course's understanding of what it means to be a designer today: the rapid transformation and expansion of the professional field forces aspiring designers to be able to self-critically relate their work to developments in the field and in culture at large. They must know how to research a subject and approach relevant issues from a theoretical position. Therefore, this theoretical, conceptual and critical dimension of the design profession is always made present in the collective events and the projects the students work on. Whatever students

are working on, they are asked to explicitly and publicly reflect on the theoretical background of their choices. The programme provides many moments in which students can practice presenting their work in a reflective manner, some of which occur in the department, others at more public venues. A good example of the combination of theory and practice is the yearly Sandberg@Mediafonds master class.

Next to the coherence between theory and practice, the programme brings about a correspondence between the collective body of work and the work of the individual student. It is the conviction of the programme that everything is related to everything else – even when students are not aware of it, or only later on. In group projects, students are encouraged to develop their own vision and use it as a basis for their individual design decisions. During weekly group critiques, students present their work and receive comments and evaluations from their peers.

Feasible

The Sandberg Instituut asks its students and alumni regularly to evaluate the quality and feasibility of the educational programme. Students and alumni are asked how effective the programme has been with respect to their own functioning in the profession. This is done on an informal basis, via conversations, but also formally three times a year. The results are discussed with the students, who also evaluate the list of guest instructors. Students and staff satisfaction surveys are carried out every two years by the Rietveld Academie's quality assurance officer. The Sandberg Instituut has participated in the national Kunstenmonitor alumni survey since 2009.

The feasibility of the Master programme depends for a large part on the input and initiative of each individual student. Every student follows his or her own route towards graduation, executing projects and assignments that are either offered by the programme or self-initiated. Next to these projects, each trimester is filled with guest lectures, workshops and excursions. Students are expected to partake in all of these collective events

In the first two trimesters, the majority of the projects and assignments are offered by the programme itself. However, by the third trimester, students are expected to spend most of their time

on self-initiated projects. In the second year, the assignments offered by the programme diminish. In this year almost all projects are self-initiated by the students themselves as they prepare for graduation.

Students are selected for their independence and skills, and therefore most of them are able to cope with the open and challenging nature of the programme. The deadlines for projects are taken very seriously, and it is up to the student to finish his or her work on time for the evaluations. The students and alumni that the committee spoke to indicated that the open nature of the programme is particularly challenging for first year students, who are often used to following a fixed curriculum. But all of them experienced the great value of discovering their own route and direction, and acknowledge that the programme at Sandberg has changed them fundamentally as a designer.

They explained that the programme is suitable only for those students who are willing to invest and who are able to deal with the responsibility required of them by the course: 'The programme is not for everyone, you need persistence.' At the same time, many of the alumni the committee are quite content with the programme and the manner in which it functions as a free space to develop a unique artistic identity. As one graduate put it: 'The programme is very valuable, to have all this attention for two years, and to be able to reflect on yourself as a professional. I did not have the tools to make what I wanted. That's what I took out of Sandberg. Sandberg helped me to find it.'

The positive evaluation of the requirements of the programme can also be found in the interviews with alumni of the past three years (2009-2011) presented in the self-evaluation of the programme.

There are very few dropouts, and if a student stops (for data see appendix 3), this is often for personal reasons and not because of the content or structure of the programme itself.

Coaching

Coaching is an integral and fundamental part of the Master programme of Design. Students are continuously in dialogue with fellow students, instructors, supervisors and guest lecturers about their work and the directions they are exploring. The results of their projects and products are evaluated on a structural

basis. Given the close-knit group of the Design students, the collective assignments, and the weekly individual and collective talks with supervisors and instructors, the students are always able to discuss problems and issues they might encounter with others.

Supervisors and instructors monitor throughout the course if the study activities are in line with the professional qualifications formulated by the programme. If problems arise, the student immediately receives more one-on-one coaching. If necessary, the programme involves external experts to supply additional expertise. In some cases, instructors give concrete assignments to help students develop in a particular direction. For example, one student who was struggling to find her place at the institute and was uncertain about the course's expectations was asked to design the yearbook of the programme in that particular year. For the student, the making of the book – interviewing her fellow-students – was a way of researching the 'rules'/structure of the programme. The assignment helped her define her own position within the institute and she graduated with an outstanding collaborative project.

In the conversations the committee had with students and alumni, it became clear that the students are quite satisfied with the manner in which the programme coaches them during the course. The students learn to think for themselves, define their own directions and are supported throughout this process of self-discovery.

Intake

Each year, the department admits 8 to 12 students who show themselves to be capable of employing multiple relevant talents and of visually expressing themselves in an individualistic manner. These students are also selected for their engagement with social and political issues. The profile of the student the programme wishes to admit can be described in the following terms:

- Visual art ability
- Critical reflection
- Originality
- Social engagement
- Talent
- Inquisitiveness
- Initiative

- Responsibility

The ideal group of students is highly diverse, bringing together a range of perspectives, cultural backgrounds and talents. Some of the students admitted have only just finished a bachelor course in design or a related art discipline; others have travelled, followed other programmes or maintained their own design practice for several years. The skills and talents of the students are varied as well, including video-makers, researcher-designers and graphic designers, as well as cultural producers, curators and teachers. The programme strives to have an equal number of male and female students, and to have at least half of the students come from countries outside the Netherlands. The international group of students represents a variety of cultural, partly non-western, contexts.

Some students are scouted by (guest) instructors who have a practice in the professional field, although this does not mean that they have an advantage over the other applicants. Students are selected on the basis of the quality of work and professional dedication, and the admission committee chooses the students with the whole group in mind: each student is selected for what he or she might be able to contribute to an inspiring and productive group dynamic. The total group of students, first and second years together, amounts to around 15 to 20 people.

The admission is executed by a committee consisting of the head of the programme, two instructors and the coordinator. Each applicant is interviewed for quarter of an hour and questioned about his or her motivation, self-reflection, artistic abilities and goals, inquisitive nature and social-political engagement. The committee uses the portfolio of work and the submitted project plan to determine whether the student is qualified.

The evaluation committee is convinced that the programme selects qualified and talented students, and applauds its intention to forge a group out of students with different backgrounds, skills and nationalities.

Teaching staff

The permanent team consists of a department head, a coordinator, three permanent instructors and a media tutor/technical assistant. Guest instructors

are involved in a structural manner as lecturers and as supervisors or members of the jury for the final exams. The department head works with the team to determine the framework of the programme and the assignments. She is responsible for the course's content and management. She monitors group dynamics, initiates collective conversations on the state of affairs, supervises students individually on concrete assignments and invites guest lecturers.

The coordinator monitors the atmosphere in the department and is the first point of contact for internal and external parties. She handles office business and coordinates student activities and various projects. The instructors supervise the students on individual and joint projects. They stir things up, question students' choices, motivate them, think along with them, and provide them with important references. Collective meetings alternate with individual conversations, with each instructor using his or her own teaching methods. The media tutor assists students with technical issues and initiates relevant workshops. He is also responsible for the departments IT-network and hard- and software.

The permanent instructors are present one day a week and available for individual and collective meetings with the students. In total there are 25 instructor hours a week, which are always highly effective. The lecturers give the students something to work on or think about. All the permanent instructors are highly qualified and have their own practice in the field of design or art. They have initiated influential projects, most of which engage with the social-political dimensions of design.

Students and graduates indicated during the visit of the committee that with the arrival of a new head in 2010, the programme has become somewhat more structured and planned. Although the graduates who experienced the transition had to get used to this new approach, the present students appreciate the more hands-on method of the new head. She is there for individual coaching and monitors the group dynamic closely.

Guest instructors are invited on the basis of specific knowledge or expertise. They may be invited by the programme, but students are also expected and encouraged to submit names for the list of guest instructors. The choice of lecturer may relate to a particular topic the students are working on, or may address a more general issue of value for designers. The guest lecturers come from a wide array of disci-

plines and offer new perspectives to the field. Each guest instructor gives a lecture or workshop about his or her work and then has individual or collective conversations with the students about a specific project. So, for example, media critic Menno Grootveld was invited in 2011 for his knowledge of the theories of Slavoj Žižek; Anthropologist Filiep de Boeck, who specialised on the Congo, was invited in 2010, to respond to the Expo2020 project (organised by second years students) that took place in this country. In some cases guest instructors are invited to pull students out of fixed patterns. At present, one guest lecturer is involved on a more permanent basis. His speciality in digital media and programming has opened up new perspectives for the students on their profession.

The evaluation committee was impressed by the theoretical and practical expertise of the permanent instructors, as well as by the diversity of guest lecturers. The committee considers the integrity and commitment with which the instructors educate and support students in the programme to be an example for other Master courses: it is what makes the programme successful. The committee is of the opinion that the horizontal, non-hierarchical relations between instructors and students to be an excellent choice, a highly effective method in the development of the student's identity as a designer. Since this democratic approach is supplemented with a more critical stance when students do not seem to progress in their work, the committee qualifies the relation between students and team as excellent.

The committee would like to encourage the course to persist in involving guest lecturers of diverse backgrounds. Given the limited number of permanent tutors, it is of importance that the programme continues to invite lecturers with expertise not present in the team.

Facilities

The Sandberg Instituut is located in the Amsterdam's Zuidas district, on the Fred. Roeskestraat, the same

location as the Gerrit Rietveld Academie where the bachelor courses are taught. The three upper floors of the building (designed in 2005 by Benthem Crouwel Architects of the Gerrit Rietveld Academie) can be accessed 24 hours a day via a separate entrance. The Rietveld Academie and the Sandberg Instituut possess a large amount of workspace where students are able to employ a diverse range of materials and techniques during regular opening hours. The department invests in equipment needed for new techniques, many of them IT-related. An important principle is that every workspace is accessible to every student, from every department, whether it be

fashion, ceramics, glass, or video-editing. Students of the programme can partake in workshops for old or innovative techniques.

Next to these joint workspaces and workshops, the Sandberg Instituut provides its own workshops and facilities, such as a new media workshop. Computer-related equipment such as professional printing, video- and scanning machines are adjacent to the teaching rooms.

The committee is of the opinion that the horizontal, non-hierarchical relations between instructors and students to be an excellent choice, a highly effective method in the development of the student's identity as a designer.

Recent surveys of students and staff, as well as in the conversations with the committee, indicate that the amount of available space per student is limited. The Sandberg Instituut has difficulties offering all its students a spacious and attractive studio room. For this reason, the management team is preparing to expand the amount of space through a new construction at the current location of the Sandberg Instituut and Rietveld Academie. According to the current planning the new buildings will be ready by the beginning of the academic year 2013-2014.

At the moment of evaluation, students did not seem to be hindered by the relative shortage of working space. The team has improved the existing workspaces with input from the students, and most of them are nearly always present. During the tour around the building, the committee witnessed the shared room of the first year students. These students had initiated their own workspace project, building their own desks at the carpentry workshops of the Rietveld Academie.

3. Assessment and achieved learning outcomes

The programme has an adequate assessment system in place and demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Explanation: The level achieved is demonstrated by interim and final tests, final projects and the performance of graduates in actual practice or in post-graduate programmes. The tests and assessments are valid, reliable and transparent to the students.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee qualifies the assessment and achieved learning outcomes as **good**. The validity and reliability of the assessments is due to the vigorous, precise manner in which the progress and work of students is monitored and commented upon. The formal and informal assessments in the programme take the form of serious and invested discussions, and, in the case of formal assessments, are followed by an argued evaluation (report) by the tutors involved. The evaluation criteria are articulated in the regulations of the Sandberg Instituut and figure centrally during assessments. Although the relative openness of the programme can sometimes confuse first year students about the nature of the assessment criteria, the programme considers this confusion to be part of the learning process. Students and graduates the assessment committee spoke to, all confirm that their struggle with the 'rules' of the programme helped them to define and deepen their own professional identities. The committee thinks that the manner in which the programme assesses the students is in line with what the programme is trying to achieve. Students are made active and informed evaluators of themselves and their peers.

Students and alumni are positive about the manner in which the Master programme of Design prepares them for the professional field. Graduates are able to operate independently at a high level in their field of discipline. The external experts the committee spoke to indicate that the international design community acknowledges the graduates of the programme as qualified, socially engaged and theoretically informed designers. The final essays and graduation projects the evaluation committee reviewed demonstrate a theoretical commitment and social engagement as well. However, the political-critical thrust of some of the graduation projects was not always apparent in the concrete designs. The committee thinks that this has much to do with the programme's high ambitions to develop in-depth theoretical understanding of the design discourse, while aiming to design innovative, authentic work as well.

Valid

Like the programme itself, the criteria for evaluating the progress and level of the students are continuously reflected upon during course. The programme expects students to discover and develop stringent criteria of their own. Formal assessments take place at various fixed moments during the program. Each trimester of the programme ends with a formal evaluation that lasts two days.

On the first day of the formal assessments, each student spends approximately ten minutes giving a presentation on what he or she has done in the last term, the conceptual framework of the choices made and an outline his or her ambitions for the next term. The presentations are evaluated in a group discussion with the entire department who attends the whole day. At the end of the presentations, the instructors (the head of the department, tutors and the project coordinator) discuss the over-

all results of the term and the progress of each student individually. On the second day, the instructor team holds a personal meeting of approximately 15 minutes with each individual student. The student's work and reflection on his or her progress, his or her portfolio, the student's contribution to the collective events or projects serve as the basis for this conversation.

The actual assessment is based on all of the student's achievements and the student's overall attitude, participation and productiveness during the trimester. The assessment always relates to the students' individual ambitions, set out in their project plans. The overall conclusion of the meeting is drawn up in a rapport and kept in the student's file.

Formal and informal evaluations take the form of a dialogue between tutor, student and fellow students. The described competencies and final qualifications are the qualitative frames of reference for

these discussions – creativity, inquisitiveness, the ability to operationalize and communicate, the ability to grow, etc. Although the student must explain in what way he or she meets the required standards, the instructor is responsible for asking the right questions and guiding the discussion in the relevant direction. If a student does not seem to make progress or demonstrate adequate critical awareness, the instructors will change their tactic and clearly set out arguments why a project or work is not up to standard. If at the end of the year the team of instructors are doubtful about the quality of work of a particular student, they will advise the student apply for another study or look for a job. If the results turn out to be insufficient in the second year, students are warned that they will not be able to acquire their Master's degree if their graduation fails to meet the required criteria.

Reliable

The formal assessments are organised in such a way that they prepare the students for evaluations and criticism in the professional field. To be able to assess the development of the competencies in an objective and reliable way, the evaluation criteria have been formulated for each of the competencies in the Course and Examination Regulations of the Sandberg Instituut. The committee is of the opinion that these criteria are a satisfactory and objective translation of the intended learning outcomes.

The department adheres to the intersubjective nature of the evaluations. Various evaluators are involved both in the (informal) evaluation of projects, and the formal assessment at the end of the trimesters. In the case of projects, the guest instructor in question partakes in the evaluation as well.

The exam committee also plays a role in the calibration of the evaluation processes. It consists of the heads of each programme of the Sandberg Instituut, and is chaired by the director. The exam committee is of importance for the comparison of best practices within the institute, and is an instrument in the fine-tuning of the direction each Master is heading. If there are problems relating to assessments, or requests for exceptions, the exam committee is there to decide.

Transparent

The evaluation criteria, as described in the Course and Examination Regulations, are used as guidelines during the formal evaluations. However, especially in the first year, the openness of the programme can sometimes lead to confusion about the assessment criteria, particularly for those students who are used to following fixed programmes and accepting the evaluation criteria of their tutors.

A student satisfaction survey in 2011 indicated that first-year students had trouble identifying and relating to the evaluation criteria. Although the rating of the transparency was low, the department does not consider confusion to be a negative thing per se. Interviews with graduates reveal how each has struggled with the institute and its criteria in his or her own way, and how that struggle was an integral part of the growth in insight these graduates experienced during the subsequent trimesters. As one graduate put it: 'I experienced that they [the staff] value each student's skills but at the same time they are able to point out how one could improve.'

In discussions with the evaluation committee it became clear that the students on the whole were happy with the feedback and evaluations they received. Although evaluations can be 'tough' as one graduate put it, the assessment is always about the *work*, it is argued, objective and pushing the students in their own chosen direction.

The committee thinks that the relative openness of the evaluation criteria – with its potential for confusion – are in line with what the programme is trying to achieve. Evaluations are subject to serious and invested discussions and thus always retain evaluative power. Students are made active and informed evaluators of themselves and their peers, instead of passively awaiting the judgement of the tutors.

Achieved learning outcomes

Whether or not the student has acquired the required the final learning outcomes is assessed at graduation. The following components must be successfully completed in order to graduate from the Design Master's course:

- A self-initiated, self-formulated and – executed design project;

- A provocative essay between 1.500 and 3000 words;
- A public presentation explaining the degree project;
- An installation/presentation at the graduation show.

The programme expects the public presentation of the degree project to be of excellent quality: location, execution, and responses must meet a high standard. At the first-term evaluation in December in the second year, the students are expected to submit a concrete plan for their graduation and the subject of their graduation essay. In the last two trimesters students work intensively on their degree projects.

At the graduation show a committee of external critics is present. Although the programme instructors appoint these external evaluators, the students may suggest names. The external critics have not been involved in previous projects of students. This is a conscious decision of the course, in that they are convinced that a fresh response to the students' work will give the best discussion and result in unbiased, objective feedback. First year students' work is also included in the graduation show, ensuring a preliminary confrontation with time, place, public and deadlines. The team instructors of the programme discuss each student individually with the committee of experts, after which they give their final assessment. The team also discusses the overall quality and (international) position of the institute with committee of external critics on the basis of the whole graduation show. In this sense, the feedback of these critics also functions as yearly evaluation of the quality of the programme of Design as a whole.

Because of the strict selection process, dropouts and delayed graduations occur rarely. The course's high starting level, intensive personal supervision and the small scale enhance its success rate.

Students and alumni the evaluation committee spoke to, as well as the responses in the surveys, are without exception positive about the manner in which the Master programme of Design pre-

pares them for the professional field. They indicate that they have deepened their understanding of their professional identity at the Sandberg Instituut and have profited from its extensive network.

Graduates of the Sandberg Instituut are acknowledged by the international design community as well qualified, highly engaged and theoretically informed designers. They are able to obtain a position and operate independently at a high level in their field of discipline. Many can make a living from their design practices – through self-initiated projects, via assignments and collaborative projects. Many have received prizes, others have had their work bought by prestigious art institutes.

Sandberg is recognised as an institute with an international reputation by alumni, students and experts in the field. The external experts the committee spoke to indicate that Sandberg should be seen as 'the research and development department' of the design field. This is where new concepts are researched, redefined and given an unexpected twist.

The evaluation committee reviewed 17 final essays of past two academic years, and saw most of the products of the graduation presentations displayed at the Sandberg Instituut. The committee is of the opinion that the essays convey a high level of theoretical engagement and critical reflection on the profession of design. The results of some of the projects (posters, books, installations) did not always convey the critical-political thrust of the student's work in a transparent manner. Some work seemed to resemble the images and discourses it was critiquing, while other projects did seem to be an innovative renegotiation of design language. The committee thinks that this has much to do with the high ambitions of the programme – the desire to be theoretically engaged with design and visual art as well as the commitment to actually make innovative design work. The committee applauds the fact that the programme sets itself such a difficult challenge and is impressed with the programme's ability to empower its students in their discovery of their professional identities as designers.

Attachments

Attachment 1 Assessment committee

List of panel members and secretary

Name (including title(s))	Role (chair / member / student-member / secretary)	Expert in the field (yes / no)
1. Prof dr T.R.A. de Rijk	lid	ja
2. Dr. R. Stämpfli	lid	ja
3. Ir R.S. Kloosterman	voorzitter	neen
4. L. Van Speybroeck	studentlid	ja

III Secretary / Co-ordinator

Drs J.M. Batteau	Secretaris, gecertificeerd oktober 2011	
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IV Brief job descriptions for panel members

1	Professor Timo de Rijk is hoogleraar industrieel ontwerpen aan de TU Delft
2	Dr Regula Stämpfli is based in Brussels and works as a political philosopher and lecturer in Germany, France and Switzerland
3	Ir René S. Kloosterman is directeur van AeQui, evaluatiebureau voor het hoger onderwijs
4	Lieven Van Speybroeck is a graphic designer at Wesley Wolkman (Gent, Belgium); he plans to graduate from Piet Zwart Instituut (Rotterdam) as a M Media Design & Communication in July 2012

V List of expertise within the panel¹

Expertise	The expertise is demonstrated by:
a. Expertise regarding the developments within the discipline	Timo de Rijk teaches design history and design theory at the Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering, Delft University of Technology and is Premsela Professor Design Cultures at VU University, Amsterdam Regula Stämpfli is a member on various boards such as IFG-Ulm (as director), the Executive Committee of the Fachhochschulen Cologne, the Conseil d'éthique, the Women's Archives in Switzerland (from 1999-2011) and www.premsula.org (Dutch platform for design and fashion). She is also an regular Evaluator/Expert for the European Commission.
b. International expertise	Regula Stämpfli is a member on various boards such as IFG-Ulm (as director), the Executive Committee of the Fachhochschulen Cologne, the Conseil d'éthique, the Women's Archives in Switzerland (from 1999-2011) and www.premsula.org (Dutch platform for design and fashion). She is also an regular Evaluator/Expert for the European Commission. Lieven Van Speybroeck is a Belgian designer.
c. Practical expertise in the professional field relevant to the programme	Timo de Rijk produced a TV-programs on design history and he is a regular organiser of exhibitions. He is member of the art and design committee of the Dutch Raad voor Cultuur (Advisory Board of the Dutch Government). In 2006 he was convener of the international conference Design and Evolution. De Rijk is editor in chief of Morf. Magazine for Design and Dutch Design Yearbook.

¹ Note: the secretary is NOT a panel member.

	Lieven Van Speybroeck is a Belgian designer.
d. Experience in teaching and developing education at the relevant programme level and expertise regarding the educational format(s) practised by the programme	Timo de Rijk teaches design history and design theory at the Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering, Delft University of Technology and is Premsele Professor Design Cultures at VU University, Amsterdam. Until recently he was teaching at the master-programme/ Atelier/ Funlab, DesignAcademy Eindhoven. Regula Stämpfli is works as a lecturer in Germany, France and Switzerland (Design2Context, University of Berne, Swiss Journalist School, Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz, SIPB, Frauenseminar Bodensee, EHES Paris etc.) teaching in German, English and French.
e. Review or audit expertise	René Kloosterman is director of AeQui and chairs many assessment committees
f. Student-related expertise	Lieven Van Speybroeck studies at Piet Zwart Instituut (Willem de Kooning Academy, University Rotterdam) as a M Media Design & Communication since 2010.

Short résumés

Timo de Rijk studied art history at the University of Leyden, The Netherlands. He got his Phd in 1998 at Delft Technical University on the thesis *The Electrical House, design and acceptance of electrical domestic appliances in the Netherlands*. He has written a few major and several smaller publications on the history of design, i.a. on Art Deco in The Netherlands. He produced a TV-program on design history and he is a regular organiser of exhibitions. He is member of the art and design committee of the Dutch Raad voor Cultuur (Advisory Board of the Dutch Government). In 2006 he was convener of the international conference *Design and Evolution*. De Rijk is editor in chief of *Morf*. Magazine for Design and Dutch Design Yearbook. Timo de Rijk works as design historian at the Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering, Delft University of Technology and is Premsele Professor Design Cultures at VU University, Amsterdam.

2010-heden Bijzonder Hoogleraar Design Cultures, VU Amsterdam

2007-heden Universitair hoofddocent designgeschiedenis en designtheorie TU Delft, Faculteit Industrieel Ontwerpen

1998-2007 Universitair docent designgeschiedenis TU Delft, Faculteit Industrieel Ontwerpen

2001-2007 Bureau Design Research and Exhibitions, Rotterdam

2001-2006 Docent master-opleiding/ Atelier/ Funlab, DesignAcademy Eindhoven (voor Droog Design, i.s.m. onder andere Hella Jongerius, Dick van Hoff, Cynthia Hathaway a.o.)

1999 -2002 Projectleider Uralski project (tentoonstellingen, publicaties). Culturele uitwisseling Nederland – Rusland in opdracht van Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, HGIS-C fonds

1998 Onderzoeker Nederlands Communicatie Museum, Den Haag

1992-1998 Promotie-onderzoek TU Delft (afgerond)

1982-1988 Doctoraal diploma kunstgeschiedenis Universiteit Leiden

Regula Stämpfli

As one of the leading European intellectuals and one of the few women in digital technology and media, who combines design, philosophy and technological advances in her work, Dr. Regula Stämpfli participates in various institutions, foundations and institutions.

Dr. Regula Stämpfli is based in Brussels and works as a political philosopher and lecturer in Germany, France and Switzerland (Design2Context, University of Berne, Swiss Journalist School, Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz, SIPB, Frauenseminar Bodensee, EHESS Paris etc.) teaching in German, English and French. She is the author of many textbooks and various scientific articles dealing, among other issues, with democratic theory, European political decision making, women's history, design, political communications and political philosophy.

Dr. Stämpfli is a member on various boards such as IFG-Ulm (as director), the Executive Committee of the Fachhochschulen Cologne, the Conseil d'éthique, the Women's Archives in Switzerland (from 1999-2011) and www.premsele.org (dutch platform for design and fashion). Regula Staempfli is also an regular Evaluator/Expert for the European Commission.

The Swiss born and Brussels based Political Scientist is known in Germany and in Switzerland through her books, columns and outspoken contributions on TV, for the Radio and in the print media. She is a columnist for Radio1 in Zuerich, columnist at www.news.ch, columnist at blickamabend.ch, the Politics-Expert for Radio 24 in Zuerich, Media-Expert for www.kleinreport.ch, the German feminist magazine "Emma" and Columnist for "Sonntag" and "Leben&Glauben" etc see www.regulastaempfli.ch. Regula Staempfli is the mother of three underaged children.

René Kloosterman

Na zijn studie Technische Bedrijfskunde (TUE, 1991) heeft Kloosterman gewerkt voor het adviesbureau KPMG Consulting en sindsdien grote projecten uitgevoerd in binnen- en buitenland (Rusland, Kazachstan, Tsjechië, Curaçao). Sinds 1995 is hij actief als zelfstandig adviseur en interimmanager. Van 2003 tot 2007 was hij opzetter en directeur van Certiked VBI; sinds 2010 is hij directeur van evaluatiebureau AeQui. Sinds 2003 treedt Kloosterman frequent op in de rol van voorzitter van visitatiecommissies in HBO en WO. Hij was actief betrokken bij de opzet van fase 2 van het visitatiestelsel.

Lieven Van Speybroeck is a graphic designer at Wesley Wolkman (Gent, Belgium); he plans to graduate from Piet Zwart Instituut (Rotterdam) as a M Media Design & Communication in July 2012.

Attachment 2 Program of the assessment

Day 1: 21 March 2012

- 12.30 – 14.00 Lunch and internal meeting of the committee
- 14.00 – 14.45 Board and management
Tijmen van Grootheest
Jurgen Beys
Annelys de Vet
- 14.45 – 15.45 Showcases; tour of the building
- 15.45 – 16.30 Open consultations and documentation review
- 16.30 – 17.30 Representatives of the Professional field committee
Thomas Castro
Max Bruinsma
Astrid Vostermans
Hans Maarten van den Brink
- 17.30 Committee and management: preliminary findings

Day 2: 22 March 2012

- 9.30 – 10.00 Arrival of committee
- 10.00 – 10.30 Exam committee
Annelys de Vet
Jurgen Bey
Jaap Vinken
- 10.30 – 12.00 Teaching staff
Daniel van der Velden (video-message)
Rob Schröder
Nina Volkertsma
Annelys de Vet
Jonathen Puckey
- 12:00 – 13:00 Lunch and internal meeting of the committee
- 13.00 – 14.30 Students of year 1 and 2
Noor van Ekelon
Yuri Veerman
Stefan Schäfer
Hannes Bernard
Simone Niquille
Donna Verheijden

14.30 – 15.30	Aiwen Yin Alumni Anja Groten Pinar&Viola Katja Novitskova Dirk Vis
15:30 – 16:30	Additional research committee
16:30 – 16:45	Feedback findings and conclusions
16:45	Drinks

Attachment 3 Quantitative data

1. Data on intake, transfers and graduates

Cohort	Intake	Output after 2 yrs	Output after 3 yrs	Drop-out	% output after 2 yrs	% output after 3 yrs	% output >3 yrs
2005-06	9	5	1	3	55,6%	66,7%	0%
2006-07	6	6	n.a.	0	100%	0%	0%
2007-08	4	3	1	0	75%	100%	0%
2008-09	13	10.	n.a.	3	76,9%	0%	0%
2009-10	8	7	n.a.	1	87,5%	0%	0%

2. Teacher -student ratio achieved: 1,8 fte for 17 students (first and second years)

3. Qualifications teachers: 9 out of 17 have a master or a PhD.

4. Average amount of face-to-face instruction: 25 hours per week.

Attachment 4 Final qualifications

The competencies for the Master Design are formulated in following way:

1. Creative capacities: The Master creates his/her own authentic communicative work which is the result of his own artistic vision and stimulates his/her personal ambition to be a designer.
2. Research capacities: The Master develops new expert knowledge, insights and skills based on practical investigations.
3. Ability to reflect on oneself critically: The Master is able to reflect on his/her own work and that of others, to analyse, interpret and assess.
4. Capacity to grow and to renew: The Master continually develops and deepens his/her own professionalism.
5. Organisational skills: The Master is able to set up an inspiring and functional working situation for himself and others, and to sustain it.
6. Communication skills: The Master is able to present his or her artistic vision and to explain this to a specialist and non-specialist group of people.
7. Reflection on other social influences: The Master places his/her own professional practice in a broad, cultural and social context.
8. Ability to work with others: The Master is able to make his/her own independent contribution to a group product or process, as necessary, and stimulates the successful realisation of the product within the group process.

The Sandberg Instituut has formulated the following indicators for the level of Master;

The Master:

- Is able to make choices;
- Is individualistic;
- Gets noticed;
- Thinks critically from a background of craftsmanship, theoretical knowledge and an understanding of research;
- Engages with social developments
- Approaches his/her profession from a clearly formulated position in the world;
- Is able to chart an individualistic course within a complex field
- Is able to maintain a career that is professionally and artistically successful according to their defensible criteria;
- Is able to attain a position in a network and make use of it to further their professional practice;
- Is able to join in discussions around constantly changing boundaries and the meaning of design, culture, audience, success and talent;
- Is able to take the lead in collaborative situations in order to realise a joint goal, listen well, and give space to others;
- Is able to connect the unique and progressive aspects of their ideas with the reception of their work
- Can make effective statements to colleagues and others involved in the field as well as toward a lay public; in short, position themselves as ambassadors of the design profession;
- Is innovative, working at the vanguard of their field and deliberately assuming the role of pioneers, i.e., helping to develop the field and the way people think about it, an activity that has repercussions in society.

Attachment 5 Overview of the programme

First year:

Trimester	Activity	Participation	Integrated assessment per trimester
1	Self-initiated projects; Emphasis on collaborative projects and assignments.	Individual and group	20 ECTS
2	Self-initiated projects; Emphasis on projects and assignments of the department (+institute).	Individual and group	20 ECTS
3	Emphasis on self-initiated projects; Projects and assignments department (+institute).	Individual and group	20 ECTS

Second year:

Trimester	Activity	Participation	Integrated assessment per trimester
1	Emphasis on final thesis; Self-initiated projects; Projects department (+institute).	Individual and group	20 ECTS
2	Emphasis on final thesis and self-initiated projects (graduation project); Projects and assignments of the department (+institute).	Individual and group	20 ECTS
3	Emphasis on self-initiated projects (graduation);	Individual	20 ECTS

Attachment 6 Documents

- Critical reflection (parts 1 -3);
- CV of staff, tutors and guest teachers (part 2);
- Overview of extended network of the Master (part 2);
- Overview and evaluations (interviews) of graduates (2009, 2010, 2011) of the Master (part 2);
- Press releases on the programme, graduates and alumni (part 3);
- Course and examination regulations Sandberg Instituut;
- Results student questionnaire 2009, 2010 and 2011;
- Programme overview (part 1);
- 'The Format: An inquiry', Design Department Yearbook 2009-2010;
- 'The Sandberg Prospectus', Design department Yearbook 2010-2011;
- Graduation projects of graduates 2010 and 2011;
- Theses of 15 students:

Cohort 2008-2010: 1017426, 1017427, 1017422, 1017430, 1017420, 1017431, 1017421, 1017424

Cohort 2009-2011: 1018394, 1018396, 1018398, 1018405, 1018198, 1018395, 1013913

Attachment 7 Declarations of independence

Declaration of independence and confidentiality

Prior to the assessment

The undersigned has been asked to assess the programme M Design of Sandberg Institute (Rietveld Academie) as a chair.

Hereby I certify to:

- not maintaining any (family) connections or ties of a personal nature or as a researcher/teacher, professional or consultant with the above institution, which could affect a fully independent judgement regarding the quality of the programme in either a positive or a negative sense
- not having maintained such connections or ties with the institution during the past five years
- observing strict confidentiality with regard to all that has come and will come to my notice in connection with the assessment, insofar such confidentiality can reasonably be claimed by the programme, the institution or NVAO
- being acquainted with the NVAO code of conduct

Signature:



Full name:

René S. Kloosterman

Place:

Amsterdam

Date:

21 maart 2012

Declaration of independence and confidentiality

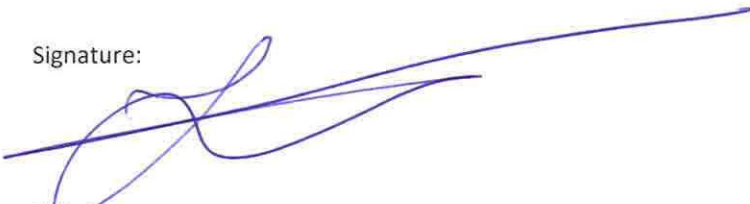
Prior to the assessment

The undersigned has been asked to assess the programme M Design of Sandberg Institute (Rietveld Academie) as a secretary.

Hereby I certify to:

- not maintaining any (family) connections or ties of a personal nature or as a researcher/teacher, professional or consultant with the above institution, which could affect a fully independent judgement regarding the quality of the programme in either a positive or a negative sense
- not having maintained such connections or ties with the institution during the past five years
- observing strict confidentiality with regard to all that has come and will come to my notice in connection with the assessment, insofar such confidentiality can reasonably be claimed by the programme, the institution or NVAO
- being acquainted with the NVAO code of conduct

Signature:



Full name:

J.M. Battean

Place:

Amsterdam

Date:

21 - 03 - 2012

Declaration of independence and confidentiality

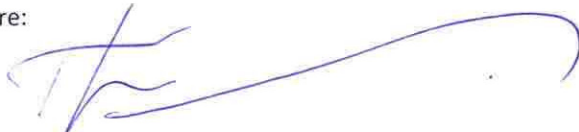
Prior to the assessment

The undersigned has been asked to assess the programme M Design of Sandberg Institute (Rietveld Academie) as an expert.

Hereby I certify to:

- not maintaining any (family) connections or ties of a personal nature or as a researcher/teacher, professional or consultant with the above institution, which could affect a fully independent judgement regarding the quality of the programme in either a positive or a negative sense
- not having maintained such connections or ties with the institution during the past five years
- observing strict confidentiality with regard to all that has come and will come to my notice in connection with the assessment, insofar such confidentiality can reasonably be claimed by the programme, the institution or NVAO
- being acquainted with the NVAO code of conduct

Signature:



Full name:

Timo R.A. de Rijk

Place:

Rotterdam

Date:

21 / 03 / 2012

Declaration of independence and confidentiality

Prior to the assessment

The undersigned has been asked to assess the programme M Design of Sandberg Institute (Rietveld Academie) as a student.

Hereby I certify to:

- not maintaining any (family) connections or ties of a personal nature or as a researcher/teacher, professional or consultant with the above institution, which could affect a fully independent judgement regarding the quality of the programme in either a positive or a negative sense
- not having maintained such connections or ties with the institution during the past five years
- observing strict confidentiality with regard to all that has come and will come to my notice in connection with the assessment, insofar such confidentiality can reasonably be claimed by the programme, the institution or NVAO
- being acquainted with the NVAO code of conduct

Signature:



Full name:

LIJVEN VAN SPEYBROECK

Place:

Amsterdam

Date:

21.03.2012

Declaration of independence and confidentiality

Prior to the assessment

The undersigned has been asked to assess the programme M Design of Sandberg Institute (Rietveld Academie) as an expert.

Hereby I certify to:

- not maintaining any (family) connections or ties of a personal nature or as a researcher/teacher, professional or consultant with the above institution, which could affect a fully independent judgement regarding the quality of the programme in either a positive or a negative sense
- not having maintained such connections or ties with the institution during the past five years
- observing strict confidentiality with regard to all that has come and will come to my notice in connection with the assessment, insofar such confidentiality can reasonably be claimed by the programme, the institution or NVAO
- being acquainted with the NVAO code of conduct

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'R. Staempfli'.

Full name:

Regula Staempfli

Place:

Amsterdam

Date:

21.3 2012