



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Vilniaus dailės akademijos Kauno fakulteto
**PROGRAMOS *TAIKOMOJI KERAMIKA* (612W10007)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

**EVALUATION REPORT
OF *APPLIED CERAMICS* (612W10007)
STUDY PROGRAMME**

at the Vilnius Academy of Arts, Kaunas Faculty

Grupės vadovas:
Team leader:

Prof. Dr. Ian Montgomery

Grupės nariai:
Team members:

Prof. Mare Saare
Assoc. Dr. Arvids Endzins
Jovita Navakienė
Jukka Liukkonen

Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
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2013

DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Studijų programos pavadinimas | <i>Taikomoji keramika</i> |
| Valstybinis kodas | 612W10007 |
| Studijų sritis | menai |
| Studijų kryptis | dailė |
| Studijų programos rūšis | universitetinės |
| Studijų pakopa | pirmoji |
| Studijų forma (trukmė metais) | nuolatinė (4) |
| Studijų programos apimtis kreditais | 240 ECTS |
| Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija | Dailės bakalauras |
| Studijų programos įregistravimo data | 1997-05-16 |

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

| | |
|---|-------------------------|
| Title of the study programme | <i>Applied Ceramics</i> |
| State code | 612W10007 |
| Study area | Art |
| Study field | Fine Arts |
| Kind of the study programme | University studies |
| Study cycle | First |
| Study mode (length in years) | Full-time (4) |
| Volume of the study programme in credits | 240 ECTS |
| Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded | Bachelor of Fine Arts |
| Date of registration of the study programme | 1997-05-16 |

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Evaluation Team received a large volume of carefully prepared documents that included the Lithuanian Higher Education Context, Self Evaluation Report, Programme Specification, and the previous Evaluation Report of 2011. The Evaluation Team visited the Kaunas campus of the Vilnius Academy of Arts on Thursday 7th and Friday 8th November 2013. The programme included scheduled meetings with senior management, the self-evaluation review preparatory team, teaching team, students from all levels of the course, and recent graduates and recognised 'social partners'.

The Evaluation Team were given a tour of facilities to include workshops, studios, exhibition spaces, and the library/learning resource area. During the tour there was ample opportunity to ask questions and to view the various technologies, teaching and learning environments, and to understand the operational aspects of the provision. Furthermore, the student and staff work in evidence in the city was of particular interest.

The various stakeholder groups (and individuals) involved were enthusiastic, positive, and fully engaged both in the process and appeared genuinely ambitious for the subject and the development of the discipline. All interactions were courteous and reflected a supportive learning and teaching environment and there appeared to be good levels of communication within teams and between students, staff, and the wider profession.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The programme aims are clear and accessible although its uniqueness as an applied ceramics, and in theory production-focused is less clear. The unique selling proposition of the programme requires further consideration.

There does appear to be a strong link with the professions, both social partners and graduates, and it is clear the programme is firmly focused on the development of traditional skills. However, with the demise of industrial-scale ceramics manufacturing the course team needs to survey the graduate market with a view to developing the skills base of its

undergraduates in preparation for the marketplace. The development of business and high level presentation skills require further consideration.

The aims and objectives are appropriate across the various levels of the course. There needs to be a stronger and more distinctive programme ethos. The programme team should look at integrating contemporary (new) technologies into the design and development stages of production and consider how business skills should increase in prominence towards the final stages of the programme.

It is difficult to rationalise the programme ethos and set it apart from the provision in Vilnius. The learning outcomes and course content need to be distinctive and communicate clearly the types of skills that students studying this course on this campus will develop. If there are emerging creative industry or industrial design opportunities towards which the course is being directed then these should be clearly defined in order to develop a clear brand for applied ceramics at Kaunas.

2. Curriculum design

The course design meets legal requirements. However, the opportunities to engage in extended creative risk-taking could be given some flexibility through the development of some larger modules. For example, some semesters incorporate six individual modules which makes for a complex mapping exercise across learning outcomes per module. This has the potential to limit students opportunity to take creative risks as individual modules are quite small and therefore conceptual and creative risk-taking may be limited as a result.

The study subjects are spread evenly. However, the relevance of the history and theory elements does not appear to have a clear link towards contemporary practice either within an applied arts or industrial ceramics context. The expert team was informed about study subjects (*Ceramics 2, Ceramics 4, Ceramics 5 and Workshop 5*), which aims to develop professional skills. Some of the collaborative projects undertaken in partnership with the city authorities are noteworthy. For example, the basement floor tile project and the underground exhibition. The team would recommend to further develop opportunities to develop business and professional practice skills, which are necessary for a programme of this type. Having said that,

The traditional practical skills focus of the programme affords students the opportunity to develop good quality creative outputs. However, the applied nature of the course should integrate more clearly contemporary issues in critical thinking and art and design theory. It should also enable students to accrue business development skills in order to get a better appreciation of the professional operating environment and to afford students to generate creative solutions for the market.

The team was informed that teachers share collected study materials from various creative exhibitions and conferences, however, The programme team should explore opportunities to further more develop research-informed teaching and a pedagogy which would be supported by a well developed system of recording and feeding back formative and summative assessments. This would help the programme to create a greater shared research and teaching identity and offer opportunities to test new teaching innovations. For example, staff publishing in learned journals or exhibiting internationally should formally integrate these elements into the teaching scenario. Similarly, where new teaching innovations are developed these should be published and shared within the academy and beyond potentially through international journals and conferences.

Beyond developing awareness of contemporary issues in history and theory and the necessity to develop business skills experiences for students, the course should seek to develop employability skills in students throughout the duration of the programme.

There is evidence of applied and collaborative partnerships existing between disciplines and externally via commissioned/partnered projects. This integration reflects the importance of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary working. However, the programme should seek to develop and extend its industrial/professional links and develop a research-informed teaching agenda.

3. Staff

The compliment of staff satisfies the legal requirements and the curriculum requirements. If the programme is to develop greater relevance to contemporary practice it should review both the critical/professional practice inputs and business teaching elements of the course. This will require strategic and clear leadership by the Course Director.

The qualifications in relation to the current curriculum are satisfactory, but the Faculty should develop a more robust and strategic staff development strategy to encourage/require staff to upskill across the areas of teaching, research, and academic enterprise. There is evidence of some staff mobility which should be extended nationally and internationally .

There are a diverse range of staff teaching across a range of related areas: ceramics core skills, contextual studies, history and theory. The course leadership should consider extending the curriculum through the inclusion of key inputs in contemporary practice and business.

The course management are encouraged to explore opportunities to diversify the curriculum to afford directed inputs from professional practitioners, visiting professors/scholars, and exchange Erasmus teachers.

The institution should develop a professional development framework designed to promote and extend key staff skills in teaching, research and academic enterprise through higher qualifications, short courses, awards etc.

Staff are involved in professional practice activities but should explore opportunities to develop scholarship, research, and academic enterprise activities that are recorded and promotable to a wider audience locally, nationally, and internationally.

4. Facilities and learning resources

The ceramics facilities barely meet minimum standards for the purposes of higher education teaching. The fabric of the ceramics building and its various facilities require urgent inspection with particular reference to health and safety, extraction, containment etc. For example, there is no effective dust extraction system throughout the working areas, the front doors to the ceramics building are non-laminated narrow gauge single glazed, there appear to be structural deficiencies in the fabric of the building, insufficient storage, separate area for silica-based products, limited/no formal evidence of workplace risk assessments, limited/no evidence of a register of substances hazardous to health, no delineation of eating and working spaces (i.e. a separate room for eating).

The configuration of the studios and workshop equipment do not appear to have sufficient risk assessment nor health and safety procedures in place to ensure students are working in a safe environment. Whilst it is acknowledged that all students receive health and safety briefings the elements under discussion here relate to the fabric and configuration of the building and the systems and procedures in place regarding the storage and use of materials.

Whilst there is clear evidence that the institution has a vision for the development of the campus, the physical teaching environment in ceramics is below minimum standards and should be addressed as a matter of urgency. This point has been highlighted in previous evaluation team reports. The studio spaces currently in use in the former hospital require urgent investment in order to meet expected minimum standards.

The library provision and student access is appropriate in breadth and depth. There appeared to be on-going investment in journals, books, and online databases. Access is satisfactory.

5. Study process and student assessment

The variability of state-funded studentships stifles the institution's ability to develop the discipline in a more proactive way and therefore, the admission requirements are not well founded. This is a unique programme with an applied design focus that would benefit significantly from a more consistent allocation of studentships. Some of the work being produced has the potential to be of international exhibition quality.

The programme would benefit from a greater level of exposure to international best practice either through study visits or the creation of further opportunities to bring scholars and academics via the new Erasmus+ scheme. The programme team should review the level, depth, and positioning of professional practice skills and business skills within the curriculum.

The Evaluation Team were shown some examples of student dissertations and practical student work across a variety of levels and sizes which was displayed within the campus. The work meets national/international standards. Students were enthusiastic about their work and opportunities to present it. They were clear about the direction and ethos of the course and their aspirations post-graduation.

Opportunities for students to engage in the Erasmus exchange programme were very limited which left many students feeling disheartened by the process. Expert team was informed that students participate in international student symposia and throwing competitions, participate in art and educational projects, conferences. It is understandable, that with small student numbers it is difficult to mobilise all students, however the programme team and Faculty should consider how it could develop student mobility (perhaps via short international study visits) while at the same time retaining healthy student cohorts on campus.

There was evidence of good quality academic support and the students appeared to really enjoy their experience at the Kaunas campus of Vilnius Academy of Arts. It would be helpful to formalise the student support area through the development of a student support charter and a formal recording procedure in respect of studies adviser meetings. There may be opportunities to provide more structured careers advice at specific points in the programme.

The assessment system appears to be fair and accessible but is highly reliant upon ongoing and frequent verbal interactions between students and staff. The numerical system does serve a purpose but is limited in allowing students to understand how they have met specific learning outcomes and for the purposes of benchmarking across a cohort and indeed for recordkeeping. This area requires detailed analysis and review in order to develop a transparent system of assessment which is fit for purpose and reflects levels of performance against individual assessment criteria which are mapped to specific learning outcomes. The assessment criterion should have a range of assigned detailed descriptors which reflect various levels of attainment.

Graduates and social partners were highly articulate and supportive of the programme and its ethos. A number had located their studios within Kaunas city centre in order to develop further their practice. Graduates were enthusiastic about developing their practice as professional ceramic artists and retained strong links with the institution.

6. Programme management

The programme has a dedicated course director who manages the programme. However, opportunities to develop the provision are constrained by the parameters of the current operating environment and lack of shared and progressive strategic vision. There is an urgency to either relocate the studios and workshops to a better environment or to refurbish/redevelop the

existing site. The students are very supportive of the institution – but their experience needs to be internationalised and key critical thinking and business skills developed.

There are annual reviews of performance and evidence of swift resolution of student concerns. The annual monitoring round affords academic staff the opportunity to reflect on academic procedures and the student experience in order to develop and enhance the programme for the next academic year. This appears to be sufficient for the needs of the student body and does reflect a positive approach to the development of the subject and the student experience.

There is some evidence that the recommendations brought forward as the result of the last institutional visit have been acted upon. However, the challenges of developing business skills and the integration of contemporary art and design professional practices and theories is still outstanding as is the need to develop a more competitive and stimulating learning environment. It would be helpful to have an organisational diagram both at Institution and Faculty levels as an extension of one of the recommendations in the previous visit. The need to internationalise more fully remains.

The Evaluation Team met graduates and Social Partners who were extremely supportive of the institution and the programme citing a number of collaborative ventures where students had exhibited locally and nationally and had become members of the professional artists organisation. The social partners believed that their involvement within the self evaluation review had been positive. They identified clear opportunities for graduates moving to the creative industries.

The programme revolves around a single unit of management (the programme team) and while this satisfies the day to day running and indeed the planning and management of the provision it may be helpful to initiate cross-cutting focus groups or teams to look at issues like, for example, performance against national benchmarks, graduate employment, employer engagement statistics, longitudinal studies of student experience, and developing an internationalisation strategy. The institution should also set up a formal health and safety committee which operates according to a set agenda and includes key personnel from the academic community, health and safety services, and ancillary staff.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Faculty should develop a strategy for the discipline beyond the confines of the institution in order to enhance the intellectual/critical thinking environment.

2. The Faculty should integrate contemporary issues in art and design, marketing, internationalisation, and business entrepreneurship in order to develop student employability skills for the creative industries.

3. The Faculty should explore opportunities for students to interact more frequently within creative environments across disciplines. Kaunas Faculty has a strong array of creative art, design, and architecture programmes but there appeared to be limited evidence of this in the development and risk-taking stages. For example, there appeared to be limited opportunities for students to cross-fertilise ideas with students from other disciplines in the early stages of the course.

4. From observation, the level and quality of communication and feedback between students and staff is outstanding and the level of student attainment is high. However, there is minimal evidence of formal disaggregation of, and assessment against, individual learning outcomes within each module of study. The course should review opportunities to integrate formalised assessment forms into the assessment regime in order to develop and enhance the student learning experience. The current numerical system does not afford the opportunity to make explicit levels of attainment in relation to specific learning outcomes nor an overview of strengths, weaknesses, and points for discussion. This would assist students to understand more clearly the decision-making process and provide a greater level of institutional transparency.

5. The admissions system needs to be reviewed to make it simpler for motivated students to gain a place on BA Applied Ceramics at Vilnius Academy of Arts (Kaunas campus). This programme has displayed excellence in terms of traditional and contemporary design/craft skills and has strong economic potential as the creative industries increase in relevance. The necessity to plan student intakes year on year should not be compromised by the vagaries of the current allocation of student places. The central allocation of student places by government requires a better level of consistency in order to assist the institution to strategically plan for the future.

6. The institution must seriously review its resource allocation model for the discipline. While it is accepted that an ambitious campus redevelopment programme is planned, the current studio working conditions require substantial investment in order that they conform to acceptable health and safety standards.

7. The institution must urgently review health and safety and working conditions in the ceramics buildings. There appear to be minimal protocols in place to ensure students and staff are not exposed to substances hazardous to health. The physical environment also requires urgent review to ensure it meets minimum health and safety requirements.

IV. SUMMARY

The programme is unique in the area and the staff are dedicated and knowledgeable with many sustaining their own practice as artists. Written coursework elements reflect good understanding of the practice by students who are enthusiastic and ambitious and good collegial bonds exist between the staff, the students and alumni. In the main, programme aims and learning outcomes correspond to professional needs and the students are encouraged to participate in the art and design events both nationally and internationally. The workshop equipment, although quite aged, is well maintained by the staff and provide the necessary technologies and there is appropriate resourcing of kilns and materials. The curriculum enables students to build progressive know-how on strong basic knowledge.

However, the environment is deficient in relation to health and safety and dissatisfactory in terms of there being minimal conveniences and the promised innovations in the building have been prolonged. There are limited internationalization opportunities - too few grants for the students and staff exchange due to the distribution of grants from the central management of the academy. There is limited business entrepreneurship within the curriculum and a narrow focus in developing professional and critical thinking skills.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Applied Ceramics* (state code – 612W10007) at the Vilnius Academy of Arts, Kaunas Faculty is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

| No. | Evaluation Area | Evaluation Area in Points* |
|-----|---|----------------------------|
| 1. | Programme aims and learning outcomes | 3 |
| 2. | Curriculum design | 3 |
| 3. | Staff | 3 |
| 4. | Material resources | 2 |
| 5. | Study process and assessment (student admission, study process student support, achievement assessment) | 3 |
| 6. | Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance) | 3 |
| | Total: | 17 |

*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 exceptionally good.

Grupės vadovas:
Team leader:

Prof. Dr. Ian Montgomery

Grupės nariai:
Team members:

Prof. Mare Saare
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Jovita Navakienė
Jukka Liukkonen

**VILNIAUS DAILĖS AKADEMIJOS PIRMOSIOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS
 TAIKOMOJI KERAMIKA (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 612W10007) 2014-01-24
 EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-54 IŠRAŠAS**

<...>

V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Vilniaus dailės akademijos studijų programa *Taikomoji keramika* (valstybinis kodas – 612W10007), vykdoma Kaune, vertinama **teigiamai**.

| Eil. Nr. | Vertinimo sritis | Srities įvertinimas, balais* |
|----------|--|------------------------------|
| 1. | Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai | 3 |
| 2. | Programos sandara | 3 |
| 3. | Personalas | 3 |
| 4. | Materialieji ištekliai | 2 |
| 5. | Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas | 3 |
| 6. | Programos vadyba | 3 |
| | Iš viso: | 17 |

* 1 - Nepatenkinamai (yra esminių trūkumų, kuriuos būtina pašalinti)

2 - Patenkinamai (tenkina minimalius reikalavimus, reikia tobulinti)

3 - Gerai (sistemiškai plėtojama sritis, turi savitų bruožų)

4 - Labai gerai (sritis yra išskirtinė)

<...>

IV. SANTRAUKA

Programa yra unikali šioje srityje, ir dėstytojai yra atsidavę ir kompetentingi, daugelis jų patys yra menininkai. Kursinių rašto darbų elementai rodo, kad studentai gerai supranta praktiką, jie yra entuziastingi ir ambicingi, o tarp dėstytojų, studentų ir absolventų yra geras koleginiis ryšys. Iš esmės, programos tikslai ir studijų rezultatai atitinka profesinius poreikius, o studentai skatinami dalyvauti nacionaliniuose ir tarptautiniuose meno ir dizaino renginiuose. Dirbtuvių įrangą, nors ir gana seną, personalas prižiūri gerai, aprūpinama reikiamomis technologijomis,

taip pat suteikiama pakankamai degimo krosnių ir medžiagų. Programos turinys leidžia studentams sukaupti pažangią praktinę patirtį, pagrįstą stipriomis bazinėmis žiniomis.

Tačiau šioje aplinkoje nepakankamai užtikrinama sveikata ir sauga, taip pat nepatenkinama yra tai, kad patogumai yra minimalūs, o žadėtos pastato inovacijos užsitęsė. Tarptautiškumo galimybės yra ribotos – centrinės akademijos vadovybės sprendimu skiriama per mažai stipendijų studentų ir dėstytojų mainams. Programos turinyje mažai dėmesio skiriama verslumui ir mažai lavinami profesinio ir kritinio mąstymo įgūdžiai.

III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1. Fakultetas turėtų parengti strategiją peržengti akademijos studijų ribas, siekiant tobulinti intelektualius arba kritinio mąstymo gebėjimus.

2. Fakultetas turėtų įtraukti šiuolaikinius meno ir dizaino, rinkodaros, tarptautiškumo bei verslumo klausimus, siekiant tobulinti studentų įsidarbinimo kūrybinėse industrijose įgūdžius.

3. Fakultetas turėtų išnagrinėti galimybes studentams dažniau bendrauti įvairių disciplinų kūrybinėje aplinkoje. Kauno fakultetas turi stiprią kūrybinio meno, dizaino ir architektūros programų pasiūlą, tačiau programų sudarymo ir rizikos etapuose tai patvirtinančių įrodymų buvo mažai. Pavyzdžiui, atrodo, kad studentai turi mažai galimybių keistis idėjomis su kitų disciplinų studentais ankstyvuosiuose programos etapuose.

4. Iš pažiūros studentų ir dėstytojų bendravimo ir grįžtamojo ryšio lygis ir kokybė yra puikūs, o studentų pasiekimai – aukšti. Tačiau turima minimaliai įrodymų apie formalų individualių studijų rezultatų atskyrimą ir vertinimą kiekviename studijų modulyje. Programoje reikėtų peržiūrėti galimybes į vertinimo sistemą įtraukti formalizuoto vertinimo formas, siekiant plėtoti ir tobulinti studentų mokymosi patirtį. Dabartinė skaitmeninė sistema nesudaro sąlygų nei aiškiai nurodyti konkrečių studijų rezultatų pasiekimo lygio, nei apžvelgti stiprybių, silpnųjų pusių ir aptartinių klausimų. Tai padėtų studentams geriau suprasti sprendimų priėmimo procesą ir padidintų institucijos skaidrumą.

5. Priėmimo sistemą turėtų būti peržiūrima, siekiant ją supaprastinti, kad motyvuoti studentai gautų vietą Vilniaus dailės akademijos (Kauno fakulteto) taikomosios

keramikos bakalauro studijų programoje. Ši programa padeda įgyti puikius tradicinio ir šiuolaikinio dizaino arba amato įgūdžius bei turi stiprų ekonominį potencialą, nes kūrybinės industrijos tampa vis aktualesnės. Būtinybei planuoti kasmetinį studentų priėmimą neturėtų pakenkti dabartinių studentų vietų skyrimo pasikeitimai. Centralizuotas valstybės studentų vietų skyrimas turi būti nuoseklesnis, kad akademija galėtų parengti strateginį planą ateičiai.

6. Akademija turi rimtai peržiūrėti savo studijų išteklių paskirstymo modelį. Nors pritariana planuojamai plataus užmojo įstaigos pertvarkymo programai, dabartinėms darbo sąlygoms studijose reikia didelių investicijų, kad jos atitiktų priimtinius sveikatos ir saugos standartus.

7. Akademija privalo skubiai peržiūrėti sveikatos ir saugos bei darbo sąlygas keramikai skirtuose pastatuose. Atrodo, kad nėra minimalių protokolų, užtikrinančių, kad studentų ir darbuotojų nepaveiktų sveikatai kenksmingos medžiagos. Taip pat reikia skubiai peržiūrėti fizinę aplinką, siekiant užtikrinti, kad ji atitiktų minimalius sveikatos ir saugos reikalavimus.

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