



**Master Institute of Visual Cultures
AKV|St.Joost
Avans University of Applied Sciences**

Master of Arts in Animation

Limited Study Programme Assessment

Summary

In January 2020 the study programme Master of Arts in Animation of AKV|St.Joost, Avans University of Applied Sciences was visited by an audit panel from NQA. The Master of Arts in Animation programme is a one year full-time programme. The programme is taught in English in 's-Hertogenbosch. The programme is attractive and of a good quality. It is offered by a dedicated programme team. Professionals from the creative industry contribute extensively to this one-year programme of an intensive nature. The learning environment is inviting and challenging with a good balance of animation, professional practice and research. A pressure cooker is created in which students from diverse backgrounds learn with each other and from each other. There is room for independent self-directed development in animation. This is combined with appropriate positioning in the professional field of animation. The programme has become well positioned in the animation industry and gives a valued contribution to the diverse and innovative domain of Animation.

The programme **meets** the generic quality for **standard 1: Intended learning outcomes**. The programme's main aim is to develop the individual creative potential of students in animation. The intended learning outcomes are based on the nationwide agreed competencies for Master programmes in Art and Design. The programme has translated these competencies into four integral learning tracks according to the multidisciplinary and integral educational approach. The animation industry is closely involved in the programme. This underlines the professional orientation of this Master programme. The animation domain is innovative and rapidly developing and the programme is well directed towards these developments. The programme is also well connected to the professional field in the region and clearly contributes to the animation industry.

The programme **meets** the generic quality for **standard 2: Teaching - Learning Environment**. The intake procedure for the programme is adequate. The interview and portfolio with assignments ensure appropriate selection. The information provided to applicants is also adequate; students are well informed before they enrol the programme. The curriculum framework is well designed, ambitious and appealing for students. Worthwhile mentioning is the Crash course in Animation dealing with the twelve principles of animation. Also the SOHO project in which students run a virtual studio and work on real-life animation assignments is valuable for the students. The project contributes to the students' professional practice. In the whole programme, the balance between self directed study and standard theoretical education is good.

The facilities support the study programme well. The studios practices create an inspiring educational environment. The studio arrangement is flexible and the studios are always accessible for students. The hard- and software available is adequate to support VR and AR animation. The technical support is extensive with workshops across film & photography, print, wood, ceramics and metal. The core team of tutors have their practices in the animation industry and are motivated to deliver professionals to the animation industry. Since the start ten years ago the programme has become well-known and has clearly positioned itself in the animation domain.

The programme **meets** the generic quality for **standard 3: Assessment**. The assessment policy enables the student's independent development and allows different learning experiences in animation. The assessment procedure is well designed, organised and executed. The assessment scheme consists of one integrated assessment per study unit. Until recently all the assessments were summative. This seemed to restrict the students in independent creative

development of practises. Therefore, from this academic year onwards the assessments at the end of each semester are summative and the three assessments during the semesters have become formative. The assessments are carefully executed by an internal assessment committee. Students are well informed and receive ample feedforward and feedback. The assessment quality assurance procedures function properly. The examination board is well positioned and contributes adequately to the assessment quality.

The programme **meets** the generic quality for **standard 4: Achieved Learning Outcomes**. The graduation products are relevant for the profile and professional orientation of the programme. The professional practice report is valuable for achieving a position in the animation industry. The research report gives an indication of the research on professional Master level. The assessment of the reports is correct and well substantiated; the explanations are clear and easy to understand. The research reports examined are all sufficient but the quality varies considerably. In some cases the research reports could be stronger connected to the final animation work. The examined animation work is of a sufficient level but the technical skills vary per student. According to the programme, storytelling in animation from a well formulated position is more important than demonstrating techniques on a high level. Graduates are satisfied with the programme; they feel well prepared for the professional practice. They experienced that they positioned themselves better as animators after an intense year of education focusing on professional positioning and on animation.

The audit panel assesses the quality of the Master programme Master of Arts in Animation of AKV|St.Joost, Avans University of Applied Sciences as **positive**. The programme meets the generic quality for all standards.

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Introduction

This audit panel report contains the assessment of the existing professional study programme Master of Arts in Animation of AKV|St.Joost, Avans University of Applied Sciences. The NQA audit panel that carried out the assessment was compiled by the NQA as commissioned by Avans University of Applied Sciences in consultation with the study programme. The NVAO approved the panel composition prior to the site visit.

The report describes the findings, considerations and conclusions of the panel. It also includes several recommendations for the study programme. The report has been drawn up in accordance with the *Assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of the Netherlands* of NVAO (September 2018) and the *NQA Guideline 2019 for a limited programme assessment*.

The site visit was conducted on 30 January 2020. The audit panel consisted of:

Drs. P.W. (Pim) Fernig (chairman, educational expert)

Dr. E. (Elke) Van Damme (educational and domain expert)

J.J.M. (Joris) Oprins, BA (domain expert)

W.S. (Willem) Stessens, BA (student member)

Ir. A.B.C. (Alfons) Hoitink auditor of the NQA, acted as secretary of the panel

Work method of the audit panel and course of procedure

The study programme Master of Arts in Animation is a unique programme and the only programme of the audit group. The study programme has submitted a self-evaluation with appendices. To assess the realized learning outcomes, the panel has inspected fifteen final graduation projects of students who recently graduated. These fifteen graduation projects have been selected from a list of alumni from the past two years.

The audit site visit with a panel made up of knowledgeable *peers* is central to the assessment. During a preliminary meeting held to prepare for the audit visit, panel members are instructed about NQA's working method and the NVAO framework. Provisional conclusions are also discussed. Findings are continually shared during the preliminary meeting and the actual audit visit. During the visit, the panel has spoken with various stakeholders of the study programme, including students, teachers (examiners), management and representatives of the work field. The panel also inspected available material and documents (see appendix 2). At the end of the site visit, information collected by the panel was processed to give an overall picture and reach a provisional, substantiated judgement. During a concluding oral feedback session, the panel chairman informed the study programme about important conclusions and the provisional judgment. The site visit was concluded with a development talk between the panel and representatives of the study programme. Students and staff of the study programme were given the option to contact the panel besides the site visit programme. This option was not used.

After the audit panel visit, a draft report was drawn up which was presented to the panel. Input by panel members was used to make a second draft which was submitted to the study programme to be checked for factual errors. The panel members took note of reactions by the study programme and where necessary, made alterations. Subsequently a definite version of the report

was adopted. The comprehensive (oral and written) information provided, allowed the panel to reach a well-deliberated judgement.

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

Utrecht, April 20, 2020

Panel chairman



Drs. P.W. (Pim) Fernig

Panel secretary



Ir. A.B.C. (Alfons) Hoitink

Outline of the study programme / Characteristic features

The Master of Arts in Animation is a one-year full-time professional Master programme. The programme started almost ten years ago as an accredited study programme. In the beginning the programme received short-term funding. From 2016 onwards, structural governmental funding has been granted and since then continuity of the programme has been secured. The programme is directed towards the realisation of everyone's individual creative potential as an animation professional. In this programme animation practices are combined with art & design activities and with research practices. The programme is unique in the Netherlands and is only offered by St. Joost School of Fine Art & Design (AKV|St.Joost) of Avans University of Applied Sciences.

The art academy AKV|St.Joost offers two Bachelor and two Master programmes. AKV|St.Joost has its own locations in two cities; 's-Hertogenbosch and Breda. Both locations are unique. In Breda the academy is housed in a former seminary. In 's-Hertogenbosch the academy has been housed in a spacious former Post NL Distribution Centre since 2017. In 2018 the academy established the Master Institute of Visual Cultures (MIVC) as the organisational structure for the two Master programmes. The Master of Arts in Animation is a programme with one pathway. The Master in Fine Art and Design consists of three different pathways: Visual Art and Post-Contemporary Practice Situated Design, Ecology Futures. This programme is research oriented and the duration of the programme is two years. In addition to the Bachelor and Master programmes, the academy has the ambition to develop a third cycle in higher education; a Professional Doctorate Programme.

The total student number studying at AKV|St.Joost is almost 1100 students. At the moment of the site visit around 1000 students study a Bachelor programme and almost 100 students a Master programme. The number of Master students increased in the last four years from 66 to almost 100 students. This is because of additional recruiting efforts and because of an increased intake for the Master of Arts in Animation. In September 2018 the limited enrolment increased from twenty to thirty students per year.

In the last review of 2015 the audit panel recommended to develop collaborative projects within the curriculum cycle and to expand the opening hours of the academy or release it completely. In standard two of this report the group SOHO project is explained and the provision of learning spaces that are accessible 24/7 is explained. It demonstrates that the study programme has acted on these recommendations. In the SOHO project students run an animation studio and work as a project team on real life projects in order to prepare them for the professional practice and to work on animation skills. The 24/7 access to learning spaces is also unique and fits with the nature of the professional field.

Basic data of the study programme

CROHO study programme name	Master Animatie
Orientation and level	Professional Master level
Degree	MA
Number of study credits	60
Location	's-Hertogenbosch
Language of instruction	English
CROHO registration number	49123

Assessment of NVAO-standards

Standard 1 Intended learning outcomes

The intended learning outcomes tie in with the level and orientation of the programme; they are geared to the expectations of the professional field, the discipline, and international requirements.

Conclusion

Based on the considerations mentioned below, the audit panel assesses that the programme **meets** the generic quality for standard 1.

The panel supports the programme's main aim to develop the individual creative potential of students in animation. The intended learning outcomes are based on the nationwide agreed competencies for Master programmes in Art and Design. The panel notes that these competencies are translated into four integral learning tracks. According to the panel this is in line with the multidisciplinary and integral educational approach. The panel sees close involvement of the animation industry. The programme is well connected with the professional field in the region. This underlines the professional orientation of this Master programme. The animation domain is innovative and rapidly developing. According to the panel the programme is well directed towards these developments and clearly contributes to the animation industry.

Substantiation

Ambition and vision

The panel supports the ambition of the study programme. The Master of Arts in Animation is practice oriented. It aims to develop the individual creative potential of students in animation and to focus on personal growth, expressed through the medium of animation. The educational approach is multidisciplinary because the animation practice is very diverse and the animation field is rapidly expanding towards new applications. Knowledge development is generated through exploring animation practises. The programme aims to facilitate and empower students to find their own unique animation vision through creativity and critical content production. Graduates are expected to substantiate design choices made during the development of their work. The programme's aim is to enable students to independently initiate and direct a design and production process. Furthermore, students are expected to innovate and develop the profession of animation through the developed knowledge, attitude, skills and their links with professional networks.

Competencies

The Master programme applies the nationwide learning outcomes and competencies for Master programmes in Art and Design Education from 2014. The learning outcomes have been formulated in close cooperation with other Master programmes in the Netherlands and with the professional work field. The panel concludes that competencies, indeed, meet the requirements set by the professional work field. The panel also concludes that the intended learning outcomes correspond with the level of a Master degree, since they are in line with the master's level (level

7) of the national quality framework. The total set agreed consists of the following seven competencies:

1. **Creative ability;** Students should be able to produce visual work based on research and clearly demonstrate their artistic vision. The visual work should have a meaning and be a product of the artist's or designer's personal ambition.
2. **Research ability;** Students should be able to research their own work and working methods through contemplation, analysis, problematisation, positioning and assessment and use this to develop research methods.
3. **Ability to grow and innovate;** Students should be able to continue to develop and deepen their own work and working methods, using this progress to bring about change in the profession, discipline, culture and society.
4. **Organisational ability;** Students should be able to create and sustain an inspiring, professional work situation.
5. **Communicative ability;** Students should be able to express their ideas, concepts, work, working methods, motives, reasoning and research conclusions for professionals and the audience within and outside their discipline.
6. **Field orientation;** Students should be able to actively and critically change the context of their work, working methods and research.
7. **Collaborative ability;** Students should be able to initiate collaboration and contribute actively and independently to creating an artistic product or process.

In line with the integrated approach, the programme formulated four learning tracks. The programme aims to develop the competencies in an integrated manner according to these learning tracks. The following table demonstrates the relation between the learning tracks and the eight competencies of the programme.

Learning tracks	Competencies						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Design & Storytelling	X	X	X				
Producing				X	X		X
Positioning & Research		X	X			X	
Professional Practice			X	X	X	X	X

Throughout the programme, for each study unit, the programme has defined learning goals and assessment criteria per learning track, with increasing complexity. According to the panel, this demonstrates that students gradually develop the competencies in an integrated manner to the final qualification levels.

Connection to the animation industry

The panel concludes that the programme is well connected to the animation industry. The studio practice tutors are well known leaders in the animation domain and closely connected to the creative industry sector. They are all part-time contracted for a maximum of 0.4 full-time employment. The tutors offer their network to the students who are requested to develop professional networks. The panel notes that graduates stay connected and regularly contribute to the programme as guest lecturers. Therefore, the panel is confident that the intended learning outcomes match the needs of the industry. The programme intends to establish an Annual External Review Committee. The panel endorses this intention, since it can contribute to the strategic development of the programme and enhance the connection to the animation industry even further.

Standard 2 Teaching – Learning Environment

The curriculum, the teaching-learning environment and the quality of the teaching staff enable the incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Conclusion

Based on the considerations mentioned below, the audit panel assesses that the programme **meets** the generic quality for standard 2.

The panel notes that the intake procedure is adequate. The interview and the portfolio with assignments ensure appropriate selection. The information provided to applicants is also adequate; students are well informed before they enrol the programme. The curriculum framework is well designed, ambitious and appealing for students. The panel is impressed by the crash course in animation dealing with the twelve principles of animation. In the SOHO project students run a virtual studio and work on real-life animation assignments. The project contributes to the students' professional practice. The balance between self-directed study and standard theoretical education is good.

The facilities support the study programme well. The studios practices create an inspiring educational environment. The studio arrangement is flexible and the studios are always accessible for students. The hard- and software available is adequate to support VR and AR animation. The technical support is extensive with workshops across film & photography, print, wood, ceramics and metal. The core team of tutors is active in the animation industry and is motivated to deliver innovative professionals to the animation industry. The panel acknowledges that the programme has become well known in the creative industry. It relies less on the inspiring individual founding tutors and has clearly positioned itself in the animation domain.

Substantiation

Admission

The panel notes that the admission to the programme is not limited to students with an animation background only. The programme focuses on the expanded field of animation and welcomes applicants with an art and design background. Applicants apply with a written personal statement, a research proposal and a portfolio. The programme team reviews applications and invite successful applicants for an interview with the programme team. A place is offered only to applicants who are likely to successfully complete the intense study programme. The number of applications is increasing; around fifty percent of the applicants are accepted. The programme team aims for a multidisciplinary group of students with different backgrounds and disciplines to stimulate peer learning in education.

The panel concludes that applicants are well-informed and that the admission procedure is executed adequately. In the past two study years 29 and 30 students were accepted. Just over fifty percent of the students were Dutch, of which four or five students entered from the Bachelor programme Animation of the academy. The international students are not only from European

countries but also from countries like Canada, USA and China. In general, the accepted students all complete the programme. The panel learned from the interviewed students that occasionally students drop out because of personal or health reasons. Students indicate that the programme is quite challenging and requires good motivation and sufficient attention.

Curriculum framework

The panel notes that the curriculum framework is well-structured and well-organised. The study programme takes twelve months and consists of two semesters starting early September and ending late August. In total there are five study periods with corresponding study units. The first four study units have a study load of fourteen credits and take ten weeks each. The final study unit has a study load of four credits and is delivered during the summer period.

The curriculum starts with the study unit *Worldbuilding & Visual Storytelling*. Students explore storytelling in animation. They perform desk and field research to learn about developments in the field of animation and relate the findings to their own artistic vision and skills. Students also gain more insight into their qualities as a professional and learn more about their personal branding. At the end of the study period students are evaluated on three components. Students pitch their personal project to be completed at the end of the next period. They hand in a research report reflecting on insights gained and containing research questions for the next period. They also hand in a personal template, in which their qualities and talents are made explicit.

In the second study unit *Animation Skills*, students start producing, and receive input on, different animation skills like visual storytelling and performance. They also learn how to set up a production pipeline for their personal project, continue with the selected research questions and work on their own *Brand Key*. Through the *Brand Key* they position themselves in the field of animation and explain elements such as their values, insights and targets. At the end of this study unit students hand in their *Brand Key*, an updated study plan and a handout of the presentation of the finished project.

At the beginning of the second semester, in the third study period, *Project SOHO* is running. In this project students acquire studio practice and learn to collaborate in certain roles with other students and clients. A team of students run their own virtual studio that is connected to different clients and work on animation assignments. Students are coached by studio tutors and professional practice tutors. They learn about the roles within a studio team, like the producer, the communicator, or the monitor of the pipeline etc. The activities and roles chosen should be connected as much as possible to the agreed study plan in the last period. At the end of the project the finished assignments are handed in to be assessed. This is accompanied by a reflection on the development process and on the individual role(s). Also the research proposal for the graduation period is handed in and evaluated.

The graduation project starts in the fourth study period. Students decide on a project that contributes to their learning goals and that positions them in the field of animation. Together with different tutors and teachers they develop the concept, the story, the visual direction, sound design and prepare for the production in the summer during the fifth study period. At the end of the fourth study period the status and planning of the graduation project, the outcome of the research and the outcome of the professional practices are assessed. Students complete the graduation project on their own in the last period during the summer. If needed tutors are

available for assistance on specific dates during the summer. The programme ends with a presentation and an assessment of the graduation project.

Learning tracks

The panel notes that in all study units the learning tracks are addressed. This enables students to develop their animation practise according to the end levels of the competencies. In the first learning track *Design & Storytelling* students develop their understanding and expertise in different genres of animation and produce animation work. Elements of visual storytelling like Character Design, Working Methods, Animation Principles and World Building are part of this learning track. These subjects are offered in workshops like Loops, Visual Development, Photo-bashing/Concept Art and Virtual Reality.

The second learning track *Producing* focuses on the production of independent studio projects. To achieve producing, the programme offers a variety of workshops in animation skills to support the development of visual content, like an Animation Crash course. In addition to visual content, workshops on sound design and performance are given. There are also workshops on how to set up a pipeline that works for each animation project.

Next to *Producing*, students are expected to develop self-directed practice-led research. The learning track *Positioning and Research* involves theoretical and contextual research in order to gain knowledge and to understand the practice of animation. In research classes and seminars students study developments in animation and learn to position themselves and their practice in relation to the field of animation.

The fourth learning track *Professional Practice* prepares students for sustainable creative practices after graduating. In this learning track the artistic position and professional profile are central in order to guide students successfully to their creative practices. The education of this track is mainly peer learning oriented. Students reflect on each other's work and provide feedback on oral and written presentations guided by tutors.

Learning and teaching methods.

The panel finds the didactical approach to be adequate for a professional Master programme. The programme offers fixed and flexible elements. Workshops, modules, research seminars and tutorials are offered next to self directed research and independent studio work. The programme team applies the flipped classroom as the main method of teaching. Rather than supplying information, information is discussed and processed. Students are required to undertake contextual research and to develop research questions. In this way the verbal and textual explanation of the students' personal style is trained. According to the programme team, this is vital for the successful development as an animation professional. Therefore, tutors adjust the learning and teaching methods each year according to the needs of the students.

During the audit visit, the panel inspected current assessment projects and representative educational materials of the five study units. The panel is impressed by the quality of the student products and notes that the programme is attractive and challenging for students. Especially the SOHO project, the one second animation assignments and crash course in basics of animation are appreciated. The literature used is versatile and rich. The programme team is creating an

excellent learning environment for the students. They put effort in building a team of students and in creating a safe environment for students to make peer learning possible.

Team Master of Animation

The programme team is relatively small and consists of three studio tutors, two professional practice tutors, two theory tutors and a study coach. The professional practice tutors and study coach also work for the other Master programme. The studio tutors are all well known active professionals from the animation industry. They all have a Master or Bachelor educational background. They offer their personal animation network to the students, like the weekly skype lunch. Students can request a skype meeting with a well known professional of the creative industry to discuss their ideas and animation work. Festivals and exhibitions like Playgrounds are open for the students. For specific subjects, alumni and industry leaders join the programme. In the last academic year ten alumni and six industry leaders contributed to specific subjects, like story boarding, sound design or Virtual Reality. The programme also has partnerships with the animation industry like with Postpanic (Amsterdam), Eyesupply (Eindhoven) and Submarine Channel (Amsterdam).

Facilities

The panel finds the facilities to be supportive to the teaching and learning environment. The facilities create an inspiring community for the almost one hundred students from both Master programmes. Students have access to their studios twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week. The physical workshops offered by the programme are diverse; from film and photography, to print, wood, ceramics and metal allowing innovations in animation. The hardware and software available in the studios is adequate and can be borrowed from the equipment loan facilities. The panel notes that the programme is flexible in offering specific facilities, like a studio for stop motion. The panel notes also that the audio facilities are limited and recommends improving the audio studio facilities, since audio plays an important role in animation.

Standard 3 Assessment

The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.

Conclusion

Based on the considerations mentioned below, the audit panel assesses that the programme **meets** the generic quality for standard 3.

The panel endorses the Master programme's assessment policy. The panel notes that the assessment policy enables the student's independent development and allows different learning experiences in animation. The panel is positive about the assessment procedure. Assessment is well designed, organised and executed. The panel agrees with the assessment scheme of one integrated assessment per study unit and with the recent adjustment of two summative and three formative assessments. Assessment is carefully executed by an internal assessment committee. Students are well informed and receive ample feedforward and feedback. The assessment quality assurance procedures are function properly. The examination board is well-positioned and contributes adequately to the assessment quality.

Substantiation

Assessment Policy

The assessment vision, ambition and policy are well documented in the Assessment Policy of the Master programme. According to this, assessment should enable students to develop independently on the basis of different learning experiences, challenges and attained knowledge and skills. Assessment should encourage students to take responsibility for their studies. Assessment should match the programme in terms of form, content and level. It should be conducted as effectively as possible. Examples of effectiveness are the digitalised procedures to minimise the hours tutors spend on administrating assessments. Furthermore, assessment should be feasible, reliable, valid and transparent. Therefore, assessment should be executed in teams to increase reliability. The programme aims to increase the professionalism and proficiency of the tutors as assessors.

Assessment Procedure

The assessment procedure is well designed and well executed. The assessments are based on students' products, like animation portfolios, presentations, project proposals, research reports, personal brand keys and animation projects. Students are informed about the assessment through the hand-out per unit of study. The panel sees a well-established routine of giving feedback and feedforward to students. Students experience the grading as transparent and well substantiated. For them the summative marking does not lead to unforeseen surprises. This is in line with the assessment policy indicating that the assessment procedure should be attainable, reliable, valid and transparent. The panel is positive about the use of digital assessment forms.

These forms with the additional feedforward or feedback can be shared via an online grading centre. The students' development in animation practice can be monitored by the tutors involved.

Until 2019-2020 all units of study were assessed summatively. Evaluations and discussions amongst tutors led to the insight that in some cases students were too focused on these summative assessments. This focus seemed to refrain students from developing independent creative practises. Therefore, the number of summative assessments is limited to the end of the first and of the second semester. The assessments at the end of period one, three and four are formative. Both the formative and summative assessments should indicate whether or not the learning goals are achieved at the desired level. In the Competency and Assessment Framework the criteria per learning track are explained for each period. According to the panel this framework ensures the gradual development towards the end levels of the competencies.

An internal assessment committee conducts the formative and summative assessments. This committee, consisting of two or more tutors, is chaired by the head of the programme or the study coach. The student's personal tutor is also present during the assessment. The tutors assess a presentation, study the products and interview the student. They determine the level of the work and formulate together the feedback or feedforward. During the final assessment an external expert is present to ensure the appropriate levels of the educational standards. The external expert does not assess the work of individual students, but provides a written judgement on the level of the graduation work as a whole. Also the degree to which the graduation work corresponds with current developments in the professional field is described. This judgement and further comments are used for the review process of the Master Studies Committee.

Quality Assurance of Assessment

The Master Study Committee (MSC) is responsible for the design, approval, monitoring and review of assessments of both Master programmes. According to the panel, the MSC functions well. The MSC demonstrates to be able to improve the assessment procedures, like the recent introduction of formative assessments. The basic qualification didactic competence training (BDB) is ongoing. Four members of the team have completed the training. Two members have completed the assessment training (BKE). At least one qualified member is part of the internal assessment committee to ensure adequate assessment execution. To further develop the professionalization and proficiency, tutors receive regular continued professional development training during study days.

The examination board is positioned well. It operates adequately and the members are well equipped in time and training to fulfil their quality assurance role. The examination board is installed for all the study programmes of the academy. It monitors assessment procedures of all these programmes through attending assessments and sampling written feedback and grades. The examination board is also well informed through student evaluations and findings of the external experts on the final assessments. These findings are discussed with the Head of Education during the ratification of results by the Examination board. This demonstrates that the examination board operates adequately and plays an important role in assessment quality assurance procedures.

Standard 4 Achieved Learning Outcomes

The programme demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

Conclusion

Based on the considerations mentioned below, the audit panel assesses that the programme **meets** the generic quality for standard 4.

The graduation products are relevant for the profile and professional orientation of the programme. The professional practice report is valuable for achieving a position in the animation industry. The research report gives an indication of the research on the professional Master level. The assessment of the reports is correct and well substantiated; the explanations are clear and easy to understand. The research reports examined are all sufficient but the quality varies considerably. According to the panel the connection of the research project to the final animation work could be stronger for some of the examined graduation projects. The examined animation work is of a sufficient level but the technical animation skills vary per student. The panel agrees with the vision of the programme that storytelling in animation from a well formulated position is of more importance than demonstrating techniques on a high level. Graduates are satisfied with the programme; they feel well prepared for the professional practice. They experienced that they positioned themselves better as animator after an intense year of education focusing on animation and on professional positioning.

Substantiation

Graduation procedure

The panel notes that the graduation procedure to be well-designed and well-executed. In the graduation project students demonstrate that they have acquired the insight, skills and techniques needed to make the appropriate decisions on aspects like scope and type in animation. The graduation project has two phases; a pre-production & production phase in period 4 and a production phase in period 5. During these two phases students work on several products. The products related to the learning tracks Positioning & Research and Professional Practice are assessed at the end of period 4. Students work on products, such as a professional practice report and a research report. In the professional practice report students position themselves as animator via products like their personal brand key, their network map or a lean canvas analysis on their own position as an animator. In the research report, students cover a theory or topic of their field of interest in relation to the animation practice. The aim of their research is to contribute to the professional field of animation. The insights gained from the professional practice and the research project is combined in the final personal animation project. At the end of period 4 students are assessed on the pre-production phase. The assessment is related to the tracks Producing and Design & Storytelling. Both tracks are assessed again after completion of the animation project in period 5. After successful completion of the Master, graduates present their final projects as part of the graduation exhibition. This exhibition takes place at the Verkade Fabriek in 's-Hertogenbosch. The creative industry is invited for this exhibition as well as the clients of the SOHO project. For students, this is a valuable moment to expand their professional network.

Graduation products

The panel examined fifteen graduation projects; five projects from August 2018 and ten projects from August 2019. The student work consisted of a professional practice report and, if applicable, additional products, a research report and the final animation work. The panel concludes that the graduation products are relevant for the professional profile and reflect the Master level of this programme. The grading is correct and clearly motivated. The graduation products show that the intended learning outcomes are achieved and that students have defined a starting position for themselves as animation professionals.

The panel notes that the professional practice reports clearly contribute to the professional orientation of the Master programme and prepares students for their positioning in the professional domain. The quality of the examined research reports is sufficient but the level varies per student. The research reports cover topics such as Economic Storytelling, Interactive Animation as Learning Tool for Secondary Education, or the Value of Animation within the field of Speculative Design. Some reports reach the scientific Master level with the research well executed, well documented and with adequate referencing to the literature used. Other reports are more of a practical nature. Some are more or less a tutorial with little discussion, evaluation and limited referencing to literature. Also the connection of the research project to the final animation work could be stronger for some of the works.

The panel notes also variation in the level of animation techniques displayed in the final animation work. Some of the examined animations were of an excellent professional quality, others were not so strong and the applied techniques of a minimal level. This variation was discussed with the staff team during the audit visit. The tutors acknowledge that the technical animation skills vary. Students enter the programme with different backgrounds in animation. In the first semester the programme offers a crash course in animation to improve technical skills in animation. Students are accepted to the programme if the team is convinced they will be able to tell stories in animation that leads to involvement of the audience. For the programme, this is as important as the technical features of the animation. The panel agrees with this vision but recommends making the research more contributing to the self directed animation work. The final animation work could substantiate or demonstrate the findings of the research more.

Graduate performance

The panel notes that graduates are well prepared for the professional field. The panel sees that the programme offers students the opportunity to enter the professional field already before graduation. The SOHO project and the intensive contacts with the animation industry contribute to this preparation. The alumni interviewed appreciate the professional practice activities. They were guided by the programme towards the important festivals to build their professional network. After graduation they work as freelance animation professional or filmmaker. Mostly the animation activities are part time jobs. Some are full-time employed and work for a studio as a producer. The animation industry values the graduates for their new approaches. The industry likes to be involved to meet young animators with new ideas and want to be inspired by this Master programme offered by MIVC.

Final conclusion regarding the study programme

Assessments of the standards

The audit team comes to the following judgements with regard to the standards:

	Master of Arts in Animation
<i>Standaard 1 Intended learning results</i>	meets the standard
<i>Standaard 2 Teaching – learning environment</i>	meets the standard
<i>Standaard 3 Assessment</i>	meets the standard
<i>Standaard 4 Achieved learning results</i>	meets the standard

Considerations and conclusion

The study programme Master of Arts in Animation meets the basic quality norms of all standards in the assessment framework. The judgments have been weighed according to the NVAO rules for decision making. Based on the positive quality of the four standards assessed, the panel is positive in its final conclusion with regard to the study programme as a whole. The programme offers an inspiring learning environment. The curriculum framework is well-structured and well-organised. The professional and practice orientation of the programme offers opportunities for further development in animation and for positioning in the professional field of animation. The programme team is motivated to contribute to the animation industry by educating animation professionals. Like one of the tutors said; 'animation takes your life in order to bring new life into something that does not exist yet, it is therefore important to practise animation with passion'. The audit panel assesses the quality of the existing professional Master programme Master of Arts in Animation of AKV|St.Joost, Avans University of Applied Sciences as **positive**.

Recommendations

Standard 2

- The panel recommends improvement of the audio studio facilities for animation.

Standard 4

- The panel recommends making the research more contributing to the self directed animation work.

Part III

Appendices

1. Audit panel site visit programme

	Themes	Participants
8.30-8.45	Welcome	Dean of AKV St.Joost Head of Education MIVC Quality Advisor
8.45 - 9.15	Introductory presentation in the exhibition 'Future Thoughts'	Dean of AKV St.Joost Head of Education MIVC Studio Practice tutor affiliated Researcher CARADT
9.15 - 10.00	Material study and preparation	Review Panel
10.00 - 10.30 Exhibition teaching materials and assessment works	Tour of current assessment projects, representative educational materials. Discussion with students	5 Students study year 2019-2020
10.45- 11.15 Exhibition of final works	Discussion with alumni in the exhibition final graduation projects: "Future thoughts"	5 Alumni:
11.30 - 12.30	Discussion with tutors and tutors responsible for assessment of final graduation projects	Studio Practice tutor Theory tutor Professional Practice tutor Study coach External expert
12.45- 13.30	Lunch and internal discussion	Review Panel
13.30 - 14.15	Tour of specific facilities	2 students
14.30 - 15.15	Quality Assurance	Member Master Studies Committee (MSC) & affiliated Researcher CARADT Member Master Studies Committee (MSC) Student & chair Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) Educational Advisor Chair Examination Board Professional field representative of The Panics Representative professional field.
15.30 - 16.00	Programme management	Dean of AKV St.Joost Head of Education MIVC Assistant coordinator
16.00 - 16.45	Internal discussion	Review Panel
16.45 - 17.00	Feedback and preliminary results	Management, staff and students
17.00 -17.45	Development Consultation: Developing a two year MA in Animation	Dean of AKV St.Joost Head of Education MIVC Theory tutor Studio practice tutor

2. Inspected documents

Aanvraag macrodoelmatigheid Master Animatie AKV|St.Joost
Assessment Policy Master Animation 2018 – 2019
Education and Examination Regulations Master Animation 2019 – 2020
Extra information regarding Professional Orientation, Admission and Student Diversity
Graduates Master of Animation 2017 – 2018
Graduates Master of Animation 2018 – 2019
Handout Assessment Period 1 Master Animation 2018 – 2019
Handout Assessment Period 2 Master Animation 2018 – 2019
Handout Assessment Period 3 Master Animation 2018 – 2019
Handout Assessment Period 4 Master Animation 2018 – 2019
Handout Assessment Period 5 Master Animation 2018 – 2019
Ingezet personeel Master Institute of Visual Cultures
Master Animation Competency & Assessment matrix 2018 – 2019
Period 1 Worldbuilding 2018 2019
Period 2 Animation skills 2018 2019
Period 3 Project SOHO 2018 2019
Period 4 Master Animation Graduation 2018 2019
Period 5 Master Animation Graduation 2018 2019
Self Evaluation Report Master of Arts in Animation (December 2019)

Fifteen final graduation projects examined by the panel

Study year	number
2017-2018	5
2018-2019	10