

Executive summary

Report

Programmes accreditation

Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory (KNC)

(Almaty, Kazakhstan)

Site-visit: 22-24 November 2016

Introduction

As one of the three higher education (HE) institutions in the sphere of culture and art the Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory (KNC) is a leading musical institution of the Republic of Kazakhstan providing professional education of specialists in the field of music at all levels.

The KNC took the decision to undergo an international external accreditation in April 2016. This decision was a natural consequence of KNC's modernization agenda and its adoption of European standards. A strong determining factor in the institution's rationale for its choice of MusiQuE as an accreditation agency was a specialized musical focus.

The accreditation procedure followed a three-stage process:

1. KNC prepared a self-evaluation documentation based on, and structured according to, the MusiQuE Standards for Programme Review.
2. An international Review Team studied the self-evaluation documentation and



conducted a site visit at KNC on 22-24th November 2016. This comprised meetings with representatives of the KNC management team, artistic, academic and administrative staff, students, employers and partners from the sector. The Review Team used the Standards noted above as the basis of its investigations.

3. The Review Team produced the report that follows, structured following the MusiQuE Standards for Programme review.

The Review Team comprised:

- Gustav Djupsjöbacka (Chair), Sibelius Academy, Finland
- Celia Duffy (Secretary and Reviewer), Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Scotland, UK
- Grzegorz Kurzynski (Reviewer), Karol Lipinski Academy of Music in Wrocław, Poland
- Darius Kucinskas (Reviewer), Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania
- Hannu Apajalahti (Reviewer), Sibelius Academy, Finland
- Zakiya Sapenova (Reviewer), Zhurgenov Kazakh National Academy of Arts, Kazakhstan
- Balausa Beisengali (Student Reviewer), Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University (KazNPU), Kazakhstan



Summary of the compliance with the Standards and recommendations

The review team concludes that second and third cycle level are not fully enough developed and documented.

Standard 1: The programme goals are clearly stated and reflect the institutional mission.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Substantially compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Substantially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Conducting	Substantially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Substantially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Substantially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Substantially compliant	/	/
Ped. & Psychology	Substantially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Traditional music	Substantially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Substantially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Recommendations

The Review Team recommends that (1) that summary statistical data (such as student numbers, completions, application data) is presented more clearly and in a uniform way across all programmes; and (2) that data should be systematically collected on equal opportunities and a more proactive approach be adopted.

The Review Team also recommends that KNC should examine in closer detail the relationship between programmes with a view to rationalization, making better use of teaching capacity inside the institution and creating critical mass, although it acknowledges that this might have consequences for funding. The Review Team commends KNC for its forward looking and ambitious institutional agenda, its inclusive approach to institutional and programme development and for its realistic evaluation of the difficulties it still faces, particularly in the international sphere.

Standard 2.1: The goals of the programme are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its methods of delivery.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Substantially compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Substantially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Conducting	Substantially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Substantially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Substantially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Substantially compliant	/	/
Ped. & Psychology	Substantially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Traditional music	Substantially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Substantially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Recommendations

In order to achieve full compliance the Review Team recommends (1) that consideration is given to reducing the weighting of general education (the Model curriculum); (2) that KNC programmes delineate more clearly the progressive relationship between first, second and third cycle; (3) that allocation of ECTS points should be undertaken by academic staff in consultation with students; and (4) that the programme aims are more closely mapped onto the 'Polifonia/Dublin Descriptors' (PDDs) and the AEC Learning Outcomes for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycle in order to show the compatibility of the programme with overarching European Frameworks. Examples of how learning outcomes (as well as assessment methods) of individual modules can be mapped against overall programme aims and the AEC Learning Outcomes for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycle can be found in the AEC Handbook Curriculum design and Development in Higher Music Education and the AEC Handbook Admissions and Assessment in Higher Music Education.

Standard 2.2: The programme offers a range of opportunities for students to gain an international perspective.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Partially compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Conducting	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Partially compliant	/	/
Ped. & Psychology	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Traditional music	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Recommendations

In order to achieve full compliance the Review Team recommends (1) the current institutional policy and programme-specific initiatives in strengthening the international dimension should be vigorously pursued; and (2) that language training in English should be compulsory for students and desirable for staff.

As noted above, the Review Team commends and recognizes the progress that KNC has made in internationalization but agrees with SERs' assessment that it is currently not satisfactory; it hopes by this recommendation to encourage and further motivate KNC's

endeavours in this area and to assist KNC in developing a deeper international presence than only through documentation. Among the suggestions the Review Team would make are institutional benchmarking; a system of grant support for travel and participation fees for students; encouragement and reward for staff to participate in international activity; and an institutional policy on language training.

Standard 2.3: Assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Partially compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Conducting	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Partially compliant	/	/
Ped. & Psychology	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Traditional music	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Recommendations

In order to achieve full compliance the Review Team recommends (1) a review of assessment policy including close alignment of types of assessment with learning outcomes and adopting a practice of written feedback - this should provide a more reliable evidence base for statements on consistency, openness and fairness; (2) staff development on assessment methods, sharing of practice among the programmes, and measures such as inviting international external members onto juries.

The Review Team would have welcomed the opportunity to review examples of assessed work in order to understand more clearly the grading systems in place. The Review Team agreed with the SERs' stated desire to improve assessment procedures but in its view there is a sound basis from which to develop.

Standard 3.1: There are clear criteria for student admission, based on an assessment of their artistic/academic suitability for the programme.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Fully compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Conducting	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Fully compliant	/	/
Ped. & Psychology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Traditional music	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Recommendations

The Review Team recommends that consideration be given to the evaluation of pedagogical skills, where appropriate, at entrance and that admissions criteria should be made available in English.

Standard 3.2: The programme has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Fully compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Conducting	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Fully compliant	/	/
Ped. & Psychology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Traditional music	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Recommendations

The Review Team recommends (1) that student achievement and progression are more clearly presented; (2) that statistics on numbers of applicants and successful applications should be easily available; (3) that programmes carefully weigh student workload in the new dual degree programme.

The Review Team commends KNC's efforts in developing its careers service, with particular regard to the international market, as well as organised provision of information for alumni.

Standard 4.1: Members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/pedagogues/researchers.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Fully compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Conducting	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Fully compliant	/	/
Ped. & Psychology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Traditional music	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Recommendations

The Review Team recommends that institutional funding for CPD is a priority.

The Review Team commends the vision, principles and clear-sightedness of the HR Management Policy 2016-2020.

Standard 4.2: There are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programmes.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Fully compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Conducting	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Fully compliant	/	/
Ped. & Psychology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Traditional music	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Recommendations

The Review Team recommends particular vigilance and forward planning of appropriate staffing of the range of elective modules as it evolves further.

Standard 5.1: The institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programme.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Partially compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Conducting	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Partially compliant	/	/
Ped. & Psychology	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Traditional music	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Recommendations

The Review Team notes KNC's efforts to improve many of the elements of this standard. It recommends that (1) KNC 'unpacks' data and pays more attention to specific programme needs and (2) that library holdings are reviewed as a matter of priority and that access to world-standard electronic resources should be improved.

Standard 5.2: The institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the study programmes.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Fully compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Conducting	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Fully compliant	/	/
Ped. & Psychology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Traditional music	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Remarks

The Review Team notes that KNC is poised to make significant changes that will improve its capability for independent fundraising and greater financial autonomy; in its opinion, the senior management team has both the knowledge and ambition to achieve this result.

Standard 5.3: The programme has sufficient qualified support staff.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Fully compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Conducting	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Fully compliant	/	/
Ped. & Psychology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Traditional music	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Remarks

The Review Team notes the number of support staff appears high but this may be accounted for by double counting and different interpretations of the term 'support staff' in English.

Standard 6.1: Effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the programme.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Fully compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Conducting	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Fully compliant	/	/
Ped. & Psychology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Traditional music	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Recommendations

The Review Team commends KNC programmes' open and informal style, which it finds effective. However, endorsing views expressed in, for example, both the Traditional and Pedagogy and Psychology SERs, it recommends (1) documentation of formal mechanisms for communications; (2) further development of an optimal electronic information system; and (3) development of clearer lines of communication between programmes.

Standard 6.2: The programme is supported by an appropriate organisational structure and clear decision-making processes.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Fully compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Conducting	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Fully compliant	/	/
Ped. & Psychology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Traditional music	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Remarks

The Review Team commends KNC for the structural development and organisational changes it has initiated and endorses the separation of academic and support functions.

Standard 7: The programme has in place effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Fully compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Conducting	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Fully compliant	/	/
Ped. & Psychology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Traditional music	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Recommendations

The Review Team commends KNC for its culture of enhancement and its involvement of a number of stakeholders; however, it recommends more formal documentation of QA processes, via a QA manual, which would prompt an institutional discussion on the interaction of QA and enhancement. The Review Team also finds some aspects informal and would recommend, for example, a clear articulation of feedback loops.

Standard 8.1: The programme engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Fully compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Conducting	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Fully compliant	/	/

Ped. & Psychology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Traditional music	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Remarks

The Review Team notes an intensive engagement with programmes' wider context.

Standard 8.2: The programme actively promotes links with various sectors of the music and other artistic professions.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Fully compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Conducting	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Fully compliant	/	/
Ped. & Psychology	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Traditional music	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Fully compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Recommendations

The Review Team recommends that (1) interactions with the professions could be more formalised and that (2) programmes should look ahead to forecast future opportunities and challenges that their students might face. For example, the current style of employment, largely with established organisations and agencies, might change in the future; KNC is likely to need to prepare its students to be more proactive and entrepreneurial in seeking employment opportunities.

Standard 8.3: Information provided to the public about the programme is clear, consistent and accurate.

	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
Art Management	Partially compliant	/	Not compliant
Composition	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Conducting	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Instrument	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Musicology	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Music education	Partially compliant	/	/
Ped. & Psychology	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Traditional music	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant
Vocal	Partially compliant	Not compliant	Not compliant

Recommendations

The Review Team recommends that (1) as a matter of priority and in line with international ambitions, that the English language content of the website is thoroughly reviewed and improved and (2) an institution-wide content management policy is designed and implemented which defines roles and responsibilities and works towards to better accuracy and currency of ever-increasing information flows.



Conclusion

The complex features of the Kazakh national educational system (so often mentioned in the SERs as a balancing challenge), e.g. the former 'line system', or the characteristics of the national system of funding, as well as internal matters such as the details of decision-making processes, some specialist roles such as 'the illustrator' and the definition of support staff, or pre-requisites such as the qualification principles for specialist higher music education, have all contributed to form a national Kazakhstan context for the Review Team, which is mostly orientated in a European HE system.

The Review Team could not always capture practice across all 9 programme areas due to the constraints of time and the necessity to be selective for the purposes of this report. The Review Team tended to draw examples from the larger areas such as Instrument and Traditional.

The Review Team commends KNC for its forward looking and ambitious institutional agenda and also for its realistic evaluation of the difficulties it still faces, particularly in the international sphere. KNC is experiencing profound change on many fronts; the Review Team acknowledges that current institutional developments through which KNC might obtain more independence from state regulations on academic and governance issues would be extremely valuable to its continued progress.

The Review Team recognizes the considerable achievements to date of the modernization of programmes at the KNC and wishes it success in its continued development.