



Follow-up Review Report

(Quality Enhancement Review)

Bachelor and Master in the Beeldende Kunsten

Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp

(Antwerp, Belgium)

Procedure conducted in cooperation with EQ-Arts –
Enhancing Quality in the Arts



November 2022

Follow-up Review Report

Name of the institution: AP University College

Name of the programme: Bachelor and Master in the Beeldende Kunsten/Visual Arts

Date of the follow-up site visit: 17 – 18 November 2022

Name of the reviewer(s) in charge of the Follow-up Procedure: Dr. Sarah Bennett

Introduction:

The two Schools of Arts of AP University College (the Royal Academy of Fine Arts and the Royal Conservatoire) commissioned MusiQuE to conduct a quality enhancement review at programme level, aimed at assessing the educational and artistic activities as well as the quality assurance systems in place for the Dance Bachelor Programme and the Bachelor and Master of Visual Arts Programme. MusiQuE sub-contracted the review of the Visual Arts Programme to EQ-Arts, while remaining responsible for the overall coordination of the procedure. In preparation for the site visit in March 2021, the MusiQuE Standards and Guidelines for Programme Review were mapped against those of EQ-Arts and a merged set of standards and guiding questions was established and constituted the framework of assessment for this procedure. Two review teams worked in sequence in each department, with MusiQuE undertaking the overall coordination of the whole review process, and review reports were produced for each programme – the Bachelor of Dance, the Bachelor and Master of Visual Arts for the Dutch language track and the Bachelor and Master of Visual Arts for the English language track.

The template below aims to assist the AP University College and the Department of Visual Arts in the post-site visit process. It is structured following the standards included in the framework of assessment used for the procedure. For each of the standards, the initial recommendations of the Review Team are included, followed by a description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved at the level of the institution / department / programme reviewed, and by the conclusions that the reviewer draws in relation to this progress.

Context for the follow-up procedure

It was agreed between MusiQuE, the EQ-Arts executive office, and the Royal Academy of Fine Arts that, in view of the fact that the Academy's Review in March 2021 took place totally online due to the Covid-19 global pandemic, the follow up procedure should include a site visit by the Review Panel Chair – Dr Sarah Bennett. This visit took place 17/18 November 2022 (see schedule of visit below) and included a tour of the departments of the Academy during which there were opportunities for conversations with coordinators, teachers and students. This was followed by meetings of the Review Panel Chair with: the Senior Leadership team – Dean of the Academy, Head of Visual Arts Programme, Head of the Educational Masters/Arts Inclusive initiator, the Education and Quality Advisor, Head of Theory and Discourse, and HRM: Infrastructure and Finances. The Chair also met with staff with responsibilities for Communications, and International Policy/Alumni; and representatives of the Student Council. Although the Chair was unable to meet the Head of Research, materials were provided that reconfirm the positive opinion of the artistic research culture in the Academy. The Chair was able to genuinely experience the life of the Academy in all its vitality, and thanks all involved for making the site visit both productive and enjoyable.

Dr Sarah Bennett, 21 November 2022

The recommendations listed below were produced by the EQ-Arts Review Team following the quality enhancement programme review carried out for the Visual Arts Bachelor and Master Programmes between January and July 2021, with an online visit carried out between 8 and 10 March 2021.

The description of the actions undertaken refers to actions carried out by the reviewed programmes in relation to the recommendations received from the Review Team.

The reviewer's conclusions convey the assessment of the progress made by the reviewed programmes in implementing the recommendations of the Review Team.

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

Recommendation (I):

It is recommended that the strategic target for the programme related to internationalisation, as articulated in the roadmap, is expanded to include the incorporation of a greater range of non-European reference points within the curriculum.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (I):

The pursuit of an open view of the world and non-European points of reference in the curriculum is approached in the Academy's and programme's policy through (1) the theory section and the broader fields of (2) internationalisation and (3) inclusive thinking and acting.

(1)

In the **theory department**, the focus on non-European reference points has been a **topic of discussion for some time**. As a result, the course Art Theory 1950 to Present deals with the topic of postmodernism, thereby providing a philosophical framework that creates more ground for non-Western thinking, or the course Research Methodology 2 introduces students to non-Western art (e.g., they compare a Chinese art form in terms of content and meaning with Western art forms). Although lectures by non-European artists are organised (e.g., some Native American artists in 22-23 through an external collaboration), there is no structural budget provided enabling theory teachers to invite a guest speaker. It is a request of the department to be able to invite one guest speaker for each theory course on an annual basis and thus integrate the non-European perspective more structurally.

(2)

The academy aspires to have **“confirmed and strengthened its position as a global player through an integrated approach on all fronts by 2025”**.

To achieve this ambition, five projects have been identified that should lead to (1) a strategic policy framework, (2) a performing partner strategy with attention to geographical spread and presence in each continent, (3) international lecturers and/or guest speakers for each discipline, (4) a curriculum with international points of reference and room for participation and substantive suggestions from students, and finally (5) enhanced international visibility.

In other words, the internationalisation policy does **not focus exclusively on the non-European aspect** but reaches wider.

(3) The Academy equally aims to 'have inclusive thinking and acting demonstrably present in the programmes by 2025 with diversity awareness in all sections.' An important step towards this is the structural embedding from 2023 of the Arts Inclusive research project in the Academy's operations, and this in collaboration with the Conservatoire. Arts Inclusive focuses on knowledge broadening and professionalisation on inclusive thinking and action of staff and students.

Reviewer's conclusions (I):

It is clear from the progress report and the follow up site visit that the Academy is developing its internationalisation strategy (through a three-pronged approach) in order to incorporate global reference points within the curriculum. The recent changes in the responsibilities of the management team, has enabled one of the senior leadership team to focus exclusively on the relationship between theory and practice, resulting in some innovative practice that is appreciated by the students, and that ensures that diverse perspectives are included structurally throughout the year. The *Arts Inclusive* project continues to enhance the ways in which the Academy incrementally succeeds in embedding diversity and inclusiveness in all its activities, and this supports the widening of the curriculum to embrace non-western standpoints. While the Chair acknowledges that the Academy is subject to national legislation that is a hindrance and often an obstacle to appointing teachers that are not EU citizens, nevertheless the Academy has made recent appointments that reflect the ambition to diversify the staff profile including a new Director of Fashion (USA-Spain-Korea – see also Academy's update under 2.2, Recommendation 5) and two further international appointments in fashion (Mexico and Israel/Germany). Additionally, teachers have been recruited from across the EU as follows: fashion (France); fashion & costume design (Germany); costume design (The Netherlands); In Situ (Germany); sculpture (Germany). Finally, three Belgian nationals with international roots have been appointed. **The Review Panel's recommendation has been enacted and actions are ongoing.**

NB: The Making Mutsaard capital project to upgrade and refurbish the campus is now underway and plans to ensure that any potentially negative impact on student learning due to building works is to be minimised on the nearly 360yr old site are high on the agenda of the Dean and the HRM. The Chair of the Review Panel wishes the Academy's Senior Leadership team good fortune in undertaking this ambitious project.

Recommendation (II):

Data on applicant profiles should be systematically collected, in addition to data on student progress and employment outcomes, in order to enable analysis of access to and attainment within the programme throughout the student study cycle, for all students including those from underrepresented socio-cultural backgrounds.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (II):

In 22-23, a full-time **education and quality development** adviser strengthens the programme team.

From 22-23, data related to **prospective students** and **new students** are systematically analysed. However, recording data related to socio-cultural backgrounds clashes with GDPR restrictions and cannot be mapped.

In 22-23, an action plan aimed at increasing the **pass rate** for the programme in general and the fashion department in particular (obviously without compromising on quality) will be rolled out with analysis of study results and focus interviews.

Reviewer's conclusions (II):

The GDPR does indeed prevent certain data being gathered or held about students. However, the Academy is putting in place some systematic analyses of data on student achievement with the aim to better understand where students underachieve. This is being developed in a two-stage process of data analysis followed by a series of interviews. The process is still being designed, supported by increasing the contract of the Education and Quality Development Adviser to Full-time. **The Review Panel's recommendation has been enacted and actions are ongoing.**

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

Recommendation (I):

The theory-practice working group should prioritise the development of a hybrid approach to theory and practice, to sustain the curiosity and critical engagement of students (particularly those in the applied arts) in the theoretical and contextual aspects of the programme.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (I):

In 22-23, there is a shift in the management of the programme from two part-time programme heads to one full-time programme head. Through the appointment of a **head of theory/discourse** (the former Free Arts programme head), the programme aims to strengthen the substantive link of theory-practice research in the programme.

In 21-22, the project **The Visit**, with a studio visit by theory teachers and researchers to BA3 and master's students was introduced as a pilot project. This was found to be very valuable and will get a structural follow-up in the programme in 22-23.

Also in 21-22, the programme prepared several actions that together contribute to strengthening the intertwining of theory and practice. They will all be implemented in the curriculum in 22-23:

- As part of **Research Methodology 1**, we encourage student participation in activities initiated from research and/or community service: B1 students participate in at least one of the *Soup Sessions* and in at least one lecture or workshop from the *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* series.
- Master classes are concentrated in two **research weeks**, in the first and second semesters. Participation in either of them will become compulsory for all master students. In 23-24, this will be formally included as a compulsory course in the programme.
- The programme introduces a **Research Day**, in which one researcher supervises a group of max 10 students each time, focusing on artistic research within their own praxis.

Reviewer's conclusions (I):

As stated above, there has been a recent new appointment of a Head of Theory/Discourse, and the postholder has been addressing the theory/practice relationship. The introduction of 'The Visit' has been a step in the right direction, and the students greatly value the work done by their theory tutor to extend and broaden the format for their written submissions. Other strategies, as set out in the progress report are working well, and there was an opportunity for the chair of the review panel to attend a 'Soup. Session' on the site visit. The 'Research Day' is still in the planning stages. **The Review Panel's recommendation has been enacted and actions are ongoing.**

Recommendation (II):

Opportunities for crossover between specialisms should be structurally embedded within the programme to encourage the development of interdisciplinary skills that equip graduates for entry to the professional field.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (II):

In 22-23, we will **explore the possibilities** of expanding the existing interdisciplinary space between specialisms in the longer term, both within and across disciplines. To this end, we also want to critically review the study programme and investigate and clearly define the possibilities of e.g., undergraduate classes and interstudio subjects such as *Moving Image*.

The programme **already offers interdisciplinary space** with the annual *project week*, with lecturers teaching in different disciplines, and with opening some discipline-specific theory courses to students from other disciplines. Since the review, the *project week* evolved at the request of students and lecturers into a project with a central and unifying theme. In 2023, that will be 'crafts in a contemporary context'.

The programme also tries to **meet concrete needs**. For example, in 21-22, the assignment volume of the ceramics lecturer (Sculpture studio) was expanded to support students from other disciplines. The printmaking studio is also considering opening certain techniques structurally, considering financial and organisational impact.

Reviewer's conclusions (II):

During the site visit it was apparent that there are multiple strategies in place for providing interdisciplinary activities and experiences, not solely based on the provision of interdisciplinary spaces/studios. The project week on 'Human Rights' in 2021/22 was a successful catalyst for students to engage with others outside of their disciplines. **The Review Panel's recommendation has been enacted and actions are ongoing.**

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

Recommendation (I):

The Academy should find effective mechanisms for drawing the global perspectives of its international student body into the design and content of the curriculum.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (I):

In 21-22, a full-time **internationalisation coordinator** (& alumni) strengthens the programme team.

In 22-23, exploratory discussions with all studios will be initiated with a focus on ongoing activities, existing partnerships, identification of blind spots and the targeted search for new partners. The Academy intends to explore the North American and African continents in a motivated manner to generate input into the programme and stimulate interaction from these **more strategically selected partnerships**.

In 22-23, **anchor points for internationalisation** are introduced in each studio and the start-up of an internationalisation working group follows. Gradually, the focus on more non-European reference points in the studios is growing.

Attention to more international profiles has also grown in **teacher recruitment**. This has been prevalent for some time in the composition of the research team - where there are fewer administrative hurdles - but awareness and alertness has also increased in recruitment for administration and teaching. There is more recruitment through international channels, and we note an increase in the number of international candidates (e.g., recent recruitment of Brandon Wen as artistic director of the fashion department). However, international lecturers with a non-EU profile can only be appointed if they adopt Belgian nationality, which is a solid hurdle in our recruitment policy.

Specifically, threshold-reducing for the recruitment of international students is the **digital admission test**, introduced in 2020 during the Covid pandemic and since then structurally integrated into the operation. The digital admission test is standard for the fashion department and an option for the other disciplines. It offers a sustainable alternative to the physical admission test and wider access to the programme.

The Academy has more than 50 nationalities. This **melting pot** offers a range of opportunities for intercultural encounters and suggestions towards non-European speakers and/or content in training. The ambition is to **consciously strengthen and address this diversity**.

Although the expertise in the theory department is mainly concentrated on the European canon, awareness of diversity and non-European contexts and contents is noticeably growing. It seeps through in various studios via assignments and specific substantive elaborations, though rather via individual initiatives (e.g., attention to African canon in Costume Design) and/or guest lectures. Although extra-curricular, the *Guess Who's Coming To Dinner* series provides a weekly platform for a diversity of voices from the arts field.

Reviewer's conclusions (I):

As noted in Standard 1, the Academy is making productive headway in relation to this recommendation. The student council are keen for international perspectives to be structurally embedded in the curriculum, rather than to remain dependent on the high % of international students attending the Academy. The appointment of a new member of staff with a remit to focus on international partnerships (as well as alumni network events and connectivity) has added momentum to the Academy's ambition for strengthening its position in a global context and extending the geographical options for student and staff exchange. Attendance at the next ELIA conference is planned, and membership of Cumulus is being considered, in order to engage with Europe/world-wide networks. (See also Chair's comments under Standard 1, Recommendation 1). **The Review Panel's recommendation has been enacted and actions are ongoing.**

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

Recommendation (I):

The Academy should review its Assessment Policy as a priority, in order to ensure that enhancements already made in some studios (such as the use of mark sheets with clear assessment criteria and assessment feedback forms), are implemented throughout the programme.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (I):

In the education staff, good practices are invariably shared, which may or may not be picked up more widely. With a full-time **education and quality development adviser** strengthening the education team in 22-23, this practice can also be better supported. After all, in developing education and strengthening educational quality, we consciously want to start from existing practices and support, frame and inspire them. Sharing good practices on assessment, judging and feedback is inherently part of this.

Reviewer's conclusions (I):

As noted below, the Education and Quality Development Advisor and Head of Programme are working productively together to develop a shared framework with quality criteria and recognise the urgency of this. **The Review Panel's recommendation has been enacted and actions are ongoing.**

Recommendation (II):

Clear protocols should be established for the operation of jury evaluations, which outline the responsibilities of those in different roles and sets expectations for the consistent conduct of these assessments.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (II):

The course has a clear jury protocol, which is distributed before the start of judging. However, we note that in practice, the protocol is interpreted in different ways. This has already been discussed in the education staff in 21-22. We want to arrive at a **shared role framework with quality criteria** and will work in 22-23 to more actively inform and coordinate with jury chairs.

Reviewer's conclusions (II):

It is clear that the protocol for juries does indeed exist, but that work has needed to be done to ensure consistency of interpretation. The Education and Quality Development Advisor and Head of Programme are working productively together to develop a shared framework with quality criteria that can be shared with juries. **The Review Panel's recommendation has been enacted and actions are ongoing.**

Recommendation (III):

Efforts to enhance the quality and consistency of written feedback on assessment, through the development of targeted training and guidance for teaching staff, should be prioritized.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (III):

In collaboration with the Educational Master's programme, we are further committed to offering open **workshops on feedback** combined with **personalised guidance** for teachers who want or need explicit support.

In 2021-2022, *Arts Inclusive* organised a **series of talks** with teachers on inclusion and inclusive education. Themes included: How to create an inclusive environment for transgender students, developing resilience in students, micro-aggression, etc. In 2022-2023, we will continue on this élan and again organise talks, workshops and lectures on inclusive thinking and action. These will be disseminated via podcasts and posters.

A college-wide reorganisation of the framing structures has resulted in teachers themselves being responsible for administratively entering evaluation results and feedback since 21-22. This organisational change has a **positive impact on more conscious handling of feedback and evaluation**. Responding to this recent development, an update of the feedback form will be provided in 22-23 to achieve more constructive and development-oriented feedback.

An optimisation of feedback and evaluation will be tackled through three actions this academic year: 1. in collaboration with Arts Inclusive, a tips & tricks constructive feedback will be drawn up and 2. in the training staff we are working on an update of the feedback template with an extra focus on development-oriented feedback and 3. we are preparing an update of the jury regulations with a focus on the different roles. These action plans are scheduled in the policy plan for 22-23.

In discussing feedback and evaluation, we ask for input from all disciplines and invariably try to explicitly name good practices that way. It thus becomes apparent how e.g., Sculpture regularly consults students in shaping its evaluation practice, and how e.g., Costume Design works with a Code of Conduct for students.

Reviewer's conclusions (III):

The endeavour to ensure the quality and consistency of written assessment feedback across the departments continues 'a pace' through a number of strategies offered by the Educational Masters and the Arts Inclusive project as described in the progress report. The Review Panel chair was impressed by the commitment of the Senior Leadership of the Academy to ensure that improvements are made in assessment feedback by supporting the teachers through continuing professional development, including at a personal level. Invited experts contribute to workshops on the use of inclusive language and provide material for podcasts (see <https://ap-arts.be/en/news/kunsten-inclusief-en>). The sharing of good practice (some departments already provide high quality feedback) also continues. The students confirmed that summative feedback has improved in some departments such as Sculpture, but that more effort is required in the departments (not named) where progress appears lacking. Given the three actions taking place in 22/23 regarding optimisation of feedback and evaluation the panel is confident that the quality of feedback in all departments will be reviewed and asks the Head of VAP to sample the feedback reports across the departments. **The Review Panel's recommendation has been enacted and actions are ongoing.**

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

Recommendation (I):

The Academy should consider how it can embed relevant **employability and professional skills incrementally within the curriculum (from BA through to MA)**, to ensure that students are all equally well prepared to make the transition out of the programme and into the professional world.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (I):

A curriculum change to the master's programme was prepared in 21-22, with the introduction in 22-23 of two new courses in fine arts & photography: *To Start As A Pro* and *Exhibition* (3 credits each). Jewellery and costume design also now offer *To Start As A Pro*. It is a course that was previously offered as an elective but has become compulsory for the above disciplines since 22-23. In the other departments, *To Start As A Pro* remains an elective course. Both courses focus on learning contents that were previously integrated in the comprehensive course *Artistic Practice* and are now given more body and focus as separately defined courses. The focus is on employability and professional skills and knowledge of the professional workings of the arts field.

The lecture series *Guess who's coming to dinner* offers an insight into the concrete practice of artists.

In 21-22, information sessions were launched as part of *To Start As A Pro* and occasionally *What's next*. Previous initiatives will be structured and bundled in 22-23 with the support of the new alumni coordinator using the title *'What's next'*.

Reviewer's conclusions (I):

The site visit provided an opportunity to hear more about the multiple strategies and various courses that have been further developed since the Review in 2021, and others that have been introduced, or are in the planning stages - all of which are aimed at enhancing the professional skills and employability of all the graduates. The chair applauds the Academy on its inspirational 'branding' of these activities and the innovative methods of engaging students incrementally from BA to MA. The students are enthusiastic about the range of opportunities for developing their professional skills but request some further consideration about whether the courses are mandatory or elective across the departments where professional skills are already embedded in the course design. The Review Team Chair supports that this should be followed up as part of implementation in 2022/23 academic year. **The Review Panel's recommendation has been enacted and actions are ongoing.**

Recommendation (II):

Opportunities for internships should be reviewed to establish how and whether they can be embedded within students' learning experience and across all specialisms.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (II):

Internship opportunities are being reviewed. Currently, internship opportunities are provided in the curriculum of the graphic design, costume design and photography.

Furthermore, fashion provides alternative internships in the summer, offered from the fashion industry through an annual competition. Introducing an internship in the fine arts and jewellery design studios should be discussed.

Reviewer's conclusions (II):

During the site visit there was a productive and positive discussion about the viability and benefit of internships in certain departments, and it is clear that the question is 'live' and under review. At present, this topic has not been further developed in the disciplines of fine art and jewellery design **The Review Panel's recommendation has been partially enacted and further consideration is planned .**

Recommendation (III):

Data on alumni destinations should be collected and analysed on an annual basis in order to identify actions that might enhance the programme's employment outcomes.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (III):

In 2021-2022, a full-time alumni coordinator (and internationalisation) boosts the programme and initiates the Academy's **alumni policy**. Action is taken on various fronts: alumni on the website (in the spotlight, activities programme, newsletter, interactive map,...), inventory and update of contact details, preparation of alumni event(s). In this way, the Academy aims to connect with its former students and dynamise the large network of and in the visual arts.

In 2021-2022, the Fashion Department participates in a large alumni event with fashion show, in cooperation with Flanders District of Creativity (DC) and the City of Antwerp. **Flanders DC** provides a contact point for entrepreneurship in the creative sector on behalf of the Flemish government and supports creative entrepreneurs in the start-up, growth or professional expansion of their businesses. The event was a first try-out with the intention of repeating the initiative on an annual basis.

The Academy organises a **three-yearly alumni survey** to gain insight into the employment of its graduates and the extent to which the programme has provided its students with sufficient knowledge, skills and familiarity with the professional field and its opportunities. The previous survey dates from 2019-2020; the next one is scheduled in 2022-2023.

Reviewer's conclusions (III):

The Chair of the 2021 Review met with the recently appointed (May 2022) alumni coordinator (with internationalisation) to discuss the alumni events that have been introduced since the Review, or that are forthcoming. Through a range of activities, the expertise and experience of its alumni is being drawn upon by the academy to augment and inform its graduate skills components across the BA and MA (see <https://ap-arts.be/en/hello-there-alumni>). The alumni coordinator is working closely with the communications coordinator to ensure efficacy in managing the growing alumni network. The Academy has been decided to continue with the alumni survey on a three yearly cycle because they want to obtain relevant information which requires sufficient responses, and since the students graduating each year are spread across nine specialisations, it is more interesting to take three graduating years together each time and thus obtain a larger number of respondents per discipline. Based on the above, the panel agrees for the

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Academy to keep the triennial survey, and particularly in view of the regular contact with alumni now in place that enables Alumni data to be evaluated and collated regularly in the interim years between surveys. **The Review Panel's recommendation has been considered and alumni activities are ongoing.**

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

Recommendation (I):

Work currently being undertaken by the Educational Master team to devise a continuing professional development programme for the Academy's teaching staff should continue to be prioritised in order to ensure that all teachers are supported to enhance their skills in the areas of inclusive and effective teaching, assessment and feedback.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (I):

In 21-22, the Educational Master's programme develops a plan for a teacher trajectory specifically tailored to **students with teaching experience**. In 22-23, this trajectory is implemented. Students with teaching experience can integrate their experience in their educational programme. We talk about the student teacher.

The student-teacher can achieve mandatory internships within their own current teaching assignment and can engage in coaching centered on peer-to-peer reflection.

This coaching track has the **potential to grow into a professionalisation track**. We are exploring the possibilities of this in cooperation with AP University of Applied Sciences.

In addition, the Educational Master's programme remains closely linked to the *Arts Inclusive* project, feeding into the content of its activities. Finally, new insights are invariably shared with colleagues in the Master of Visual Arts programme.

Reviewer's conclusions (I):

The programme of Arts Inclusive and other workshops has been successfully engaging teachers in enhancing their skills in inclusive teaching, assessment and feedback, as described in the progress report under Standards 2 and 4. The plans for a potential professionalisation track are under discussion with AP University of Applied sciences, and a professional track for Academy teachers (current and future) should be implemented as soon as possible with the support of AP UAS. **The Review Panel's recommendation has been enacted and actions are ongoing.**

Standard 5.1. The institution has (partner institutions have) appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programme.

Recommendation (I):

A clear process for requesting access to specialist studios and equipment (outside of a student's normal studio) should be established and communicated to staff and students.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (I):

The academy has a system - though **limited** - that allows students access to several studios, notably the print studio, wood studio and mix lab. There is room for improvement in communication about this. An expansion of such access is limited for now because of the intensive use of the studios by the students of the discipline themselves.

Reviewer's conclusions (I):

Discussions about how to manage and communicate access to workshops is under consideration among the Senior Leadership Team. **The Review Panel's recommendation is under consideration.**

Recommendation (II):

The Academy should ensure that: all workshops where health and safety is a priority are supervised by a member of staff when accessible to or timetabled for students; urgent equipment repairs are prioritised; and students are trained to use the equipment therein safely.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (II):

The Academy: provides a sustainability and safety **anchor** from among its teachers in each studio, encourages first aid training, issues a Code of Conduct, discusses sustainability and safety as part of staff appraisals, and integrates sustainability and safety into student assignments'. Additionally, the Academy provides an annual update of the maintenance-repair-investment budget, and an explanation of how to use the equipment at the start of the academic year. Intensive training is given in several studios for this purpose. Furthermore, we are working on the **introduction of a first aid anchor per studio.**

Reviewer's conclusions (II):

The Chair further recommends that the sustainability and safety policy should be clearly accessible to students, S&S anchors and teachers in each relevant workshop. **The Review Panel's recommendation has been enacted and actions are ongoing.**

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

Recommendation (I):

The approval and swift implementation of the planned internal communications policy is recommended in order to ensure that digital communication is effective, particularly during this time of increased online and blended learning.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (I):

In the context of the pandemic, the programme accelerated its **shift to digital communication**: AP-mail (requires continued sensitisation of students and teachers), Digitap as a digital learning platform for theory subjects, Teams as a channel for uploading work for practical subjects.

Since the review, the focus for internal communication has been on further **sensitisation** and implementation of the existing channels. Besides the curriculum-related channels, students and staff also receive the monthly 'Hello There', which is an internal newsletter with staff and student specific information. Further efforts should be made on the mail architecture and the use of Outlook (and the associated AP-mail). A clear structure (sender / hierarchy) will ensure that mails are opened and read more often: the Outlook's tool is currently limited to informing but can be extended to include an organising and agenda-setting element. Sender status is important in this, e.g., a message from the head of the academy would have a more compelling character or e.g., the HR department could schedule a staff meeting in each employee's agenda. This may address the fact that we find that central AP-mails are deleted by many from the bias that they do not apply to them.

Reviewer's conclusions (I):

Emerging from the period of the Covid-19 global pandemic, the internal channels and methods are under constant review in order to maximise the reach and efficacy of communication within and across the Academy. The challenges for effective communications are well known by those with responsibility, and increased digital awareness and skills brought about during the pandemic are being optimised. **The Review Panel's recommendation has been enacted and actions are ongoing.**

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

Recommendation (I):

Clear mechanisms for the closure of feedback loops should be established to ensure that students and other stakeholders know how their feedback on the programme has been considered and actioned where appropriate.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (I):

A system for providing feedback on results and following up feedback is rather sporadic - mostly because of limited response - and should be optimised in the context of internal communication and quality assurance. The communication platform Intranet for Students offers possibilities but is currently little actively used. Consultation with the Student Council is needed.

Reviewer's conclusions (I):

The Chair of the Review Panel held a constructive meeting with the Student Council on the topic of ensuring that actions/decisions/ undertaken by the Academy's leadership team in response to student matters, are disseminated when and as appropriate to the Student Council through the introduction of a formal agenda item at the monthly meetings attended by the Dean and or the Head of the Visual Arts programme. This was shared with the Senior Leadership Team (see also Standard 7). Feedback to Alumni has been addressed through the intensified Alumni activities and network. Closing the feedback loop to other stakeholders is still under consideration. **The Review Panel's recommendation has been partially enacted and is under further consideration**

Recommendation (II):

The Heads of Programme should encourage the Student Council to establish ways to track issues and actions across academic years and to make use of the student intranet to both gather feedback and disseminate information.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (II):

In 21-22, investments were made in vain to strengthen Student Council attendance. With a view to **improving the functioning of the Student Council**, in 22-23 the Academy plans to invest in more members per studio (to increase the level of support and broaden the flow of communication), in a fixed meeting rhythm (structurally scheduled a week before SofA Council), in systematically checking off and discussing educational topics with students and in installing a fixed communication platform.

Reviewer's conclusions (II):

In a meeting with the Student Council the Chair heard that the Student Council members have introduced note taking (minutes) of their meetings that can be used to share matters (ongoing or concluded) with new members of the Council, and to ensure that matters are represented at SofA Council. They have also identified roles and responsibilities within the Council to maximise its effectiveness. **The Review Panel's recommendation has been enacted and actions are ongoing.**

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

Recommendation (I):

Regular meetings between the Heads of Programme and the work field, and between Heads of Programme and the Student Council should be formally embedded within the annual quality cycle and feed into programme monitoring and review processes.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (I):

In 22-23, all ongoing processes in the programme are mapped one by one with the aim of structurally improving the planning, organisation and communication of recurrent activities in an academic year. A first step in this direction was the teachers' calendar.

The appointment of a full-time education and quality development adviser will help integrate regular consultation moments with the resonance committee and student council into the annual calendar.

Reviewer's conclusions (I):

The annual schedule, structure and timings for formal meetings has been improved and the recently increased contract of the Education and Quality Development Adviser from part-time to full-time bodes well for enhancing the annual quality cycle further. **The Review Panel's recommendation has been enacted and actions are ongoing.**

Recommendation (II):

The newly developed quality assurance mechanisms employed by the Academy should be regularly reviewed to ensure that they are fit for purpose and continue to identify issues, areas for enhancement and examples of good practice.

Description of the actions undertaken and progress achieved (II):

A systematic follow-up of the quality assurance policy *an sich* should be integrated into the operation of the programme.

Reviewer's conclusions (II):

The recently increased contract of the Education and Quality Development Adviser from p/t to of f/t will be instrumental in ensuring the internal quality assurance processes are working to the advantage of the student learning experience leading to an annual quality assurance process. **The Review Panel's recommendation is being enacted and further actions are forthcoming.**