

Executive summary

Report

Programme accreditation

Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya (ESMUC)

Bachelor of Music

Master of Performance

Master of Flamencology

(Barcelona, Spain)

Site-visit: 5 – 8 February, 2024

Introduction

The Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya (ESMUC) was founded by the Government of the Generalitat de Catalunya, aiming to be part of the European Higher Education Area. It was the first public higher education institution in Catalunya offering a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in Music following the Catalan and Spanish regulations for artistic education.

The previous verification processes of the Bachelor's degree were conducted in 2012 and 2013 by the Agència per a la Qualitat del Sistema Universitari de Catalunya (AQU Catalunya). These processes were followed in 2014 by an institutional review commissioned to the Association Européenne de Conservatoires, Académies de



Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC) including the participation of AQU Catalunya. In 2018 ESMUC went through the accreditation process of the Bachelor's degree of Music and the Master's degree in Advanced Music Performance Studies: Classical and Contemporary Music Instruments. This review was a joint effort of AQU Catalunya and MusiQuE.

The current joint accreditation process is a continuation of the previous verification processes and is again conducted and recognised by both agencies AQU Catalunya and MusiQuE. For this purpose, the AQU Catalunya standards for accreditation of arts higher education programmes have been mapped against the MusiQuE standards for programme review. The mapping between both sets of standards is provided as an annex to the report and aims to demonstrate the correspondence between both sets of standards.

The procedure for the accreditation of the programmes followed a three-stage process:

1. ESMUC prepared a Self-evaluation Report (SER) and supporting documentation, based on the AQU Catalunya standards for accreditation of arts higher education programmes and the MusiQuE Standards for Programme Review.
2. An international review team composed by MusiQuE and AQU Catalunya studied the SER and conducted a site-visit at ESMUC from 5th to 8th of February 2024. The site-visit comprised meetings with representatives of the ESMUC management team, teaching and support staff, students, alumni, representatives of the music profession and external stakeholders, and visits to facilities as well as attendance to classes and performances. The review team used both sets of standards as the basis of its investigations.
3. The review team produced the accreditation report that follows, structured according to the two sets of standards mentioned above.

The review team is formed by:

- Philippe Dinkel, Former Director, Haute école de musique de Genève (HEM), Switzerland (Review Team Chair), MusiQuE
- Tuovi Martinsen, Head of International Relations, Sibelius Academy (University of the Arts Helsinki), Finland (Review Team Member and Secretary), MusiQuE
- Dr. Iñaki Sandoval, Dean of Music, Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, Spain (Review Team Member), MusiQuE
- Dr. Sheila del Barrio Ungría, Professor, Madrid School of Creative Music, Complutense University of Madrid and International University of Valencia, Spain (Review Team Member), AQU Catalunya
- Dr. Alicia Pajón Fernández, PhD in Musicology, Student representative, Spain (Review Team Member), AQU Catalunya
- Raquel del Pino, classical guitarist, and active singer at Teatro de la Zarzuela, Teatro Real and Gran Teatre del Liceu, Spain (Review Team Member), AQU Catalunya



- Observer: Noèlia Grifo i Castillo, Senior Advisory, AQU Catalunya

The resulting report covers the review of the three programmes according to the standards of AQU Catalunya and MusiQuE. Many observations, findings, and recommendations in the report apply to all programmes. Where they specifically refer to one of the programme under review, this is marked in the report. In the final summary, compliance with both the AQU Catalunya and MusiQuE Standards and recommendations are shown for each programme separately.



Summary of the compliance with the Standards and recommendations

The review team concludes that Bachelor of Music, the Master of Performance and the Master of Flamencology comply with the *MusiQuE Standards for Programme Review* and AQU Catalunya standards for accreditation of arts higher education programmes as follows:

Programme		Standards		
		AQU Standard 1.1.	AQU Standard 1.2.	MusiQuE Standard 1.1
Bachelor	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Fully compliant</i>
	Recommendations / suggestions for enhancement			
Master of Performance	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Fully compliant</i>
	R / S	(MusiQuE Standard 1.1) The review team strongly suggests ESMUC's efforts to change the structure of the Master's into a two-year programme. The review team encourages ESMUC to continue discussions on the need for more institutional autonomy to develop a curriculum structure according to the identified needs.		
Master of Flamencology	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Fully compliant</i>
	Recommendations / suggestions for enhancement	(MusiQuE Standard 1.1) the review team suggests to consider including some onsite activities (e.g. internships) in the curriculum of the Master in Flamencology programme to ensure the connection to the field, including flamenco, but also to the larger research community.		
All programmes	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Fully compliant</i>
	Recommendations / suggestions for enhancement	The review team suggests for ESMUC a further development of the language policy. The review team suggests that the importance of the English language competences should be emphasised throughout the institution, with the respect to the national languages, Catalan, and Spanish.		
		AQU Standard 1.3.		MusiQuE Standard 2.1
Bachelor	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>		<i>Fully compliant</i>
	Recommendations / suggestions for enhancement			
Master of Performance	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>		<i>Fully compliant</i>
	R / S			

Master of Flamencology	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>		<i>Substantially compliant</i>	
	Recommendations / suggestions for enhancement	The review team recommends the department to prioritise the necessary developments to offer learning activities also in English.			
		AQU Standard 1.4.		MusiQuE Standard 1.2	
Bachelor	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>		<i>Fully compliant</i>	
	R / S				
Master of Performance	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>		<i>Fully compliant</i>	
	R / S				
Master of Flamencology	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>		<i>Fully compliant</i>	
	R / S				
		AQU Standard 1.5.		MusiQuE Standard 1.1	
Bachelor	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>		<i>Fully compliant</i>	
	R / S				
Master of Performance	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>		<i>Fully compliant</i>	
	R / S				
Master of Flamencology	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>		<i>Fully compliant</i>	
	R / S				
		AQU Standard 2.1.	AQU Standard 2.2.	AQU Standard 2.3.	MusiQuE Standard 6.1
All programmes	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
	Recommendations / suggestions for enhancement	(MusiQuE Standard 6.1.) Therefore, the review team recommends ESMUC to further develop the webpage to ensure all relevant information is available in three languages: Catalan, Spanish and English and to carefully proofread the English translations.			
		AQU Standard 3.1.	AQU Standard 3.2.	AQU Standard 3.3.	MusiQuE Standard 7
All programmes	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
	R / S	(MusiQuE Standard 7) The review team recommends ESMUC to consider bringing the quality assurance processes closer to the staff and students by organising informal sessions, where information would be gathered e.g., in discussions.			
		AQU Standard 4.1.	AQU Standard 4.2.	AQU Standard 4.3.	MusiQuE Standard 3.1

All programmes	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Fully compliant</i>
	Recommendations / suggestions for enhancement	(AQU Standard 4.2) The review team encourages ESMUC to consider a system of periodical formal review for staff members, which would both help participation, review the past period, and agree upon new objectives for the new one.			
		AQU Standard 5.1.	AQU Standard 5.2.	MusiQuE Standard 5.1	
Bachelor	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Fully compliant</i>	
	R / S				
Master of Performance	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Fully compliant</i>	
	R / S				
Master of Flamencology	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>	
	R / S	(MusiQuE Standard 5.1.) The review team recommends to consider increasing the access to quality repositories offering documentation or articles in high-impact journals and to enhance the anti-plagiarism system to verify the identity of students during exams. The review team suggests the Master in Flamencology to further explore the use of ESMUC's facilities to deliver face-to-face learning activities (roundtables, working groups, etc.).			
		MusiQuE Standard 5.2			
Bachelor	Level of compliance	<i>Fully compliant</i>			
	R / S				
Master of Performance	Level of compliance	<i>Fully compliant</i>			
	R / S				
Master of Flamencology	Level of compliance	<i>Substantially compliant</i>			
	Recommendations / suggestions for enhancement	The review team recommends to develop a specific policy to ensure there are adequate mechanisms for monitoring students' health and wellbeing in an online learning setting.			
		AQU Standard 6.1.			
Bachelor	Level of compliance	<i>Progressing toward excellence</i>			
	R / S				
Master of Performance	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>			
	R / S				
Master of Flamencology	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>			
	R / S				
		AQU Standard 6.2.	MusiQuE Standard 2.1		

Bachelor	Level of compliance	<i>Progressing towards excellence</i>	<i>Fully compliant</i>
	Recommendations / suggestions for enhancement		
Master of Performance	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Fully compliant</i>
	R / S		
Master of Flamencology	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
	R / S	The review team recommends to complete a follow up process focused on the achievement of learning outcomes in two years, as the programme has only been recently implemented and there is not much evidence about elements such as the programme suitability for the professional life.	
		AQU Standard 6.3.	MusiQuE Standard 2.2
Bachelor	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
	R / S		
Master of Performance	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
	R / S		
Master of Flamencology	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
	R / S		
All programmes		(MusiQuE Standard 2.2) The review team recommends a more holistic approach to assessment to also activate the student's own responsibility on his/her learning process. ESMUC is also encouraged to consider using dialogues in assessment, assessing rather the process than e.g., the one-time event in an exam or in a concert.	
		AQU Standard 6.4.	MusiQuE Standard 2.3
Bachelor	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
	R / S		
Master of Performance	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
	R / S		
Master of Flamencology	Level of compliance	<i>Compliant</i>	<i>Substantially compliant</i>
	Recommendations / suggestions for enhancement	(MusiQuE Standard 2.3) The review team recommends that as the employability possibilities are wider than the continuation on the research path, it would be important to consider including a face-to face practical period into the Master's studies, if the curriculum can be one year longer.	
All programmes		The review team recommends ESMUC to consider other methods of gathering evidence on the education's offering in facilitating the transfer to the professional life.	
		MusiQuE Standard 4.1	

All programmes	Level of compliance	<i>Partially compliant</i>
	Recommendations / suggestions for enhancement	The review team warmly recommends ESMUC to consider introducing English language programmes both on Bachelor and Master levels and increasing the offer for international experiences (Erasmus exchanges) both at Bachelor and Master level despite the scope of the latter. The review team recommends to plan and complete specific actions to face language challenges before the next review.
		MusiQuE Standard 4.2
Bachelor	Level of compliance	<i>Fully compliant</i>
	R / S	
Master of Performance	Level of compliance	<i>Fully compliant</i>
	R / S	
Master of Flamencology	Level of compliance	<i>Fully compliant</i>
	R / S	

Conclusion

During the site-visit, the review team was convinced that ESMUC has a strong future-oriented vision and that they have set aims for development. Those developmental aims are closely linked and based on the analysis of the challenges in the changing operational environment of the music sector. The review team was impressed by the commitment of the senior management and faculty, as they clearly share the values and base their actions on them. The mission and vision of ESMUC were successfully communicated throughout the entire organisation and the importance of the teamwork, which also includes students, was evident in all discussions. The whole organisation was customised to self-reflective approach, which guarantees the continuous improvement of ESMUC. ESMUC's close collaboration with alumni and labour market and the approach to develop student-centered education relevant for the future, are supporting the reach of the high-level and relevant educational outcomes. The well-planned educational wholeness gives students the needed assets for entering the competitive professional world. To sum up, the ESMUC's well-functioning and systematic work on quality enhancement is assertive.

