

# Executive summary

## Report

### Programmes Quality Enhancement Review

### Music Performance Programmes

## Malmö Academy of Music (Malmö, Sweden)

**Site-visit: 30 September – 2 October 2018**

### Introduction

Malmö Academy of Music (MAM) was founded in 1907 and has been incorporated into Lund University since 1977. Within the University, MAM is a member of the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts, along with the Malmö Arts Academy and Malmö Theatre Academy. Elsewhere in Sweden, the music academy in Gothenburg is incorporated into an arts university, and Stockholm might follow suit; academies in Örebro, Piteå and Ingesund are incorporated into regional universities.

MAM provides high-level tertiary education in music, offering degree programmes at Bachelor, Master levels in performance and teacher training, the former including church music and composition. The PhD programmes focus on music pedagogy and artistic research. MAM aims to train musicians, composers, music teachers and church musicians wishing to attain the highest level of artistic expression, and, for the music educator, capable of inspiring and developing people's interest in music into a lifelong passion.



These musicians should in turn be capable of facilitating the expression of all sorts of musical traditions. [*Source*: MAM website].

The most recent comprehensive review of MAM's performance programmes occurred between 2012 and 2014 and was conducted by the Swedish Higher Education Authority. The methodology used, considering uniquely results, was subsequently highly criticized across Sweden, and led to the exclusion of the Swedish Higher Education Authority from ENQA. Since then, a new evaluation system has been instituted, compliant with ESG, and membership in ENQA is being solicited once again. In this new system, the national agency plays an oversight role, providing individual universities with greater autonomy in managing this process. Faculties at Lund University have long been provided significant autonomy, and the pilot evaluation proposed here by MusiQuE for MAM has received university support. The university may, at a later date, choose to integrate such an approach to evaluations of the two other member academies of the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts.

This pilot evaluation integrating a “critical friend” approach included the following steps:

- Four critical friends visited the Academy in the spring of 2018 and each produced a report, sent to the Academy by early summer 2018;
- In September, the Academy produced a Self-evaluation Report (SER) responding to the Critical Friend Reports;
- An international review team convened by MusiQuE studied the SER and Critical Friend Reports and then conducted a site-visit between 30 September and 2 October 2018. Members of the review team met with students, teachers and Academy leaders, alumni and representatives of the profession, visited facilities and classes, and attended a symphony concert. They conducted Skype meetings with two of the “critical friends.”
- The review team produced the following report, in accordance with MusiQuE standards.

The “critical friend” approach described here constitutes a first for MusiQuE, and as such both MAM and review team members are finding their way. As opposed to a traditional programme review starting with a SER, here four “critical friends” – expert peers - have reviewed various aspects of the programme. MAM has in turn produced an SER responding to the Critical Friend Reports. It is to be noted that the very tight timeframe overall has meant that in some instances MAM has not had sufficient time to imagine or enact programme changes.



The Review Team consisted of the following members:

- Orla McDonough (Chair), Head of Conservatory, DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama, Dublin, Ireland
- Helena Gaunt (review team member), Principal, Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, Cardiff, Wales, United Kingdom
- Claus Finderup (review team member), Associate Professor at Rhythmic Music Conservatory (RMC), Copenhagen, Denmark
- Antoine Gilliéron (student member) Haute École de Musique de Lausanne, Switzerland
- Gretchen Amussen (review team member acting as Secretary) Former director of External Affairs & Communication, Paris Conservatoire, France



# Summary of the compliance with the Standards and recommendations

The review team concludes that the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music complies with the *Standards for Institutional Review* as follows:

<b>1. Institutional mission, vision and context</b>	
<b>Standard 1.</b> The institutional mission and vision are clearly stated.	<b>Substantially compliant</b>
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The review team recommends MAM explore ways in which to enhance musical diversity through increased collaboration across programmes and genres. It further recommends that MAM develop a comprehensive international strategy, aiming to achieve enhanced quality in selected focus areas other than recruitment. Lastly, the team encourages MAM to explore ways in which to ensure MAM’s active voice in the broader societal debate.</p>	
<b>2. Educational processes</b>	
<b>Standard 2.1.</b> The goals of the institution are achieved through the content and structure of the study programmes and their methods of delivery	<b>Partially compliant</b>
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The review team recommends development of clear course descriptions, minimum levels of delivery within an individualized approach, as well as precise accounting of assessment, learning and teaching strategies. Finally, the review team recommends a clear and coherent strategy be developed for chamber music.</p>	
<b>Standard 2.2.</b> The institution offers a range of opportunities for students to gain an international perspective.	<b>Substantially compliant</b>
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The review team encourages MAM to develop a more strategic approach to defining its place locally, regionally, in Europe and beyond, thus strengthening programme priorities and partnerships, and inevitably having a positive impact on increasing international student matriculation.</p>	

<b>Standard 2.3.</b> The assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes.	<b>Partially compliant</b>
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The review team recommends a clear definition of criteria and relative weighting of these used in assessment as they pertain to learning outcomes. These criteria in turn need to be visible on programme syllabi. The review team recommends that assessments be systematically provided in written form, and inasmuch as possible, that MAM avoid having sole evaluators in instrumental assessments. Inclusion of external examiners from other courses or disciplines at MAM could enhance interdisciplinary communication and collaboration; it might also be possible to consider recruiting regional, national or European (via funding from Erasmus +) external examiners. Finally, the review teams recommend considering implementation of a grading system compatible with the ECTS grading system.</p>	
<b>3. Student profiles</b>	
<b>Standard 3.1.</b> Clear admission criteria exist, which establish artistic/academic suitability of students.	<b>Partially compliant</b>
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The review team recommends clarification of assessment criteria for admission and communication of this and programme content to jury members and future candidates. The review team further recommends ongoing internal evaluation of admission requirements and procedures.</p>	
<b>Standard 3.2.</b> The institution has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students.	<b>Partially compliant</b>
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The review team recommends the development of clearly identified mechanisms to monitor achievement throughout students' studies; further, it encourages MAM to take advantage of the Lund University statistics office to regularly run surveys to monitor alumni activities. Lastly, the review team encourages MAM to integrate alumni further into its ongoing activities and long-term strategic planning</p>	
<b>4. Teaching staff</b>	

<b>Standard 4.1.</b> Members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/pedagogues/ researchers.	<b>Substantially compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> <p>The review team recommends that MAM explore ways in which to provide forums for ongoing discussion amongst teachers, across disciplines. It further encourages MAM to envisage a framework in which to develop and support continuing professional development for teaching staff.</p>	
<b>Standard 4.2.</b> There are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programmes.	<b>Fully compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> <p>The review team encourages MAM to explore how best to provide both time and a sufficient framework for teachers to participate in ongoing professional development and research strategies.</p>	
<b>5. Facilities, resources and support</b>	
<b>Standard 5.1.</b> The institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programmes.	<b>Fully compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> <p>The review team does, however, express its concern for digital and learning environments, and concurs with critical friend P. Dinkel in the recommendation that MAM develop a comprehensive digital strategy.</p>	
<b>Standard 5.2.</b> The institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the study programmes.	<b>Fully compliant</b>
<b>Standard 5.3.</b> The institution has sufficient qualified support staff.	<b>Fully compliant</b>
<b>6. Communication, organisation and decision-making</b>	
<b>Standard 6.1.</b> Effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the institution.	<b>Substantially compliant</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	

The review team encourages the systematization of written transcripts of teacher meetings; further, it urges MAM to consistently connect programme development with the action plan 2017-2021 so as to guarantee greater ownership by teachers. The review team encourages MAM to systematically communicate information to students in a timely manner.

**Standard 6.2.** The institution has an appropriate organisational structure and clear decision-making processes.

**Substantially compliant**

### Recommendations

The review team notes that the chamber music programme does not appear to be supported with an identified organizational structure and recommends that creating one be a priority

## 7. Internal quality culture

**Standard 7.1.** The institution has a strong internal quality culture, supported by clear and effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures.

**Partially compliant**

### Recommendations

The review team recommends devising a systematic written evaluation system for all courses, and that individual teachers not be held responsible for this. The review team notes that examinations are conducted with few or no external jury members, and in some instances, notably for individual instrumental courses, individual teachers are solely responsible for determining if their students pass or fail. These evaluations are often only done orally. The review team encourages MAM to explore ways of integrating external examiners - be they local, regional, or international - into examination juries and recommends structuring written assessment of one on one teaching systematically across the programme. The lack of external participation among examiners could put MAM at risk for guaranteeing an international standard.

Finally, the review team recommends that MAM engage an internal evaluation of admission processes, and that these processes be widely communicated to both admission juries and to future candidates.

## 8. Public interaction

**Standard 8.1.** The institution engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts.

**Fully compliant**



<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The review team encourages MAM to strengthen these activities across the programme and to look to enhancing further such collaborations beyond Malmö and its region.</p>		
<p><b>Standard 8.2.</b> The institution actively promotes links with various sectors of the music and other artistic professions.</p>	<p><b>Fully compliant</b></p> <p>MA/MA Diploma</p>	<p><b>Partially compliant</b></p> <p>BA</p>
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The review team recommends strengthened collaborations with the artistic professions at the Bachelor level. It further recommends the development of formal, clearly structured methods of assessing and monitoring the ongoing needs of the music profession, and a clear engagement in promoting lifelong learning opportunities.</p>		
<p><b>Standard 8.3.</b> Information provided to the public about the institution is clear, consistent and accurate.</p>	<p><b>Substantially compliant</b></p>	
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The review team recommends the development of more comprehensive programme descriptions as well as clear information relative to selection criteria for future students.</p>		

## Conclusion

The review team acknowledges that this programme review is atypical in that it is largely based on comments made by four critical friends and MAM's response to these. Further, the relatively short time frame in which the critical friend reports, MAM's response, and the review team's site-visit took place mean that in some instances, MAM did not have time to either envisage a response or make changes to the programme.

MAM is a positive, nurturing community, committed to developing individual trajectories for each of its students. Students enjoy an active role in all aspects of the organisation, including participation in admissions and examination juries. Further, they benefit from excellent facilities, and there appears to be a strong, informal oral communication culture between teachers and students. The teaching staff is of a high artistic standard. MAM's situation, sitting as it does within the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts and in turn Lund



University, constitutes a major asset, and the future move to a centralized building for the Faculty suggests enormous potential for inter-arts collaboration as well as greater visibility. Culture is strongly supported in the region and indeed nationally, so that employment prospects for graduates within the region are high. Future projected growth in Malmö and the projected international science research centre at Lund University promise new employment opportunities as well as exciting potential links between science and the arts.

The various stakeholders met during the review are clearly engaged and care deeply about MAM. The review team believes the recommendations made in this report can serve to strengthen and clarify educational processes, promote new forms of collaboration across programmes and genres, and provide MAM with a stronger voice in the regional, national and international artistic and educational community. Some areas will benefit from clarification or development of comprehensive strategies: these include assessment, digital and learning environment, internationalization, and human resources. By so doing, MAM will ensure that all its stakeholders – students, teachers, and alumni – take ownership and engage forcefully in the ambitious and exciting Action Plan it has developed.

MAM enjoys unique strengths and opportunities, and the review team hopes the recommendations made in this report will enable it to enhance its educational programme and indeed, its place in the community.

