CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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EVALUATION REPORT

STUDY FIELD

HISTORY AND THEORY OF ARTS

at LITHUANIAN ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND THEATRE

Expert panel:

1. **Prof. dr. Dana Arnold (team leader)** *academic,*

2. **Dr. Michael Fox,** *academic,*

3. **Lect. Hannu Apajalahti,** *academic,*

4. **Ms Monika Lipšic,** *representative of social partners,*

5. **Mr Justas Žemaitis,** *students' representative.*

Evaluation coordinator - *Ms Agnė Grigaitė*

Report language – English

Vilnius
2021

Study Field Data

Title of the study programme	Programme " Art Theory[1] "
State code	6211NX004
Type of studies	University cycle studies
Cycle of studies	Second cycle studies
Mode of study and duration (in years)	Full-time studies (2)
Credit volume	120
Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Master of Humanities
Language of instruction	Lithuanian
Minimum education required	Higher university education (Bachelor's Degree)
Registration date of the study programme	28-07-2005

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[1] This study programme consists of three specialisations: Ethnomusicology, Musicology, Theatreand Film Studies

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation of study fields is based on the Methodology of External Evaluation of Study Fields approved by the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC) 31 December 2019 Order No. V-149.

The evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions to constantly improve their study process and to inform the public about the quality of studies.

The evaluation process consists of the main following stages: *1) self-evaluation and self-evaluation report prepared by Higher Education Institution (hereafter – HEI); 2) visit of the review team at the higher education institution; 3) production of the evaluation report by the review team and its publication; 4) follow-up activities.*

On the basis of this external evaluation report of the study field SKVC takes a decision to accredit study field either for 7 years or for 3 years. If the field evaluation is negative then the study field is not accredited.

The study field and cycle is **accredited for 7 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as 'exceptional' (5 points), 'very good' (4 points) or 'good' (3 points).

The study field and cycle is **accredited for 3 years** if one of the evaluation areas was evaluated as 'satisfactory' (2 points).

The study field and cycle **is not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas was evaluated as 'unsatisfactory' (1 point).

1.2. THE REVIEW TEAM

The review team was assigned according to the Experts Selection Procedure (hereinafter referred to as the Procedure) as approved by the Director of Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education on 31 December 2019 Order No. V-149. The Review Visit to the HEI was conducted by the team on *10/12/2020.*

1. **Prof. dr. Dana Arnold (team leader)** *the University of East Anglia, Professor of Art History, United Kingdom.*
2. **Dr. Michael Fox,** *Limerick School of Art and Design, Senior Lecturer and Programme Co-ordinator Year One Art and Design Core Year, Ireland*
3. **Lect. Hannu Apajalahti,** *Sibelius Academy / University of the Arts Helsinki, Lecturer of Music Theory, Finland.*
4. **Ms Monika Lipšic,** *VIDEOGRAMS. International Kaunas Film Festival (artists' film festival), Program curator, Lithuania.*
5. **Mr Justas Žemaitis,** *student of Vilnius University, Master study programme Religious Studies, Lithuania.*

1.3. GENERAL INFORMATION

The documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by the SKVC. Along with the self-evaluation report and annexes, the following additional documents have been provided by the HEI before, during and/or after the site-visit:

No.	Name of the document
1.	"LITHUANIAN ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND THEATRE Study Field: HISTORY AND THEORY OF ART (N15) SELF-EVALUATION REPORT" (henceforth abbreviated as the SER)
2.	"Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (LMTA) Learning facilities and resources"
3.	Two additional examples of "Learning Agreement for studies" ("University of Helsinki" and "Lyon Conservatoire National Superieur Musique et Danse")
4.	An additional example of "Learning Agreement for traineeships" ("Art.eria Gallery")
5.	Examples of theses.

1.4. BACKGROUND OF STUDY FIELD/STUDY FIELD PLACE AND SIGNIFICANCE IN HEI

The Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (henceforth abbreviated as the LMTA or the Academy) is a public tertiary higher education institution founded in 1933. The founder of the Academy is the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania. The Academy is a specialised higher education institution that delivers studies in arts, as well as art history and theory. It trains professional music, theatre, film and dance artists and researchers. The Academy currently hosts about 1000 students in three study cycles. The Academy has three faculties, two of which are based in Vilnius, one in Klaipėda. In the European context, the size of the Academy as a stand-alone higher education art institution is average.

The mission of the Academy is to ensure sustainable development of art and art research, participate in the shaping of the national artistic education and cultural policy, foster spiritual harmony and national identity in society, educate the most artistically gifted young people into creative, proactive, entrepreneurial members of society who are open to Lithuania and the world.

The study field of History and Theory of Art consists of only one second cycle study programme, "Art Theory" (state code 6211NX004) (hereafter – programme). It is in the field of the humanities which comprises research in a number of art branches (fine arts, architecture, music, theatre, dance film and others). It is the only study programme in the

Academy that trains art historians and theorists. It aims to train them in an interdisciplinary context.

The study programme is a small one with only 10 enrolled students (2019) in total. It consists of three specialisations, formerly separate study programmes: Musicology, Ethnomusicology, and Theatre and Film Studies which were merged in 2019. This is the first evaluation of the programme in its current form.

The responsibilities in the delivery of the programme are multipolar. The programme specialisations are coordinated and their quality is monitored by the heads of respective departments: Ethnomusicology, Music Theory, Music History, Art History and Theory.

II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

History and Theory of Arts study field and **second cycle** at Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre is given **positive** evaluation.

Study field and cycle assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Study aims, outcomes and content	4
2.	Links between science (art) and study activities	4
3.	Student admission and support	4
4.	Studying, student performance and graduate employment	4
5.	Teaching staff	4
6.	Learning facilities and resources	4
7.	Study quality management and publicity	3
	Total:	**27**

*1 (unsatisfactory) - there are essential shortcomings that must be eliminated;

2 (satisfactory) - meets the established minimum requirements, needs improvement;

3 (good) - the field develops systematically, has distinctive features;

4 (very good) - the field is evaluated very well in the national and international context, without any deficiencies;

5 (exceptional) - the field is exceptionally good in the national and international context/environment.

III. STUDY FIELD ANALYSIS

3.1. STUDY AIMS, OUTCOMES AND CONTENT

Study aims, outcomes and content shall be assessed in accordance with the following indicators:

3.1.1. Evaluation of the conformity of the aims and outcomes of the field and cycle study programmes to the needs of the society and/or the labour market (not applicable to HEIs operating in exile conditions).

(1) Factual situation

The only study programme within the Study Field of History and Theory of Art at the LMTA is the second cycle programme "Art Theory". It consists of three specialisations, formerly separate study programmes: Musicology, Ethnomusicology, and Theatre and Film Studies. The programme aims to train musicologists, ethnomusicologists, theatre and film historians and theorists in an interdisciplinary context.

Professional activities of the graduates include research of art and cultural heritage as well as impact on art processes and management. Graduates of the programme may hold different positions in cultural and educational institutions, media, and other areas related to culture in the public, non-governmental or private sectors.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Based on the information provided in the SER, related documentation, and discussions with the staff and social partners the panel agrees that the rationale for the study field is adequate and the compliance with the needs of the society and the labour market is substantiated. Specialists educated in the programme are very much in demand and graduates of the programme gain good employability and their skills meet the needs of employers and social partners. During the discussions the panel was confirmed that the graduates are widely employed in cultural institutions and clearly meet needs of the society.

During the online meeting with alumni, employers and other social partners some remarks were raised concerning students' lack of training in communication and management skills as well as entrepreneurship skills.

3.1.2. Evaluation of the conformity of the field and cycle study programme aims and outcomes with the mission, objectives of activities and strategy of the HEI.

(1) Factual situation

The LMTA is a specialised higher education institution that delivers studies in arts and art history and theory. It trains professional artists and art researchers. Its mission is to ensure development of art and art research. The mission, vision, and strategic frame are clearly presented in the SER. They are strongly assimilated within the university community.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel fully agrees that the study field conforms very well with the mission, objectives of activities and strategy of the LMTA. The Academy is mainly focused on training professional artists. In the discussion with the senior management and members of the faculty administration, the panel was informed that the programme is important in the context of academia as a research dimension that can be added to artistic practice. The panel is in agreement with the conception that research of the arts is an organic part of a modern art university.

3.1.3. Evaluation of the compliance of the field and cycle study programme with legal requirements.

(1)   Factual situation

The study plan of the programme is presented in the SER and annexes. The MA Studies consists of 120 ECTS which is equal to 3200 study hours, 85 ECTS for study field, 5 ECTS for university specified or optional studies, 30 ECTS for final thesis, about 14% of the total contact teaching hours. Studies are outlined according to the Description of General Requirements for the Provision of Studies (hereafter - Description of General Study Requirements) approved by Order No. V-1168 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 30 December 2016 and the Descriptor of the Study Field of History and Theory of Art (hereafter – Descriptor of Study Field) approved by Order No V-825 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania of 23 July 2015. The SER and its annexes describe the principles of composition of study credits.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel agrees that the programme is compliant with the legal requirements and meets the standards.

3.1.4. Evaluation of compatibility of aims, learning outcomes, teaching/learning and assessment methods of the field and cycle study programmes.

(1)   Factual situation

Learning outcomes of the programme subjects are presented in the SER and its annexes. The aim of the study programme is to train highly-qualified researchers and theorists who are able to initiate and carry out various research and art projects, conduct scientific and/or applied research initiated by themselves.

Links between the aim, intended learning outcomes and study programme subjects/modules in the study programme are presented in the SER annex 3. Learning outcomes are divided in five different areas which include in total 19 learning outcomes.

An example how subject modules are linked to learning outcomes: "Knowledge and its application" is formulated as follows: "Graduates will be able to name and critically evaluate the patterns of a specific cultural (ethnic and professional) and artistic (music, theatre, cinema) phenomenon, period or problem, and relate them to the latest research results and theoretical assumptions." The learning outcomes are then linked to 16 subject modules out of which four are subjects for all specializations and others are courses of certain specializations. Most of the subject modules are linked to several learning outcomes. For example the subject module "Trends and Research Methodology of Ethnomusicology" is linked with 10 different learning outcomes. The subject module "Contemporary Theories of Art History and Theatre Studies" is linked with seven learning outcomes.

The teaching/learning methods of the study programme are described in the SER and its annex 1. They include lectures, seminars, practical training in groups, consultations and individual lectures. The assessment methods applied in the studies are described in the SER. They include e.g. active participation during classes, performance and presentation of practical tasks, and exams.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Taken into account that the programme consists of two rather different kinds of approaches to the arts (musicology/ethnomusicology and film studies), most of the learning outcomes documented in the annex 3 are quite general in nature. However, the panel is satisfied with the compatibility of general programme aims, learning outcomes, teaching/learning and assessment methods of the study programme.

The content of the subject modules are described on a very general level which may be seen also as a result of the interdisciplinary approach which is quite open-ended concept as such. The actual content of the study subjects could be more transparent. However, it came out during the online discussion with students that they were in general quite satisfied with the programme aims and contents of the study subjects, and how they are delivered. As one student put it: "Great opportunity for practitioners, looking at art history." The interdisciplinary approach was in general appreciated.

3.1.5. Evaluation of the totality of the field and cycle study programme subjects/modules, which ensures consistent development of competences of students.

(1) Factual situation

The SER gives sufficient detail for the study field. Consistency of the field study programme content is evaluated. Programme specialisation subjects and/or modules are interrelated, extend and supplement each other.

According to the SER, in the first year of studies, students study the subjects which provide them with professional knowledge based on the results of fundamental scientific and applied research. In the second year of studies, students study the subjects which expand, deepen and help to apply their knowledge and abilities in scientific and/or applied research. Studies are completed and achieved learning outcomes are consolidated in the Final Master's Thesis.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The programme offers students substantial selection of courses for development of their abilities to apply knowledge when conducting research.

The programme offers a wide range of interdisciplinary approaches which benefits the students' overall possibilities to widen their knowledge within the arts field in general.

From the documentation and discussions with staff, students, alumni, and social partners during the online visit, the panel is in agreement that the study programme ensures consistent development of student competencies.

3.1.6. Evaluation of opportunities for students to personalise the structure of field study programmes according to their personal learning objectives and intended learning outcomes.

(1) Factual situation

The programme offers three different areas for specialisation: musicology, ethnomusicology, and theatre and film studies. Students may also choose study subjects in the field of History and Theory of Art offered by Vilnius University and Vilnius Academy of Arts. LMTA has a wide range of international partners within art fields as well.

According to the SER, students in the Musicology specialisation are able to choose 5-credit field subjects from the Ethnomusicology and/or Theatre and Film Studies specialisations in the first and second semester. Thus students have an opportunity to individualise their studies through elective subjects and deepen their knowledge or provide them with the new knowledge and abilities.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The programme offers enough possibilities for students to specialise in certain subjects within their chosen field. Interdisciplinarity and the development of practice research ambitions are impressive and could be a means of developing the peripheral skills of students for the labour market.

The synergy between musicology/ethnomusicology and theatre/film studies may be problematic considering their rather different methodological backgrounds. However, because LMTA has a wide range of specialists in all these fields in other programmes, it can be seen as strength as well.

During the online discussion with the students, the panel noted that for some students the content of courses are too general and for others too specific. Widening the range of options and the general flexibility of student choices could help to meet the different needs, competencies and interests of students who join the programme from a range of backgrounds.

Students have plenty of possibilities to gain international experience by choosing periods of study abroad under exchange programmes.

3.1.7. Evaluation of compliance of final theses with the field and cycle requirements.

(1)   Factual situation

List of final theses are presented in the SER annex 2. The principles governing the preparation of students' final theses are set out in the Descriptor of the Procedure for Organisation of Final Theses Assessment approved by the Resolution of the Senate of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre. This document was made available to the Panel in English through a link in the SER.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

According to documentation, final theses are compliant with the field and cycle requirements. Subjects of research are closely related to the cultural and artistic life. The panel is satisfied that the final thesis is compliant with the requirements for the programme.

Recommendations for this evaluation area:

1.   To widen the range of options and the general flexibility of student choices, as this could help to meet the different needs, competencies and interests of students who join the programme from a wide range of backgrounds.

2.   The learning outcomes of the subject modules are described on a very general level. The Academy may develop the ways to articulate the learning outcomes and their links to actual content of the study subjects to enhance transparency.

3.2. LINKS BETWEEN SCIENCE (ART) AND STUDY ACTIVITIES

Links between science (art) and study activities shall be assessed in accordance with the following indicators:

3.2.1. Evaluation of the sufficiency of the science (applied science, art) activities implemented by the HEI for the field of research (art) related to the field of study.

(1)   Factual situation

Details of the research activities of staff members, their international quality and how these formed the curricula of the study field are presented in the SER and its annexes.

Results of the last 3 years of the annual evaluation of HEIs' Research and development (hereafter – R&D) and art activities and results of the last comparative expert evaluation of R&D activities are presented in the SER. According to the results of annual evaluation of R&D activities in higher education institutions, LMTA research in the field of History and Theory of Art has been ranked second among Lithuanian higher education institutions. Quality of scientific research and development was seen strong on the national level with limited international recognition.

According to the SER, most LMTA researchers are scholars of musicology (music history, theory, ethnomusicology), theatre and film studies in the field of History and Theory of Art. Four out of five scientific research areas in the Academy are related to the research field of History and Theory of Art. Three most significant works of research of the teaching staff completed in five years are listed in the annex of the SER.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel is convinced that the quality of research activities is on the appropriate level and that they are related to the field studies.

3.2.2. Evaluation of the link between the content of studies and the latest developments in science, art and technology.

(1)   Factual situation

According to the SER, subjects in the programme Art Theory are linked with the recent achievements in science and art. The content of studies is updated on a regular basis at LMTA through the introduction of new scientific knowledge and innovations

The link between the content of the field study programme and the latest developments in science, arts and technology is substantiated in the SER.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Taken into account that the programme consists of three specialisations, formerly separate study programmes, Musicology, Ethnomusicology, and Theatre and Film Studies, it is rather challenging to link all the three specializations to the latest achievements of science, arts, and technology. LMTA's response to this problem is to focus on interdisciplinarity.

3.2.3. Evaluation of conditions for students to get involved in scientific (applied science, art) activities consistent with their study cycle.

(1)   Factual situation

The SER describes the activities of the students in scientific and applied activities. Participation in conferences and applied research activities is mandatory for all students of the programme. The requirements are presented in the document Descriptor of the Study Subject "Research Paper" to which the link was not provided, but a summary of its basic principles was included in the SER main text.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The programme is led by highly qualified, enthusiastic researchers, who are actively encouraging students to be involved in research activities. The interdisciplinary approach is evident and programme structure is supporting the development of students' research skills.

3.3. STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT

Student admission and support shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:

3.3.1. Evaluation of the suitability and publicity of student selection and admission criteria and process.

(1)   Factual situation

Admission to the LMTA is carried out in accordance with the regulations of the procedure provided by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports of the Republic of Lithuania.

Information about requirements for admission to the programme are provided at the Academy's website, education fairs held in different towns in Lithuania and abroad, and during Open Door Days organised by LMTA every spring. Social media is in use for advertising as well as high school visits.

According to the SER applicants to the Art Theory MA study programme are required to have a BA degree in Music, Theatre, Film Studies or History and Theory of Art. Graduates who are coming from previously mentioned study fields do not take part in entrance examinations. In this situation the score of the final thesis project is taken instead of entrance examination. If the applicant is coming from another study field, the applicant must submit documents proving their professional experience to study in the Art Theory programme. The maximum score of admission is 10 and it is based on the evaluation score of entrance

examination, the evaluation score of admission interview and the average score of learning outcomes achieved in the first cycle studies.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Based on the information provided in SER and during the meeting with staff responsible for writing SER, the panel is satisfied that the procedure of student selection and admission as well as criteria for the admission is well explained.

3.3.2. Evaluation of the procedure of recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and informal learning and its application.

(1)   Factual situation

The graduates who have completed their studies abroad and who have submitted the application to the selected study programme have to participate in the procedure of attestation of higher education diplomas. The applicants of the chosen study programme must apply to the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education for the assessment of competencies acquired abroad. According to the SER during the reporting period, "partial learning outcomes were recognised for three persons who participated in international mobility programmes". There were no cases of the recognition of prior and other learning.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Based on the information presented in the SER and the meetings, the view of the panel is that the qualification recognition procedures used on the programmes are transparent, clearly explained and compliant with both national and institutional regulations.

3.3.3. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring academic mobility of students.

(1)   Factual situation

The SER states that internationalisation, to be attractive for foreign students, teachers and researchers for studies and work at LMTA is among the key strategic priorities set out in the LMTA'2030 Strategy. However, in the last three years only one foreign student has been admitted.

The LMTA has a wide range of international partners within art fields. The number of students who have participated in international mobility is presented in the SER.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

According to the documentation and the information received during the discussions with different groups, there are problems in ensuring and increasing academic mobility. First

of all, there is a language barrier. The core studies at the LMTA are offered in Lithuanian only. On the other hand, outgoing LMTA students may have problems with their learning agreements concerning studies abroad, because there are few if any study programmes which completely fits the formal requirements of the LMTA programme. Taken into account that the learning outcomes of the study field are very general, there may not be too much unavoidable regulatory barriers in this area. Even in the current circumstances, there have been a substantial number of LMTA students who have participated in short-term mobility programmes.

According to the SER, the Academy has been holding English language courses for teachers and administrative staff. This may help to increase the incoming academic mobility in the future.

According to the SER, there are plans to deliver programme subjects which are currently offered as optional on-demand subjects (e.g. Cinema and Audiovisual Media, Cognitive Psychology of Music, Performance Theory and Practice) in English for students coming from exchange programmes to this and other study programmes of the Academy. The panel agrees that this sort of advancement could be very encouraging for foreign students who would like to study in Lithuania.

3.3.4. Assessment of the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the academic, financial, social, psychological and personal support provided to the students of the field.

(1) Factual situation

The LMTA aims at appropriate organisation and provision of academic, financial, social, psychological, personal and other support to students, as well as consistent and timely dissemination of information. The various means of supporting students financially are presented in the SER. Students are offered a possibility to stay at the inexpensive LMTA student residence. Students are provided with psychological counselling and the series of psychological self-help lectures. The Career and Competence Centre operating in the Academy coordinates information to the students on opportunities for professional career.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

According to the documentation and the online meeting there are possibilities for financial and personal support provided to the students. The students seem to be well aware of their possibilities to get academic, financial and social help.

3.3.5 Evaluation of the sufficiency of study information and student counselling.

(1) Factual situation

The SER describes various ways for delivering information to students. Programme students are consulted on the matters related to the studies e.g. by the Study Information and Data Office and administrators of the Faculties.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

There are appropriate formal means for delivering information and student counselling. During the online meetings it became evident for the panel that because of the low number of students, student counselling actualise mostly in students' personal meetings with their teachers and faculty administration. On the other hand, students brought forth in the online meeting that the student cohort doesn't actually form a communal group due to their diverse backgrounds. This may cause lack of peer support, usually very important in university communities.

Recommendations for this evaluation area:
   1.   The panel was concerned that the student cohort doesn't actually form a communal group due to their diverse backgrounds. The Academy may consider how to enhance the formation of a vibrant student community within the study field.
   2.   The Academy may consider how to enhance the programme's compatibility with studies in partner universities in order to enhance internationalization of the study field and the international mobility of its own students. There may be removable regulatory barriers concerning programme contents and requirements.
   3.   As there are problems in ensuring and increasing internationalization due to language barrier, it is recommended to introduce more activities in English within the study field.

3.4. STUDYING, STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

Studying, student performance and graduate employment shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:

3.4.1. Evaluation of the teaching and learning process that enables to take into account the needs of the students and enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

(1)   Factual situation

The approaches to teaching and learning in the study cycle are varied and appropriate including lectures, seminars, practical classes involving individual and teamwork exercises.

The SER indicates that the pandemic restrictions had augmented the use of existing platforms such as Moodle and this was discussed with staff and students during the online visit.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

Based on the information in the SER, supporting information and online meetings with staff and students the panel is satisfied that the teaching and learning processes are appropriate to the needs of students in achieving the learning outcomes. The panel notes that attention is given to provision of feedback when teachers work with a student individually.

3.4.2. Evaluation of conditions ensuring access to study for socially vulnerable groups and students with special needs.

(1)   Factual situation

The SER gives details of the financial and pastoral support offered to students, including vulnerable groups. Also, it is stated in the SER, that "the Academy participates in the project implemented by the State Studies Foundation for students with disability Increasing Accessibility of Studies as a partner". This information was confirmed during the online visit in meetings with staff and students.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel is satisfied that adequate care and provision of support is available to students with special needs or who are from socially vulnerable groups.

3.4.3. Evaluation of the systematic nature of the monitoring of student study progress and feedback to students to promote self-assessment and subsequent planning of study progress.

(1)   Factual situation

The SER and relevant links provide information about student monitoring and feedback. These include teacher reviews, updates to course documentation for example the subject descriptors, topics, methods of studies and assessment, the list of literature. There is also consultation with students on how best to develop their individual learning skills, self-cognition, and coping with examination nerves.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel is satisfied that these processes are adequate and remain fluid and responsive to changing needs.

3.4.4. Evaluation of employability of graduates and graduate career tracking in the study field.

(1) Factual situation

The SER and relevant links provide details of how employability is monitored and the careers of graduates in the study field are tracked by the Career and Competence Office in cooperation with the departments overseeing the delivery of programme specialisations. Statistics on accepted students and graduates of the study field are provided.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel agrees that processes concerning evaluation of graduates and graduate career tracking are adequate.

3.4.5. Evaluation of the feedback provided to students in the course of the studies to promote self-assessment and subsequent planning of study progress.

(1) Factual situation

The SER outlines how feedback is provided to the student by teachers of study subjects/modules. After each examination, the subject teacher gives every student confidential feedback on mutual experience, possibilities for improvement of the content of the study subject, teaching methods, studying and assessment. This was confirmed in meetings with staff during the online visit.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel is satisfied that students receive adequate feedback to assist them in progressing their studies and personal development.

3.4.6. Evaluation of the implementation of policies to ensure academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination.

(1) Factual situation

The SER and related link gives details of the Code of Ethics which all members of the LMTA community undertake not to violate.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel agrees that these policies are adequate and that during the review period, there have been no cases of violations of academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination principles.

3.4.7. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the application of procedures for the submission and examination of appeals and complaints regarding the study process within the field studies.

(1)   Factual situation

The SER and related link give details of how students may file appeals and complaints with regard to the study process in accordance with the Descriptor of the Procedure for Submission and Consideration of Appeals Regarding Learning Outcomes at LMTA. Details are also given about the grounds for possible appeals and complaints.

According to the documentation the students of the study field concerned have not lodged any appeals and complaints over the last three years.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel agrees that the processes for student appeals and complaints are appropriate and robust.

3.5. TEACHING STAFF

Study field teaching shall be evaluated in accordance with the following indicators:

3.5.1. Evaluation of the adequacy of the number, qualification and competence (scientific, didactic, professional) of teaching staff within a field study programme(s) at the HEI in order to achieve the learning outcomes. entrance requirements are well-founded, consistent and transparent.

(1)   Factual situation

The situation in relation to the number and quality of teaching staff on the programme is a positive one:

- Over the period covered in the SER the student teacher ratio remained stable with a ratio of 1: 2.83 full-time equivalents (hereafter – FTEs) indicated for the 2019 intake.
- There are 24 teachers delivering across the programme subjects and at least 16 of these hold contracts of at least 5 FTE.

The adequacy of these figures and ratios was confirmed during both the meeting with Senior Management and Faculty Administration Staff and during the meeting with the teaching staff. When asked how the programme ensures continuity of delivery given the apparent large staff turnover, members of the Senior Management explained that while experts were brought in to deliver specialist elements of the programme the core teaching cohort was stable. The supplementary expertise ensured adequate subject specific knowledge to meet the learning outcomes.

In relation to qualifications the programme exceeds the requirements laid down by the Ministry in the Description of General Study Requirements. There are currently 82.6% of teachers who hold a Scientific(art) degree, 100% are practitioners with at least 3 years

practical experience and 35% of the study field is taught by teachers working as professors. Foreign language competency is also high among the teaching staff.

The recruitment of teaching staff for the programme is compliant with:

- Descriptor of Minimum Qualification Requirements for Positions of LMTA Teachers and Research Associates;

- Descriptor of the Procedure for Organisation of Public Competition to Positions of LMTA Teachers and Research Associates and their Accreditation.

Recruitment is by competition and teachers are accredited every five years. Continuation of teaching contracts is based on a self-evaluation report submitted each year which is monitored by the Quality Management Office and Research Centre.

The recruitment procedure is characterised as a strength in the section on Teaching staff in the SER.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

During the online visit the Expert Panel formed a positive opinion on the quantity and quality of teaching staff. This opinion is based on the confirmation of the information contained in the SER and also through meeting with the staff and experiencing how the programme is led by a highly qualified, enthusiastic group of researchers.

During the meeting with the teachers, evidence was presented of how the teaching staff use their research as the core of their teaching practice. How teachers are active in publishing their research and are all members of international associations of researchers.

To ensure quality teachers for the future doctoral students are encouraged to present their research to masters students and young teachers are often encouraged to teach together to build pedagogic confidence.

There is ongoing monitoring of teachers and anonymous student surveys of teachers' performance are regular. Teachers not meeting the quality standards of the programme leave the Academy.

3.5.2. Evaluation of conditions for ensuring teaching staffs' academic mobility (not applicable to studies carried out by HEIs operating under the conditions of exile).

(1)   Factual situation

In 2019 LTMA had 171 bilateral agreements in 37 countries worldwide. LTMA is also involved in a number of networks that encourage mobility, including Nordplus, Nordtrad, Norteas and the European Network for Theatre Schools. Funding for staff mobility is provided by the department and supplemented with funds achieved from applications to Erasmus + and Nordplus.

During the meeting with the Teachers, they confirmed their involvement in conferences and their contributions to international publications. The Teachers' group also explained how they can apply for internal funding and also make supported applications to Erasmus+. They explained that the current restrictions hindered their involvement with

Scandinavian and Baltic networks which usually consist of lectures, workshops and masterclasses, but that online alternatives were in the planning stages. Teaching staff also commented on how they are inspired by their mobility initiatives in programme development.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

It is the view of the expert panel that there is adequate provision, support and engagement in staff mobility initiatives. This opinion is formed on the basis of information on networks supplies in the SER. and statistical information on 433 teachers who engaged in learning mobility, project activities, strategic partnerships and other international projects between 2017 and 2019.

The level of support and the enthusiasm of staff to partake in these mobility initiatives was confirmed during the meeting with the Teachers. The availability of funds and the support for applications for Erasmus+ was also outlined as was the encouragement for young teachers, who have experience abroad to return and share their experience. In a climate where research is calculated as part of the workload, applying for funding to go abroad for specialist coursed is supported.

3.5.3. Evaluation of the conditions to improve the competences of the teaching staff.

(1)   Factual situation

Both the right and the obligation of teachers to engage in activities which improve their competencies are embedded in formal legal acts of the Academy outlined in the SER:

- As well as funds made available for staff development through mobility initiatives, EUR 20,000 is made available annually from the LTMA budget to support research activities;
- Funding and support is also made available for competency improvement, and physical resources are made available for teacher self-study and there is regular updating of library acquisitions;
- Teachers are supported in national and international study projects. During the three years covered by this self-evaluation 124 study, scientific and artistic projects were undertaken 41 of which were international;
- Short-term creative holidays may also be applied for and granted;
- In the SER a table is available which indicates a steady increase in the funds made available for staff development initiatives.

The potentialities for staff to improve their competencies through various staff development activities were confirmed during the meeting with the Teachers. Access to funding and institutional support was outlined and reflected the points made in the SER. Workload flexibility was also outlined which supports the staff's ability to partake in development programmes. There was only one dissenting voice among the teaching representatives who felt a greater balance between pedagogy and scholarly activities needed.

There was only one main negative area in relation to teaching staff competencies and this centred on competencies in the use of digital media and in particular the use of virtual learning environments (hereafter – VLEs). This was identified as an area needing improvement during the SER process. This deficiency was also expressed in the panel's meeting with the students, who saw the lack of knowledge, in the area of VLE use as a hindrance to effective communication with the students. This was an inadequacy which became more obvious during the pandemic lockdown where the use of VLEs became central to the continuance of teaching and learning.

(2) Expert judgement/indicator analysis

In general, the possibilities for staff to engage with initiatives for competency improvement are good. These initiatives are outlined in the SER and were confirmed by the teaching staff. There is access to both institutional and EU funding and there are institutional supports and facilities available to underpin these. However, both the SER and the meeting with the students drew the panel's attention to the lack of engagement on the part of some staff to the full potential of VLE usage. The students pointed out that while Microsoft Teams is used by some staff, quite a lot of digital communication is through email, which they felt was inadequate. Some students also expressed their disappointment at the lack of use of more pedagogically appropriate VLEs such as Moodle, which is available but not used. The students were of the opinion that Moodle was not being used due to lack of staff expertise with VLEs. It was pointed out that the few teachers who use Moodle use it effectively. It is the view of the panel that training in VLE-based pedagogical practices would be an advantage.

Recommendations for this evaluation area:

1. The Academy may consider how to enhance the full potential of virtual learning environments' usage. It is the view of the panel that training in VLE-based pedagogical practices would be an advantage.

3.6. LEARNING FACILIETIES AND RESOURCES

Study field learning facilities and resources should be evaluated according to the following criteria:

3.6.1. Evaluation of the suitability and adequacy of the physical, informational and financial resources of the field studies to ensure an effective learning process.

(1) Factual situation

In the SER and related documents the data is provided rigorously on the premises and resources of the whole LMTA and the scope is not on the programme level. The programme is rather tiny with less than 20 students and hence its material needs are relatively small. LMTA is an art university which has a wide range of special premises and equipment for the needs of art studies, including Cinema Hall and the LMTA Music Innovation Studies Centre. However, as the SER states, special learning facilities, premises or technical equipment, are not required for the professional practice of students in the programme of "Art Theory" since practice is not distinguished in the study plan.

The university library resources are adequately described in the SER. The community of the Academy has access to 19 licenced databases of scientific information and recordings which are very important for the study field.

The needs for learning facilities and resources are considered twice a year and fulfilled in accordance with the priorities set and financial capacities. According to the SER the current infrastructure is in line with the requirements for the quality of studies and allows for comprehensive training future professionals of history and theory of art.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

In the meetings, the panel was not presented any complaints concerning lack of material resources. The most important resource for the delivery of the programme is the teachers' capacity to keep up the programme. According to the SER and discussions with the staff physical and information resources of studies are adequate.

During the online discussions with students and teachers it became evident that circumstances caused by covid-19 has led to a situation where students' skills in using databases and other e-resources have improved. At the same time many teachers have learned to take more advantage in utilizing online teaching and communication methods.

3.6.2. Evaluation of the planning and upgrading of resources needed to carry out the field studies.

(1)   Factual situation

A university-level plan for the improvement of the infrastructure required for the studies is provided in the SER and its financial viability is presented.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The area of improvement set in the SER is the availability of material of all programme subjects in a virtual environment. During the online discussion with students they hoped for more material to be digitised and more shared e-resources between institutions. The panel agrees with this. The importance of online resources and skills to take advantage of them have been approved to be more than relevant during the pandemic.

3.7. STUDY QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND PUBLICITY

Study quality management and publicity shall be evaluated according to the following indicators:

3.7.1. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system of the studies.

(1)   Factual situation

According to the SER, related documentation, and the interviews, the LMTA has a very strong quality culture. The panel was convinced that there are appropriate quality assurance measures in place in the study field. On the top there is a comprehensive quality manual.

The internal assessment processes are systematically performed every year. The responsibilities of members in different bodies are clearly defined.

On the other hand, during the Expert Panel's online visit it was mentioned that the involvement of the students in giving feedback on the study programme is very little and often unpredictable.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The panel was generally satisfied with the quality assurance measures in place and the involvement of all stakeholders in the decision-making process.

3.7.2. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the involvement of stakeholders (students and other stakeholders) in internal quality assurance. Evaluation of the planning and upgrading of resources needed to carry out the field studies.

(1)   Factual situation

According to SER, stakeholders participate in internal quality assurance in various forms: they are invited to teach; they are members of the study programme committee; they are members of study subject/module and /or final assessment commissions as well as participate in surveys organized by LMTA and express their opinion about the quality of the studies.

The panel was generally convinced with the effectiveness of such involvement, however the online meeting with social partners revealed slightly different approach in different fields of art (ethnomusicology, musicology,, theatre and film studies), where not all social partners were being able to confirm the general involvement in internal quality assurance.

The expert online meetings with the LMTA staff also showed that some of the feedback on improvements is received from international colleagues, informally. The staff members are

themselves up to date with global tendencies in the academic world and follow certain programmes abroad or may suggest changes.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The Expert Panel was generally satisfied with the internal quality assurance system. The Policy for Quality Assurance is well documented and there is a general eagerness to achieve good results. However, the panel's meeting with the students and other stakeholders suggested that perhaps they are not always involved in the planning and upgrading of resources needed to carry out the field studies.

3.7.3. Evaluation of the collection, use and publication of information on studies, their evaluation and improvement processes and outcomes.

(1)   Factual situation

LMTA collects and makes publicly available various official documentation on the delivery of the studies in the field of History and Theory of Art:

• The Descriptor of the Programme Profile containing information about admission requirements, learning outcomes, qualifications acquired, etc.;

• Summaries of learning outcomes attained by Programme students are prepared after each examination session. The summaries are made by the faculty administrators;

• The results of surveys of stakeholders' opinion about the quality of studies. The surveys are organised in accordance with the Descriptor of the Procedure for Organisation of Surveys at LMTA;

• Monitoring of Programme graduates' employment carried out by the Career and Competence Centre.

The SER provided different links to LMTA website to prove this. The LMTA website is informative and easy to navigate. The presentation of the study programme is generally informative though not so engaging in modern terms.

The SER does not provide examples on how the information collected on the delivery and evaluation of studies is used to improve the field studies.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The Expert Panel was generally satisfied by the quality culture of the LMTA in publication of official information on studies.
Being quite a fresh programme it is impressive how it is represented.

3.7.4. Evaluation of the opinion of the field students (collected in the ways and by the means chosen by the SKVC or the HEI) about the quality of the studies at the HEI.

(1)   Factual situation

According to the SER, students are the first ones who help to identify problems in the quality of studies and contribute to the search for solutions. Student surveys are carried out regularly. There is generally a warm atmosphere between students and LMTA staff and students can provide their feedback in a spoken form more often than in written.

In the SER, the survey results are provided giving main students' observations and expectations as well as specific changes and remarks made. The SER gives results in general about the LMTA and not programme specific observations.

The meeting with students as well as faculty members revealed the lack of the evaluated study programme students participation in the feedback process.

(2)   Expert judgement/indicator analysis

The expert panel was satisfied with the evaluation of the opinion of the field students about the quality of the studies at the LMTA, however the lack of students' involvement in giving formal feedback may result in poor analysis of the situation. However, the panel was impressed by the warm relationship between the students and faculty members.

Recommendations for this evaluation area:

1.   Involvement of the students in giving feedback on the study programme is little and often unpredictable. The Academy may consider how to enhance its systematic feedback systems.

2.   The panel's meeting with the students and other stakeholders suggested that they are not always involved in the planning and upgrading of resources needed to carry out the field studies. The Academy may consider how to improve this.

IV. EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE

Core definition: Excellence means exhibiting characteristics that are very good and, implicitly, not achievable by all.

Explanatory context Excellence enshrines one meaning of quality: a traditional view that associates quality with the exceptional.

- Programme is led by highly qualified, enthusiastic researchers;
- Graduates widely employed in cultural institutions and clearly meet needs of stakeholders;
- Impressive interdisciplinarity and the development of practice research ambitions, that could be a means of developing the peripheral skills of students for the labour market;
- Impressive possibilities for international exchange which could be further developed.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.   To widen the range of options and the general flexibility of student choices, as this could help to meet the different needs, competencies and interests of students who join the programme from a wide range of backgrounds.

2.   The learning outcomes of the subject modules are described on a very general level. The Academy may develop the ways to articulate the learning outcomes and their links to actual content of the study subjects to enhance transparency.

3.   The panel was concerned that the student cohort doesn't actually form a communal group due to their diverse backgrounds. The Academy may consider how to enhance the formation of a vibrant student community within the study field.

4.   The Academy may consider how to enhance the programme's compatibility with studies in partner universities in order to enhance internationalization of the study field and the international mobility of its own students. There may be removable regulatory barriers concerning programme contents and requirements.

5.   As there are problems in ensuring and increasing internationalization due to language barrier, it is recommended to introduce more activities in English within the study field.

6.   The Academy may consider how to enhance the full potential of virtual learning environments' usage. It is the view of the panel that training in VLE-based pedagogical practices would be an advantage.

7.   Involvement of the students in giving feedback on the study programme is little and often unpredictable. The Academy may consider how to enhance its systematic feedback systems.

8.   The panel's meeting with the students and other stakeholders suggested that they are not always involved in the planning and upgrading of resources needed to carry out the field studies. The Academy may consider how to improve this.

VI. SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the findings of the evaluation team based on the Self-Evaluation Reports and the interviews with the university administration (senior management and faculty administration staff), staff responsible for the preparation of the SER, teaching staff and stakeholders (students, alumni, employers, social partners). The evaluation team gives a positive evaluation to the implementation of the study field of History and Theory of Arts second cycle study programme at Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre with all areas of evaluation assessed as very good or good.

The panel formed a positive view of the quality culture within the university. The mission, vision, and strategic frame are clearly presented in the SER. They are strongly assimilated within the university community. The panel fully agrees that the study field conforms well with the mission, objectives of activities and strategy of the LMTA.

The panel agrees that the programme is compliant with the legal requirements and meets the standards. The programme offers a wide range of interdisciplinary approaches which benefits the students' overall possibilities to widen their knowledge within the arts field in general. However, the synergy between different approaches may be difficult to reach within studies considering their rather diverse methodological backgrounds. Widening the range of options and the general flexibility of student choices could help to meet the different needs, competencies and interests of students who join the programme from a range of backgrounds. Besides, students brought forth that the student cohort doesn't actually form a communal group due to their diverse backgrounds. This may cause lack of peer support, important for university communities.

According to the results of annual evaluation, quality of scientific research and development is strong on the national level with limited international recognition. The panel was convinced that the quality of research activities is on the appropriate level and that they are related to the field studies. The programme is led by highly qualified, enthusiastic researchers, who are actively encouraging students to be involved in research activities. The interdisciplinary approach is evident and programme structure is supporting the development of students' research skills.

Based on the information provided in the SER and during the online meetings, the panel is satisfied that the procedure of student selection and admission as well as criteria for the admission is well explained. The view of the panel is that the qualification recognition procedures used on the programmes are transparent, clearly explained and compliant with both national and institutional regulations.

The Academy aims to be attractive for foreign students, teachers and researchers for studies and work at the Academy. It is among the key strategic priorities set out in the

strategy. The LMTA has a wide range of international partners within art fields. In order to enhance internationalization of the study field and the international mobility of its own students, the Academy may consider how to enhance the programme's compatibility with studies in partner universities. Taken into account the wide interdisciplinary approach of the study field, there may be removable regulatory barriers concerning programme contents and requirements.

The panel is satisfied that the teaching and learning processes are appropriate to the needs of students in achieving the learning outcomes. The panel is also satisfied that adequate care and provision of support is available to students with special needs or who are from socially vulnerable groups. The panel agrees that these policies are adequate and that during the review period, there have been no cases of violations of academic integrity, tolerance and non- discrimination principles.

The panel formed a positive opinion on the quantity and quality of teaching staff. Evidence was presented of how the teaching staff use their research as the core of their teaching practice and how teachers are active in publishing their research and are all members of international associations of researchers. Teachers for the future doctoral students are encouraged to present their research to MA students and young teachers are often encouraged to teach together to build pedagogic confidence. There is ongoing monitoring of teachers and anonymous student surveys of teachers' performance are regular.

There is adequate provision, support and engagement in staff mobility initiatives. The possibilities for staff to engage with initiatives for competency improvement are good. There is access to both institutional and EU funding and there are institutional supports and facilities available to underpin these.

The most important resource for the delivery of the programme is the teachers' capacity to keep up the programme. According to the SER and discussions with the staff, physical and information resources of studies are adequate. During the online discussions it became evident that circumstances caused by covid-19 have led to a situation where students' skills in using databases and other e-resources have improved. At the same time many teachers have learned to take more advantage in utilizing online teaching and communication methods. The Academy may consider how to enhance the full potential of virtual learning environments' usage. It is the view of the panel that training in VLE-based pedagogical practices would be an advantage.

The panel was generally satisfied with the quality assurance measures in place and the involvement of all stakeholders in the decision-making process. The Policy for Quality Assurance is well documented and there is a general eagerness to achieve good results. However, the panel's meeting with the students and other stakeholders suggested that they are not always involved in the planning and upgrading of resources needed to carry out the field studies.

Based on the contents of this report the panel is pleased to positively endorse the study field under review.

> **Expert panel signatures:**
>
> 1. **Prof. dr. Dana Arnold (team leader)** *academic,*
> 2. **Dr. Michael Fox,** *academic,*
> 3. **Lect. Hannu Apajalahti,** *academic,*
> 4. **Ms Monika Lipšic,** *representative of social partners'*
> 5. **Mr Justas Žemaitis,** *students' representative.*