



Master of Music & Master of Sonology

Royal Conservatoire The Hague

University of the Arts The Hague - The Netherlands

Assessment report

Experiment Institutional Accreditation with a Lighter Programme Accreditation

May 2021

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Administrative data

Administrative data regarding the programmes	
Nomenclature of the programmes in CROHO (Central Register of Higher Education Programmes)	Master Muziek – Master Sonologie
Orientation and level of the programmes	Hbo-master
Number of credits	120 ECTS
Length of the programmes	2 years
Graduate profiles and disciplines	<p>Master of Music</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Classical Music + instrument (Orchestra Master, Ensemble Academy, Ensemble Percussion), European Chamber Music Master (ECMAster), Jazz + instrument/vocals, Early Music + instrument, European Master of Early Music (EMEM), Organ, Vocal Studies: Classical Music, Early Music and Ensemble Singing, Conducting: Choral Conducting, Wind Band / Fanfare / Brass Band Conducting and National Master <p>Orchestral Conducting, Theory of Music, Composition, Instrumental and Vocal Learning & Teaching, Music Education according to the Kodály Concept, ArtScience, Art of Sound, New Audiences and Innovative Practice (NAIP)</p> <p>Master of Sonology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Sonology, Instruments & Interfaces and Audio Communication & Sonology
Location(s)	Royal Conservatoire The Hague and Leiden University (electives)
Mode(s) of study	Full-time
Language	English
CROHO registration number	44739 (Master Muziek) and 49104 (Master Sonologie)

Administrative data regarding the institution	
Name of the institution	Hogeschool der Kunsten Den Haag (University of the Arts The Hague), Faculteit Muziek en Dans – Koninklijk Conservatorium (Royal Conservatoire)
Status of the institution	Publicly funded institution providing higher education
Outcome of the Institutional Audit	Positive (2020)

The master's programmes and the home institution are set up according to the rules stipulated in the Dutch law for higher education and scientific research (WHW – Wet op het Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek). These rules regulate the funding, structure, admission and governance of Dutch higher education.

The University of the Arts The Hague is one of the institutions that have been specifically mentioned as specialised institutions for higher education in an annex of the law. The formal recognition of the institution and its programmes is based on the accreditation system as currently in place in The Netherlands. In 1990, the Royal Conservatoire merged with the Royal Academy of Art to form the University of the Arts The Hague. The two faculties jointly offer the ArtScience Interfaculty and the Interfaculty School for Young Talent.

Summary

The Master of Music and Master of Sonology programmes offered by the Royal Conservatoire, the faculty for music and dance of the University of the Arts The Hague in The Netherlands, were assessed by an independent review team of international peer-reviewers in the context of the 'Experiment Institutional Accreditation with a Lighter Programme Accreditation'. In this report, the review team presents its findings, judgements and conclusions in relation to the relevant standards.

Standard 1 (intended learning outcomes)

*In relation to standard 1, the review team scores both programmes as follows: the programmes **meet** the standard.*

The review team noted that the Royal Conservatoire has taken significant steps to improve the description of the intended learning outcomes of the Master of Music and Master of Sonology programmes and saw clear and well demonstrated progress in this area. The intended learning outcomes for both programmes and their disciplines¹ are clearly described. The intended learning outcomes are set out in ways that make explicit their relationship to the master's level and to the orientation of the disciplines, and they relate well to the overall goals of the programmes.

By explicitly linking the intended learning outcomes of the programmes to the European-level framework developed specifically for the higher music education sector by the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC), the Royal Conservatoire is able to ensure that the intended learning outcomes reflect international expectations within the music sector, both in terms of content and level.

The review team welcomes the pro-active approach adopted by the Royal Conservatoire to reach out to members of the profession with the aim to ensure the intended learning outcomes take into account the requirements of the profession. The review team noted such links with the profession are being strengthened in a variety of ways within both master's programmes.

The review team is convinced that the way in which the intended learning outcomes are currently described is fit for purpose and responds to the recommendation made by the panel at the time of the previous assessment procedure in 2012. However, the review team would now like to encourage the Royal Conservatoire to consider presenting the intended learning outcomes in a simpler fashion.

Standard 2 (teaching-learning environment)

In the context of the 'Experiment Institutional Accreditation with a Lighter Programme Accreditation', programmes are being reviewed in relation to NVAO standard 1 and standard 4 only. The institution is responsible for organising the assessment of standards 2 and 3 independently, without involvement from NVAO in the review process. For this reason, the present report does not include an analysis in relation to NVAO standard 2.

Standard 3 (student assessment)

In the context of the 'Experiment Institutional Accreditation with a Lighter Programme Accreditation', programmes are being reviewed in relation to NVAO standard 1 and standard 4 only. The institution is responsible for organising the assessment of standards 2 and 3 independently, without involvement from NVAO in the review process. For this reason, the present report does not include an analysis in relation to NVAO standard 3.

¹ In both master's programmes, a 'discipline' is a strand within the programme with its own intended learning outcomes and curriculum. A 'specialisation' is a specific additional component within the curriculum of a discipline.

Standard 4 (achieved learning outcomes)

*In relation to standard 4, the review team scores both programmes as follows: the programmes **meet** the standard.*

The review team noted that student achievement is explicitly monitored in terms of intended learning outcomes and considers this a strength. The linking of explicit learning outcomes to each course makes it clear which learning outcomes each student has achieved.

The review team would like to note that the general level of the final works is commendably high. Many of the final recitals which the review team was able to hear were performed to a high musical standard and were extremely well prepared. The representatives of professional organisations met by the review team during the visit confirmed the high level of the conservatoire's graduates.

The review team welcomes and encourages the plans of the Royal Conservatoire to strengthen the connection to its alumni community in order to keep track of their integration in the profession. Strengthening the ties with the alumni network through the recently established online platform will not only allow the master's programmes to get greater insight in the needs of young graduates and the changing demands of the music sector but will also facilitate the further optimisation of the educational provision of the master's programmes on a continuing basis.

The review team considers the involvement of external examiners from outside The Netherlands as good practice to ensure that the intended learning outcomes are also met at international level and endorses the efforts of the institution to continue comparing grades awarded by internal and external examiners in order to achieve appropriate grading.

Final conclusion

The review team is convinced that the Royal Conservatoire is absolutely committed to preparing students as fully as possible for the realities of the musical profession. Both the Master of Music and the Master of Sonology programmes facilitate the students' full immersion in professional practice. This ambition is not only shown in the rhetoric of the rationale of the programmes, but it is also translated into sets of detailed intended learning outcomes. Students' achievements in their final work and their successful integration into the music profession further demonstrate the relevance and the coherence of the master's programmes being offered by the Royal Conservatoire.

The learning outcomes of both master's programmes are appropriate to the master's level and are in line with the expectations of the music profession within Europe and more widely, on an international scale. The final works studied by the panel are relevant to the content of the programmes and allow students to demonstrate their achievement of the relevant learning outcomes. The review team is convinced that both the Master of Music and the Master of Sonology programmes meet NVAO standards 1 and 4. Consequently, the review team recommends the following weighted and substantiated final conclusion regarding the programmes: **positive**.

Introduction

About this report

This report serves as the assessment report for the Master of Music and Master of Sonology programmes offered by the Royal Conservatoire, the faculty for music and dance of the University of the Arts The Hague in The Netherlands. The assessment of the programmes was carried out by an independent review team of international peer-reviewers. The composition of the review team was approved by the Accreditation Organisation of The Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) prior to the assessment process. In this report, the review team presents its findings, judgements and conclusions.

Overview of the assessment process

The assessment followed a three-stage process:

- the Royal Conservatoire prepared a self-evaluation report and supporting documents, offering background information and self-critical insights about the two master's programmes under review;
- an international review team studied the self-evaluation report and materials, and carried out an online site visit before reaching a weighted and substantiated conclusion regarding the programmes;
- the review team produced the present assessment report.

More details about the composition of the review team, the list of supporting documents studied, the online site visit programme and the review methodology adopted by the review team can be found in annexes to this report.

The Royal Conservatoire

The Royal Conservatoire is a centre for education, research and production. The conservatoire presents itself as an institute that has been dedicated to excellence for decades, with internationally renowned musicians as teaching staff and where tradition and craft are inseparably linked to experimentation and innovation. The principal objective of the Royal Conservatoire is to train talented young musicians and dancers to the highest artistic and professional standards and provide them with the versatility they need to function in today's demanding, constantly changing and increasingly international professional environment.

Founded in 1826, the Royal Conservatoire is the oldest music academy in The Netherlands. Both being separate faculties, the Royal Conservatoire and the Royal Academy of Art together form the University of the Arts The Hague.

Experiment Institutional Accreditation with a Lighter Programme Accreditation

The University of the Arts The Hague passed an Institutional Audit in 2020. Institutions that have successfully completed the Institutional Audit have the opportunity to apply for participation in the 'Experiment Institutional Accreditation with a Lighter Programme Accreditation'. The experiment was set up by the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and is implemented by NVAO. The University of the Arts applied, and was permitted, to take part in the experiment.

Existing programmes offered by institutions that have passed an Institutional Audit are normally assessed with a limited framework featuring four NVAO standards.² In the context of the 'Experiment Institutional Accreditation with a Lighter Programme Accreditation', however, these programmes are being reviewed with a lighter framework: only the assessment in relation to standard 1 (Intended learning outcomes) and standard 4 (Achieved learning

² Existing programmes offered by institutions which have not completed the Institutional Audit are assessed with a more extensive framework featuring eleven NVAO standards. The extensive framework includes elements that are omitted in the limited framework, such as the relation of the programmes with institutional policies, services and facilities, the internal quality assurance system and quality culture.

outcomes) is presented to NVAO as part of the application for accreditation of the programmes. The institution is responsible for organising the assessment of standards 2 and 3 independently, without involvement from NVAO in the review process. For this reason, the present report does not include an analysis in relation to standards 2 (Teaching-learning environment) and 3 (Student assessment).

International context

Because of its international profile, the Royal Conservatoire expressed the wish not only to have the Master of Music and Master of Sonology programmes assessed on the basis of the relevant national frameworks, but also to receive feedback on the programmes based on the internationally recognised assessment framework of MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement. For this reason, the review team assessed the programmes both against NVAO standards 1 and 4 and the MusiQuE standards for programme review.

Since the MusiQuE standards exceed the scope of NVAO standards 1 and 4, the review team will present its findings in relation to the MusiQuE standards in a separate report. The report based on the MusiQuE standards will be made publicly available, in line with MusiQuE's policies and as required by the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).³ Since the MusiQuE standards have been mapped against the relevant NVAO standards, the topics addressed by NVAO standards 2 and 3 will be fully covered in this report.

Presentation of the master's programmes

The two master's programmes of the Royal Conservatoire under review contain 120 ECTS, equivalent to two years of study.⁴ In these two years, the programmes aim to offer an environment in which students can further develop their personal musical visions and ambitions.

The purpose of the Master of Music programme is not simply to provide a continuation of the bachelor programme with two more years of individual lessons, but to offer a study programme based on a holistic educational philosophy that will help the students to develop their own identity as reflective and entrepreneurial practitioners at a high artistic level in the music profession. In the master's programme, research and professional practice occupy a more pronounced position than in the bachelor's programme. While in the bachelor's programme students are prepared for professional practice, the master's programme aims to facilitate the students' full immersion and integration in professional practice. This integration is achieved through intensive cooperation with professional partners. To guide the students' development, the curriculum of the Master of Music programme is divided into three domains, including artistic development, research and professional integration. Students carry out a 'Master Project' in which these three domains are combined, helping students to find their place in future professional practice.

The Master of Sonology programme gives students the opportunity to immerse themselves deeply in an area related to their previous studies, making use of their own musical abilities, knowledge and insights. Most students enrolling in the Master of Sonology programme have a bachelor's degree from elsewhere, in areas such as composition of electronic and/or acoustic music, computer science, musicology, music perception, film studies, engineering or as a performing musician. In the master's programme, the students carry out an individual research project. The research projects are highly specific and specialized, but the new knowledge brought in being in the course of realising the project is always linked to the broader context of the field of electroacoustic music. The traditional areas covered in sonology such as studio composition, computer programming, sound research, digital signal processing, algorithmic composition and the theory of electronic music are still strongly represented in the

³ Reports based on the MusiQuE standards are published at www.musique-ge.eu/completed-reviews.

⁴ The third master's programme offered by the Royal Conservatoire, the Master of Opera at the Dutch National Opera Academy, is accredited in a separate procedure and is therefore not discussed in this report.

syllabus, but relatively new subjects such as live electronics, improvisation, field recording and the spatial aspects of sound have become at least as important.

In line with the ambition of the Royal Conservatoire to reflect the variety of artistic and professional contexts in its programmes, the Master of Music and Master of Sonology programmes embrace different graduate profiles. An overview of the graduate profiles which students are able to choose from to develop their own area of expertise is available in the table with administrative data for both programmes in the first pages of this report.

In addition to selecting a graduate profile of their choice, students can select electives to gain insights into specific musical subjects or to acquire additional practical skills, with a focus on relevant research literature and the use of different research methodologies. Students can choose from electives offered by the Royal Conservatoire but may also select a range of courses available at Leiden University. Since 2001, the University of the Arts The Hague and Leiden University have formed a partnership in the field of education and artistic research. The collaboration is embodied in the Academy of Creative and Performing Arts (ACPA), which is part of Leiden University's faculty of humanities.

Previous assessment procedure

The previous assessment procedure of the two master's programmes took place in 2012. The review team that carried out the assessment made several observations, including a recommendation for the Royal Conservatoire to take steps to optimise the description of learning objectives and to clarify their relationship between these and the overarching learning outcomes of the programmes. The developments in relation to the learning outcomes will be discussed under standard 1.

Current assessment procedure

The current assessment procedure takes place in a unique and innovative context, through participation in the 'Experiment Institutional Accreditation with a Lighter Programme Accreditation' and by combining national and international frameworks. The ambitious and experimental character of the procedure reflects the ambition of the Royal Conservatoire not only to improve its quality culture further still, but also to strive continually for the enhancement of its programmes in terms of international comparisons.

The current assessment procedure is taking place during the pandemic caused by the Covid-19 virus. In response to the lockdown and the restricting measures taken, the institution was urged to intensify forms of e-learning and to develop online assessment methods.⁵ In its self-evaluation report, the institution provided the review team with detailed information on how it has responded to the crisis situation and included reflections on how elements of digital teaching and learning are expected to remain sustainably embedded in the master's programmes in the future.⁶

The review team was most grateful to the Royal Conservatoire and all staff and students who contributed to the development of the self-evaluation report for preparing such clear and high-quality documentation, for the willingness to welcome the review team in a digital setting, and for engaging in sincere and open discussions with the review team, all amidst the uncertain times occasioned by the pandemic.

⁵ The institution gathered an overview of the information regarding the impact of the pandemic on the education for students, applicants and other stakeholders on a bilingual website (www.koncon.nl/corona).

⁶ NVAO asked review teams (in a communication circulated by email in February 2021) to have appropriate attention for the educational changes made in response to the pandemic in the context of NVAO standards 2 and 3. Since this report deals strictly with NVAO standard 1 and 4 only, it does not include an analysis of the review team on forms of digital learning and assessment introduced as a response to the pandemic. Elements relating to recent changes in the teaching and learning environment and assessment methods will be featured in the report based on the MusiQuE standards, which will be made publicly available.

Judgements by standard

1. Intended learning outcomes

Standard 1: 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.

The intended learning outcomes demonstrably describe the level of the programme (Associate Degree, Bachelors, or Masters) as defined in the Dutch Qualifications Framework, as well as its orientation (professional or academic). In addition, they tie in with the regional, national or international perspective of the requirements currently set by the professional field and the discipline with regard to the contents of the programme. Insofar as is applicable, the intended learning outcomes are in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations.

Rationale for the programmes

The rationale, the intended learning outcomes and the structure of both master's programmes embody the ambition to prepare students to function in the multifaceted world of artistic performance as it exists today. The programmes seek to equip students with the necessary tools effectively to navigate their individual paths to professional success as working professionals.

Recent developments in the educational provision

To enable students to develop themselves within their own preferred areas of interest, both programmes offer a set of different graduate profiles, indicated as 'disciplines'. In the Master of Music programme, some of the disciplines feature additional 'specialisations'.⁷ Since the previous assessment procedure in 2012, several developments have taken place in relation to these disciplines and specialisations in order to offer students educational provision appropriate to their own specific expertise and aspirations. The main changes are outlined below:

- The Master of Music has featured an 'Orchestra Master' specialisation, offered in cooperation with *The Hague Philharmonic*, in the 'Classical music + instrument' discipline since 2012. Recently, new specialisations were established in cooperation with other professional organisations. The specialisation 'Ensemble Academy' is organised in cooperation with a group of contemporary music ensembles and the specialisation 'Ensemble Percussion' is provided in close collaboration with *Slagwerk Den Haag*.
- A new discipline 'Ensemble Singing' was created within the Master of Music in collaboration with the *Netherlands Chamber Choir*.
- The art of sound department created an 'Art of Sound' discipline in the Master of Music.
- The thematic master's discipline 'aus LICHT' was implemented in the years 2017-2019 in cooperation with the *Holland Festival* and the *Dutch National Opera & Ballet*. This led to an internationally acclaimed performance of sections from Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Licht* cycle during the *Holland Festival* in 2019.⁸
- The master's specialisation 'Master in Artistic Research' (MAR) was transferred to the master's programme which is offered by the Royal Academy of Art of the University of the Arts The Hague, as the institution felt it was more compatible with the learning outcomes and profile of a master's programme in the field of fine arts.

⁷ In these master's programmes, a 'discipline' is a strand within the programme with its own intended learning outcomes and curriculum. A 'specialisation' is a specific additional component within the curriculum of a discipline.

⁸ *Aus LICHT* is a selection of key sections from Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Licht* cycle. From the twenty-nine hours of music, the production comprised fifteen hours performed over three days, reflecting the tonal universe of the original cycle.

- The master's specialisation 'T.I.M.E.' (This Is Music-theatre Education) was discontinued in 2018 due to a lack of compatibility with the objectives of the Master of Music programme and insufficient links to other disciplines in the programme.
- Two new joint European programmes were established as disciplines in the Master of Music programme: the 'European Chamber Music Master' (ECMAster) and the 'European Master for Early Music' (EMEM).
- In the Master of Sonology, a double degree 'Audio Communication & Sonology' was established in collaboration with the *Technische Universitat Berlin*.
- The discipline 'Instruments & Interfaces' in the Master of Sonology was offered in collaboration with the *Studio for Electro-Instrumental Music* (STEIM) in Amsterdam since 2011. Unfortunately, STEIM ceased to exist as of 1 January 2021. As a result, the discipline will be no longer offered to new candidates.
- From the 2021-2022 academic year, the departments of Classical Music, Early Music and Jazz will offer a specialisation entitled 'Complementary Subject' which will enable students to follow lessons in a second instrument.

Description of intended learning outcomes and their reference to international frameworks

The Royal Conservatoire made major efforts to improve the description of the intended learning outcomes of the Master of Music and Master of Sonology programmes and to clarify how they are embedded in the different disciplines and individual courses.

The intended learning outcomes are described with reference to international frameworks both in terms of content and level. The Royal Conservatoire is an institute with an explicit international orientation. It aims to place its programmes and their intended learning outcomes into an international context. Because of its international character, the institution made a strategic choice not to use the national framework of competence profiles for the description of the learning outcomes of its programmes, but rather to adhere to the relevant international qualifications frameworks.⁹ In this context, the Royal Conservatoire considers the European-level framework developed specifically for the higher music education sector by the *European Association of Conservatoires* (AEC) as the relevant tool to inform its learning outcomes.

The AEC Learning Outcomes are designed to support the music sector in implementing the Bologna Process reforms and aim to provide a shared understanding across European music higher education of what graduates will have achieved after completing their bachelor's, master's or doctoral studies. They have been developed through a careful consultation process involving higher music education institutions and other key stakeholders throughout Europe.¹⁰ The AEC Learning Outcomes are structured into three headings: practical (skills-based) outcomes, theoretical (knowledge-based) outcomes and generic outcomes. This threefold structure enables the expression of the three different aspects of the various areas of learning that are relevant to musicians (such as artistic expression, improvisation and verbal and written communication). The AEC Learning Outcomes are consistent with the structure of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Because of its compatibility with the EQF, the AEC Learning Outcomes are also fully compatible with the Dutch National Qualifications Framework (NLQF), which is directly linked to the EQF. The AEC Learning Outcomes are related to and defined by the same three levels as the Dublin Descriptors: 1st cycle (bachelor), 2nd cycle (master) and 3rd cycle (doctoral).¹¹

⁹ Institutions in The Netherlands are allowed to use international qualifications frameworks which fit their own needs and context, provided they can explain how and why they are being used, and how they are compatible with the Dutch National Qualifications Framework.

¹⁰ The Royal Conservatoire makes use of the 2017 version of the AEC Learning Outcomes, which is the most recently revised version.

¹¹ The Dublin Descriptors are a set of internationally recognised descriptors that define the level and the content of the three cycles in higher education in the European Higher Education Area.

The Royal Conservatoire has adapted the AEC Learning Outcomes to ensure an optimal fit with the content of each discipline in the two master's programmes. This has resulted in a stronger articulation of and an emphasis on certain learning outcomes in each discipline, reflecting the profile of the curriculum in question.

Consultation of professional stakeholders

Professional stakeholders are consulted regularly in order to check whether the intended learning outcomes of the two master's programmes meet the expectations of the professional sector. For this purpose, the Royal Conservatoire demonstrates a pro-active approach towards discussions and collaborations with the music profession. This approach consists of, firstly, a continual dialogue with the profession through so-called 'professional stakeholder meetings' and, secondly, through intensive projects organised in collaboration with ensembles and arts organisations as part of the curriculum.

The 'professional stakeholders meeting' with representatives of the professional community are regularly organised. In these meetings, the latest trends and ongoing needs in professional practice are discussed, as well as the relevance of the intended learning outcomes and the curricula. The departments responsible for the delivery of the various disciplines in the programmes coordinate these meetings. In previous years, the departments of Classical and Early Music, Art of Sound, Jazz, Vocal, and Music Education have been the main organisers of these stakeholder meetings for the Master of Music. A stakeholder meeting for the Master of Sonology programme took place in February 2021. Each of the professional stakeholder meetings results in a report, providing input for the enhancement of the programmes. The institution indicated that the meetings have proven to be highly interesting and relevant for the further development of the two master's programmes.

The other way in which the institutions checks if the intended learning outcomes are relevant for the professional sector, are the many formalised collaborations with professional ensembles and opportunities for students to engage with societal partners as part of disciplines, specialisations and individual courses. In addition to these formalised components of the curricula, the Royal Conservatoire also engages with various professional ensembles for short intensive projects. Students are actively encouraged to engage in activities organised by professional arts organisations and receive recognition for these activities in the form of credit points. They are also each assigned a professional integration coach who facilitates their contacts with the music sector.

In addition to this, the teachers themselves are active as professionals in the world of music, thus creating a natural and permanent dialogue with the requirements of the profession. Almost all teachers have part-time contracts and, in addition to being teachers in the programmes, are active as performers, composers, sound artists and researchers.

Reflection by the review team

The review team noted that the Royal Conservatoire has taken significant steps to improve the description of the intended learning outcomes of the Master of Music and Master of Sonology programmes and saw clear and well demonstrated progress in this area. The intended learning outcomes for both programmes and their disciplines are clearly stated in the curriculum handbooks. They are set out in ways that make explicit their relationship to the master's level and to the orientation of the disciplines, and they relate well to the overall goals of the programmes.

By explicitly linking the intended learning outcomes of the programmes to the AEC Learning Outcomes, the Royal Conservatoire is able to ensure that the intended learning outcomes reflect international expectations within the music sector, both in terms of content and level. The review team supports the institution's choice to connect the learning outcomes to the relevant frameworks in support of the international character and orientation of the programmes.

The review team welcomes the pro-active approach adopted by the Royal Conservatoire to reach out to members of the profession and noted an open and positive attitude towards activities organised in collaboration with professional stakeholders with the purpose of ensuring intended learning outcomes are in line with professional requirements. The review team noted that links with the profession are being strengthened in a variety of ways within both master's programmes. Regular meetings with professional stakeholders allow for discussion of the needs and recent developments in the sector and for adjustment of the intended learning outcomes and content of the programmes to their expectations. Active partnerships with a large number of professional ensembles, festivals, orchestras and similar organisations offer students the possibility of gaining valuable and stimulating experiences, facilitating their entry in the world of work.

The review team is convinced that the way in which the intended learning outcomes are currently described is fit for purpose and responds to the recommendation made by the panel at the time of the previous assessment procedure in 2012. However, the review team would now like to encourage the Royal Conservatoire to consider presenting the intended learning outcomes in a simpler fashion. The intended learning outcomes can be viewed as over-elaborate, and their high-detailed nature may diminish their purpose and 'memorability' for students and staff. Providing concise summaries (in addition to the current descriptions in the curriculum handbooks) of the intended learning outcomes which highlight their main goals and overarching ideas might help stakeholders of the programmes to better internalise their content and significance.

Judgement

On the basis of the information in the self-evaluation report, the additional documentation including appendixes and the meetings held during the site visit, the review team scores the programmes as follows in relation to standard 1.

Standard	Master of Music	Master of Sonology
Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes	Meets the standard	Meets the standard

2. Teaching-learning environment

Standard 2: The curriculum, the teaching-learning environment and the quality of the teaching staff enable the incoming students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

The intended learning outcomes have been adequately translated into educational objectives of (components of) the curriculum. The diversity of the students admitted is taken into account in this respect. The teachers have sufficient expertise in terms of both subject matter and teaching methods to teach the curriculum and provide appropriate guidance. The teaching-learning environment encourages students to play an active role in the design of their own learning process (student-centred approach). If the programme is taught in a language other than Dutch, the programme must justify its choice. This also applies if the programme bears a foreign language name. The teaching staff must have a sufficient command of the language in which they are teaching. Services and facilities are not assessed unless they have been set up specifically for the programme concerned.

In the context of the 'Experiment Institutional Accreditation with a Lighter Programme Accreditation', programmes are being reviewed in relation to standard 1 and standard 4 only.¹² The institution is responsible for organising the assessment of standards 2 and 3 independently, without involvement from NVAO in the review process. For this reason, the present report does not include an analysis in relation to standard 2.

3. Student assessment

Standard 3: The programme has an adequate system of student assessment in place.

The student assessments are valid, reliable and sufficiently independent. The requirements are transparent to the students. The quality of interim and final examinations is sufficiently safeguarded and meets the statutory quality standards. The tests support the students' own learning processes.

In the context of the 'Experiment Institutional Accreditation with a Lighter Programme Accreditation', programmes are being reviewed in relation to standard 1 and standard 4 only.¹³ The institution is responsible for organising the assessment of standards 2 and 3 independently, without involvement from NVAO in the review process. For this reason, the present report does not include an analysis in relation to standard 3.

¹² More information about the 'Experiment Institutional Accreditation with a Lighter Programme Accreditation' can be found in the introduction to this report.

¹³ More information about the 'Experiment Institutional Accreditation with a Lighter Programme Accreditation' can be found in the introduction to this report.

4. Achieved learning outcomes

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

The achievement of the intended learning outcomes is demonstrated by the results of tests, the final projects, and the performance of graduates in actual practice or in post-graduate programmes.

Achievement of intended learning outcomes

Student achievement is linked to and explicitly monitored in terms of the intended learning outcomes. Students obtain their degree once they have achieved all the intended learning outcomes by passing the required courses and gaining the necessary credits. The Exam Committee, which is responsible for the quality of all student assessment processes, checks whether the intended learning outcomes are achieved before the degree is awarded based on the information available in *Osiris*, the student progress tracking system used by the Royal Conservatoire.

Final works of graduating students

Before graduating, students in the Master of Music and Master of Sonology programmes are required to present two final works. Master of Music students publicly present their research exposition or thesis and demonstrate their artistic development in a final recital or presentation.¹⁴ Master of Sonology students hand in a thesis one month in advance of the presentation of their artistic work, after which the thesis and the presentations are discussed during a one-hour interview. The review team was provided with a selection of final works of graduates from both the Master of Music and Master of Sonology programmes in advance of the site visit. The review team was able to listen to recordings of a selection of final recitals, as well as additional information concerning the assessment process and the grading of the final works.¹⁵ The review team studied the final works of seventeen students from the Master of Music programme who graduated over the past two academic years, and the final works of fifteen students from the Master of Sonology programme who graduated over the past five academic years.¹⁶ The selection of final works represented an overall balance in the variety of disciplines offered in both master's programmes. In addition to the final works made available in advance, the review team members were offered the opportunity to observe several extra final recitals and assessment panel discussions immediately following the site visit.¹⁷ The impressions of the review team concerning the final works are described in the paragraph 'Reflection by the review team' further below.

Monitoring the performance of alumni in the profession

The Royal Conservatoire makes use of both quantitative and qualitative methods to monitor how the alumni of the master's programmes perform in the profession and further studies.

¹⁴ In the Master of Music, the disciplines 'Theory of Music', 'Instrumental and Vocal Learning & Teaching' and 'Music Education' according to the Kodály Concept' feature only a research presentation and no recital.

¹⁵ The institution chose not to include recordings of the final artistic presentations of Master of Sonology graduates because of the specific nature of the sonology presentations. Instead, it was agreed with the review team in advance that the review team member with expertise in the field of sonology would be invited to attend final presentations during a mini-festival on 23-24 June 2021. The review team member attending the event shared his observations afterwards, in order to support the reflections of the review team presented in this report.

¹⁶ In line with GDPR-related requirements, the details of the final works studied by the review team are not included in this report. The student numbers, the programme and discipline in which the students were enrolled and information on the grading of the final works are known to the Secretary of the review team.

¹⁷ Review team members were able to attend the extra final recitals and assessment panel discussions through livestream. The recitals took place live in the Royal Conservatoire. Observations on the extra final recitals were shared among the review team members in order to complement their reflections presented in this report.

The institution uses the information provided by the national 'HBO-Kunstenmonitor' (*Art Monitor*), a tool that surveys all graduates of Dutch higher arts education institutions one and a half years after their graduation. The survey statistics show that with regards to questions about their professional integration, alumni rated the Master of Music programme at the Royal Conservatoire higher than the national benchmark in 2019. The Royal Conservatoire has also recently implemented a dedicated online platform to strengthen the connection to its alumni community. This allows the institution to get additional insights into the progress, achievements, and subsequent employment of alumni of the programmes. Three major themes have been identified as key issues to be further explored in consultation with alumni of the programmes: lifelong learning, quality recruitment and professional preparation practice.

The institution invites external examiners from outside The Netherlands to the final presentations of students to assess whether the intended learning outcomes are also met at international level. This allows the institution to collect feedback on the level of graduating students from an 'outsider's perspective'. Feedback from the external examiners on the level at the moment of graduation is annually collected through a survey. Every two years, a comparison is made between the grades awarded by internal and external examiners at the final presentations.

'Critical friends' invited by the institution are also asked to comment on the level of graduating students.¹⁸ Critical friends have indicated that the level of graduates is very high and in line with the requirements of the discipline and the professional field. They describe the level of graduating students as 'internationally excellent', since the students not only have the required competencies, but they are also articulate, self-reflective and have a good understanding of the professional field. Professional stakeholders are also consulted on the performance of alumni in the professional stakeholder meetings and through daily contacts with partners who co-organise the various projects as part of the curricula of the programmes.

The self-evaluation report prepared by the Royal Conservatoire shows that Master of Music contains an extensive list of alumni from all disciplines and specialisations who have been able to make significant careers in the international music profession, as teaching staff in higher music education institutions or music academies across Europe, as founders of prestigious ensembles, as prize winners and as performing artists. The Royal Conservatoire itself has also been a base for the establishment of several ensembles that gained international reputations, especially in the fields of contemporary and early music. Alumni of the Master of Sonology are active as composers, performers, sound designers, computer programmers and educators. A number of them hold teaching positions at higher music education institutions, mainly in Western Europe. The Master of Sonology programme also serves as a solid preparation for doctoral research. The review team received details of ten alumni of the programme who have completed or have recently been admitted to, a doctoral programme. The representatives of professional organisations met by the review team during the visit confirmed the high level of the conservatoire's graduates.

Reflection by the review team

The review team noted that student achievement is explicitly monitored in terms of intended learning outcomes and considers this a strength. The linking of explicit learning outcomes to each course makes it clear which learning outcomes each master's student has achieved.

The review team saw a sufficient number of final works from graduates of both the Master of Music and the Master of Sonology programme. The review team did not encounter anomalies in the grading. In the Master of Music programme, however, the review team noticed a slight generosity in grading in the initial selection of final works made available by the institution. In order to enable the review team to give a balanced opinion on the satisfactory-unsatisfactory cutting scores, it requested the institution to provide additional final works that

¹⁸ The Royal Conservatoire uses the term 'critical friends' to refer to external peers whom the institution has selected to provide external perspectives and advice. For the Royal Conservatoire, a 'critical friend' is an external expert who is considered as an authority within the specific field of study of one of the disciplines in the master's programmes. Critical friends form a part of the external dimension of the internal quality assurance system of the institution.

received lower than average gradings. After consideration of these extra final works, the review team concluded that the overall grading of the final works in both the Master of Music and Master of Sonology programmes can be considered as fair.¹⁹ The review team did notice a certain disparity in the discourse substantiating the grading of final works across the various disciplines of the master's programmes²⁰. The review team would like to note that the general level of the final works is commendably high. Many of the final recitals which the review team was able to hear were performed to a high musical standard and were extremely well prepared.

While the self-evaluation report identifies a range of quantitative and qualitative methods currently used for monitoring the achievement of graduates, most of these methods do not appear to be providing precise information on the professional activities of the majority of students (in particular, non-European students who return to their country of origin after they complete their programme of study). The review team acknowledges the difficulties involved in obtaining such data but would like to encourage the institution to seek ways of collecting more fine-grained information. This may prove helpful to the institution in critically evaluating the achievement of students in the longer term.

It was clear to the review team that the institution is committed to intensifying its efforts to assess whether graduates meet the demands of the sector and whether the master's programmes are educating students who achieve high levels in their chosen professional fields. In this context, the review team welcomes and encourages the plans of the Royal Conservatoire to strengthen the connection to its alumni community in order to keep track of their integration in the profession. Strengthening the ties with the alumni network through the new online platform will not only allow both master's programmes to get greater insight in the needs of young graduates and the changing demands of the music sector, but will also facilitate the further optimisation of the educational provision of the master's programmes on a continual basis. It was clear to the review team that the institution does not intend to rely solely on positive feedback from graduates, but that there is a genuine willingness to investigate their satisfaction levels thoroughly and to respond to what is learnt as a result. The review team also supports the commitment of the programmes expressed in the self-evaluation report to seek ways of increasing the involvement of alumni in the delivery of certain parts of the programmes, in various roles and capacities.

The review team considers the involvement of external examiners from outside The Netherlands as good practice to ensure that the intended learning outcomes are also met at international level and endorses the efforts of the institution to continue comparing grades awarded by internal and external examiners in order to achieve appropriate grading.

Judgement

On the basis of the information in the self-evaluation report, the additional documentation including appendixes and the meetings held during the site visit, the review team scores the programmes as follows in relation to standard 4.

Standard	Master of Music	Master of Sonology
Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes	Meets the standard	Meets the standard

¹⁹ The institution made two additional final works from each master's programme available to the review team.

²⁰ The review team has included further comments about this issue in its report based on the assessment framework of MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement referred to in the introduction, covering NVAO Standards 2 and 3.

Final conclusion

The review team is convinced that the Royal Conservatoire is absolutely committed to preparing students as fully as possible for the realities of the musical profession. Both the Master of Music and the Master of Sonology programmes facilitate the students' full immersion in professional practice. This ambition is not only shown in the rhetoric of the rationale of the programmes, but it is also translated into sets of detailed intended learning outcomes. Students' achievements in their final work and their successful integration into the music profession further demonstrate the relevance and the coherence of the master's programmes being offered by the Royal Conservatoire.

The learning outcomes of both master's programmes are appropriate to the master's level and are in line with the expectations of the music profession within Europe and more widely, on an international scale. The final works studied by the panel are relevant to the content of the programmes and allow students to demonstrate their achievement of the relevant learning outcomes. The review team is convinced that both the Master of Music and the Master of Sonology programmes meet NVAO standards 1 and 4. Consequently, the review team recommends the following weighted and substantiated final conclusion regarding the programmes.

Final conclusion	Master of Music	Master of Sonology
The programmes meet all applicable standards.	Positive	Positive

Annexes

Annex 1. Overview of judgements by standard

The review team scores each standard as follows:

Standard	Master of Music	Master of Sonology
Standard 1. Intended learning outcomes	Meets the standard	Meets the standard
Standard 2. Teaching-learning environment	Not applicable	Not applicable
Standard 3. Student assessment	Not applicable	Not applicable
Standard 4. Achieved learning outcomes	Meets the standard	Meets the standard

The panel recommends the following weighted and substantiated final conclusion regarding the programmes:

Final conclusion	Master of Music	Master of Sonology
The programmes meet all applicable standards.	Positive	Positive

Annex 2. Review team composition

Name of panel member	Brief description
Dame Janet Ritterman (Chair)	Chancellor of Middlesex University London and Vice President, Royal College of Music, London
Mist Thorkelsdottir	Head of International Programs in the Performing Arts at the University of Southern California, Thornton School of Music
Jeffrey Sharkey	Principal of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow
Michael Harenberg	Head of Sound Arts studies at the Bern University of the Arts (Switzerland), lecturer, composer and researcher
Neil Wallace	Former programme director of De Doelen Concert Hall in Rotterdam, co-founder and director of the Big Idea Foundation, and founder and artistic director of the bi-annual international festival for innovation in choral music International Choral Biennale
Isabel González Delgado	Master student in music research at Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya, Barcelona
Secretary (certified by NVAO)	Jef Cox

All review team members and the Secretary signed a declaration of independence and confidentiality prior to the accreditation procedure. By signing the declaration, all review team members and the Secretary indicated that for at least five years, they have had no direct or indirect ties with the institution that would lead to (the semblance of) a conflict of interest and that, for the same time span, they did not perform any consultancy work for the benefit of the programmes to be assessed or in another context within the institution, whose results could be an object of the assessment. NVAO approved the composition of the review team in advance.

Annex 3. Overview of appendices studied by the review team

The following documents were provided to the review team as appendices to the self-evaluation report in advance of the site visit:

Appendices to the self-evaluation report	
A	<i>NVAO Netherlands, Assessment Framework for the higher education accreditation system of The Netherlands, September 2018</i>
B	<i>Mapping CF guidelines with MusiQuE - NVAO Standards 2021.03.15</i>
C	<i>Quality Culture KC 2020 and beyond</i>
D	<i>Handbook for a Critical Friend Review, 2019</i>
E	<i>Decision on Accreditation for the Master of Music (E1) and Master of Sonology programme 2012 (E2)</i>
F	<i>Curriculum Handbooks</i>
G	<i>Master of Music Handbook, 2020/21</i>
H	<i>Master Project Guidelines 2020-21</i>
I	<i>Faculty Plan Royal Conservatoire, 2019-2021</i>
J	<i>Internationalisation at the Royal Conservatoire: Status Report and Policy Objectives 2021-2024</i>
K	<i>Study Guide Royal Conservatoire 2020/21</i>
L	<i>Institutional Plan + Plan for Quality Agreements 2019-2024, University of the Arts The Hague</i>
M	<i>AEC Learning Outcomes 2017, Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC)</i>
N	<i>Master Electives Handbook 2020-21</i>
O	<i>Employability Statement KC 20-21</i>
P	<i>Critical Friends Analysis, 2016-2020</i>
Q	<i>Professional Stakeholders Meeting Sonology, 2021</i>
R	<i>Critical Friends reports and feedback reports</i>
S	<i>2017.10.26 Final Report MusiQuE Review KC Research Unit</i>
T	<i>Sonology Masters Guidelines 2020 21</i>
U	<i>The Artist as Teacher flyer 2020-2021</i>
V	<i>Master Project (Study) Plan Guidelines</i>
W	<i>Applications and enrolment numbers 2018-2021</i>
X	<i>Report External examiners final presentations 19-20</i>

Y	<i>List of prize winners</i>
Z	<i>Royal Conservatoire – Alumni Community Explained</i>
AA	<i>Report Stockhausen ‘aus Licht’</i>
AB	<i>Concert Season Brochure 2019-2020</i>

In addition to the above-mentioned documents, the review team was provided with a selection of final projects from graduates of both programmes. In line with GDPR-related requirements, information about the final projects (including the names of the graduates, their student numbers and other contextual information) has not been included in this report.

The review team made use of the opportunity indicated in the NVAO assessment framework to request additional documents and information to substantiate its judgements. The additional documentation provided by the programmes is not listed in the overview above.

Annex 4. Site visit schedule

Day 1 – Tuesday 25/05/2021			
Time CEST	Meeting	Participants	
9:30 - 10:30	Review team meeting		
10:30 - 12:00	Meeting 1: Welcome and meeting with the management of the institution & programmes	Welcome by Principal Opening video, including information on facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Principal · Vice-principal, Research Supervisor, Master Circle Leader · Head Institute of Sonology · Head of Master Research, Research Supervisor and Master Circle Leader · Lector 'Music, Education & Society', lecturer ACPA and Master Circle Leader · Head of Master Professional Integration, Head of NAIP programme, Course Leader 'Artist as Teacher' and member Council of Representatives · Head of Quality Culture 	
12:00 - 12:30	Review team meeting		
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch Break		
13:30 - 14:30	Meeting 2: Meeting with students	Group 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Student Vocal Studies · Student Vocal Studies · Student Classical Music · Student Classical Music · Student Jazz · Student Early Music · Student NAIP 	Group 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Student Sonology · Student Sonology · Student Art of Sound · Student Composition · Student Composition · Student Instrumental and Vocal Learning & Teaching
14:30 - 15:00	Review team meeting		
15:00 - 15:15	Break		
15:15 - 16:30	Meeting 3: Meeting with heads of departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Head of Early Music · Head of Classical Music and Master Circle Leader · Head of Jazz · Head of Vocal Studies · Head of Art of Sound and Master Circle Leader · Head Theory of Music, Research Supervisor and Master Circle Leader Master Kodaly · Head of Education · Head of Composition · Head of ArtScience 	
16:30 - 17:00	Break		
17:00 - 18:00	Review team meeting		

Day 2 – Wednesday 26/05/2021		
Time CEST	Meeting	Participants
13:00 - 14:00	Review team meeting	
14:00 - 15:15	Meeting 4: Meeting with teaching staff from the two programmes	<p>Group 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Teacher Sonology · Teacher Sonology, Group Lecturer and Research Supervisor · Teacher Composition, Group Lecturer and Research Supervisor · Teacher ArtScience · Teacher Theory of Music and Master Circle Leader Master Kodaly · Teacher Vocal Department, Research Supervisor, Course Leader 'Artist as Teacher' and Master Circle Leader <p>Group 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Guitar Teacher Classical Music Department, Research Supervisor and chair Exam Committee · Professional Integration Coach Classical Music · Traverso Teacher and Group Lecturer Early Music Department, Research Supervisor · Trumpet Teacher and Group Lecturer Early Music Department, Research Supervisor, Master Circle Leader · Teacher Vocal Department · Voice Teacher Jazz Department, Research Supervisor, Master Circle Leader and vice-chair Exam Committee · Drums Teacher Jazz Department and member Study Programme Committee
15:15 - 15:45	Review team meeting	
15:45 - 16:00	Break	
16:00 - 17:00	Meeting 5: Meeting with representatives of the profession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Representative Residentie Orkest · Representative Amare · Representative Nederlands Kammerkoor · Representative Holland Festival · Representative New European Ensemble · Representative Gaudeamus Festival
17:00 - 17:30	Review team meeting	
17:30 – 18:00	Break	
18:00 - 19:00	Meeting 6: Meeting with 3 Critical Friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Critical friend Classical Music in 2016 and 2019 · Critical friend Art of Sound in 2017 and 2020 · Critical friend Vocal Studies in 2019 and 2021
19:00 - 19:15	Break	
19.15 - 20.00	Review team meeting	

Day 3 – Thursday 27/05/2021	
Time CEST	Meeting
10:15 - 11:00	Review team meeting
11:00 - 11:30	Optional meeting for clarifications
11:30 - 12:30	Review team meeting
12:30 - 13:00	Break
13:00 - 14:00	Feedback session: presentation of the initial findings by the Review team
14:00 - 14:30	Review team meeting

In line with GDPR-related requirements, the names of individual participants to the meetings with the review team have been omitted in the site visit schedule. Their role in the institution or programmes or their affiliation with external organisations, however, has been retained.

All meetings took place online.

Annex 5. Review methodology adopted by the review team

Assessment framework

For the assessment of the programmes, the review team made use of the NVAO assessment framework for the 'Experiment Institutional Accreditation with a Lighter Programme Accreditation' (full title in Dutch: *Beoordeling opleiding met lichtere opleidingsaccreditatie - Experiment instellingsaccreditatie met lichtere opleidingsaccreditatie - Nadere uitwerking, februari 2019*). In this framework, the assessment standards to be used are mentioned, as well as the rules for the judgements by standard. The Secretary informed the review team about the details of this framework and pointed to the differences with the regular NVAO assessment framework for the higher education accreditation system of The Netherlands (full title in Dutch: *Beoordelingskader accreditatiestelsel hoger onderwijs Nederland, september 2018*) at the start of the procedure.

In the context of the 'Experiment Institutional Accreditation with a Lighter Programme Accreditation', programmes are being reviewed in relation to NVAO standard 1 and standard 4 only. The institution is responsible for organising the assessment of standards 2 and 3 independently, without involvement from NVAO in the review process. For this reason, the present report does not include an analysis in relation to NVAO standards 2 and 3.

Preparation by the review team

The Secretary and the Chair of the review team had intensive contact with MusiQuE about the preparation of the procedure, both by email and through online meetings, from January 2021 onwards. MusiQuE approached the entire review team with a comprehensive briefing about the details of the procedure in February 2021 and organized a first meeting of the review team in March 2021.

The self-evaluation report and appendices submitted by the programmes were made available to the review team on 8 April 2021. On the same day, MusiQuE provided the review team with instructions on how to study the documentation. Individual review team members were asked to analyse the materials by filling a self-evaluation report analysis template. MusiQuE collected the completed templates, collated the listed observations in an anonymised overview, and shared the overview with the entire review team in May 2021. In advance of the site visit, each review team member was also asked to study a selection of the final projects made available by the programmes. A division of the final projects among the review team members was agreed on between the Chair, the Secretary and MusiQuE.

The review team discussed the initial observations on the self-evaluation report, based on the overview shared by MusiQuE, and the final projects, during a preparatory meeting on 18 May 2021. Following this meeting, the review team decided to make use of the opportunity indicated in the NVAO assessment framework to request additional documents from the programmes. The review team also decided to raise the number of final projects to be examined in order to receive a selection of final projects with a more balanced division in scoring, so as to enable the review team to give its substantiated opinion on the satisfactory-unsatisfactory cutting scores in the grading of the final projects, and on the grading methods employed. The review team discussed the final projects in detail during a meeting on 24 May 2021.

Online site visit

The review team carried out a site visit from 25 until 27 May 2021. All meetings during the site visit took place online. In its operations during the site visit, the review team took into account the MusiQuE protocol for online procedures.

The site visit allowed the review team to verify its initial findings based on the analysis of the self-evaluation report and appendices, to formulate judgements in relation to NVAO standard 1 (intended learning outcomes) and 4 (achieved learning outcomes) and to reach a weighted and substantiated final conclusion regarding the

programmes. An overview of the meetings which took place during the site visit is available in annex 4 to this report. During the site visit, the review team split up for certain meetings as indicated in the site visit schedule. This allowed the review team to engage in in-depth discussions with relevant stakeholders of both programmes, reflecting the range of graduate profiles and disciplines. After each meeting, the review team held a private meeting to compare notes and to share impressions gained from the previous session. The review team presented its findings at the end of the site visit during a feedback session attended by representatives of the institution.

Judgements by standard and assessment rules

As stipulated in the NVAO assessment framework for the 'Experiment Institutional Accreditation with a Lighter Programme Accreditation', the review team formulated separate judgements concerning the applicable NVAO standards by indicating whether the programmes 'meet the standard' or 'do not meet the standard' (in Dutch: '*voldoet*' of '*voldoet niet*').

The review team subsequently expressed a final conclusion concerning the programmes. In line with the relevant assessment rules, the programmes can be scored 'positive' or 'negative' (in Dutch: '*positief*' or '*negatief*'). A final conclusion can only be 'positive' if the applicable standards have both been judged as 'meet the standard' (in Dutch: '*voldoet*').

Production of the report

The Secretary prepared a draft of the report following the site visit. The draft was checked by the Chair of the review team in July 2021 and was subsequently shared with the members of the review team. A version of the report approved by the review team was then sent to MusiQuE.

The MusiQuE office carried out a preliminary check of the report and coordinated the approval process by the Board of MusiQuE. The Board of MusiQuE reviewed the report to ensure its overall quality in August 2021.

The version of the report approved by the MusiQuE Board was presented to the institution for a factual accuracy check. Comments on factual accuracy which were communicated on behalf of the programmes were taken into account by the review team when finalising the report.

The final report was endorsed by the MusiQuE Board and subsequently submitted to the Royal Conservatoire The Hague in September 2021.

Development dialogue

The Royal Conservatoire arranged for a discussion to take place between the members of the review team and members of staff of the two programmes. The purpose of this discussion, described as a 'development dialogue', was to discuss potential improvements from a developmental perspective. The development dialogue will result in a separate document, to be produced in autumn 2021, that is not part of the application for accreditation.

Annex 6. List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full description
AEC	Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen
CROHO	Central Register of Higher Education Programmes
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
ESG	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
MusiQuE	Music Quality Enhancement
NVAO	Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie