

# **International Art Academy Palestine (IAAP)**

## **Quality Enhancement Institution Review**

**ON BEHALF OF:**

**THE OSLO NATIONAL ACADEMY OF THE ARTS  
&  
THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS NORWAY**

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**Annex 1 DOCUMENTS PROVIDED**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Oslo National Academy (KHiO) is in the middle of a new "Consolidation project 2010-2013" with the International Art Academy Palestine (IAAP), sponsored by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry requires that a new midterm evaluation take place – similar to the review in 2008.

In November 2011 I was approached by George Morgenstern, the IAAP Coordinator from the National Academy to make a return visit to carry out this review, which was to take place between the 25<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2012. This is a report of the outcomes of this visit with identified areas of good practice and recommendations for the academy and equally important for KHiO and the Ministry.

These outcomes were arrived at through reading key academy documents, external reports, intensive discussions with all key stakeholders and my own observations.

## **2. OBJECTIVES OF QUALITY ENHANCEMENT EVALUATION**

### **2.1 Objectives of the review**

As with the Interim review in 2008 the main objective was to arrive at a well-substantiated view of the strategic management and operation of the project:

- to assess the economic dispositions based on the aims of the project, assess the accounts and accounting reports.
- assess if the project has satisfactory progression to achieve the aim to establish an art education in Ramallah at a satisfactory level.
- the possibility to achieve the targets agreed between Oslo National Academy of the Arts and The Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

In addition I think to contribute to the sustainability of the academy it is necessary to support the academy (including students, management, teaching, technical and administrative staff) to gain expertise on self-evaluation, linking internal quality issues with external requirements.

The academy has to look at self-evaluation as an institutional responsibility to enhance the quality of the academy, rather than focusing on the bureaucratic and controlling aspects of quality assurance.

The academy has to develop a continuous rigorous internal evaluation process and willingness for open, honest critical self-evaluation.

In arriving at these objectives we have to value and preserve cultural, artistic, and pedagogic diversity.

The principles employed include: student centred, outcomes-based learning; involves student participation and the need for comparability – *European Qualifications Framework*.

## **2.2 Terms of reference**

As well as my role as Head of Birmingham School of Art, I have spent the past 22 years being trained and training experts for engagement in Quality Review Enhancement, initially in the UK but for over ten years across a greater Europe. More recently I have been one of the founders of **EQ-arts** - a European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA) organization affiliated to the European Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA) - which offers a distinctive approach towards *Quality Assurance and Enhancement*, using a methodology specifically tailored for Higher Arts Education Institutions and which embraces all arts disciplines. It offers a sound evaluation process that draws upon a European qualifications framework, respects the individual vision and national context of institutions while maintaining a clear focus on the student experience. EQ-arts is a community of trained and highly experienced QA experts who have tested its methodology of institutional review through conducting institutional and subject reviews across Europe over the past six years.

## **2.3 Process of the review**

After discussions between Dr. Tina Sherwell and myself, we agreed the process of the review initially involved the Academic Director writing an IAAP Update Report 2008 – 12<sup>1</sup>, which closely followed structure and headings of the institutional Self-Evaluation Report produced in 2008.

This report was supported by a number of additional documents (see Annex 1), presenting key documents in the development of the academy including External Examiner reports, student handbooks, statistics etc.

The visit in April involved an extensive range of meetings including:

- Chairman of the Board Dr. Mohammad Shaheen & Tayseer Barakaat;
- the Directors Khaled Mourani & Dr. Tina Sherwell;
- separate student groups for all four years y1 (7),y2 (7),y3 (4), y4 (6);
- teachers Beatrice Catanzaro, Yazam Khalili, Mohammed Yaqubi, Bayan Shbeib;
- Academic Board member Yasid Anani;
- graduates/alumni (3);
- Operations Manager Samia Tamimi
- Development Officer Nancy Mahmoud

I also visited a student off-site exhibition at Kufer Naimi.

The visit culminated in a feedback session with the Academic Director and the reciprocal agreement to provide some additional material and information.

## **3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ACADEMY**

### **3.1 History 2008 - 12**

IAAP is the major project within the Palestinian Association for Contemporary Art (PACA), and has continued to develop and strengthen

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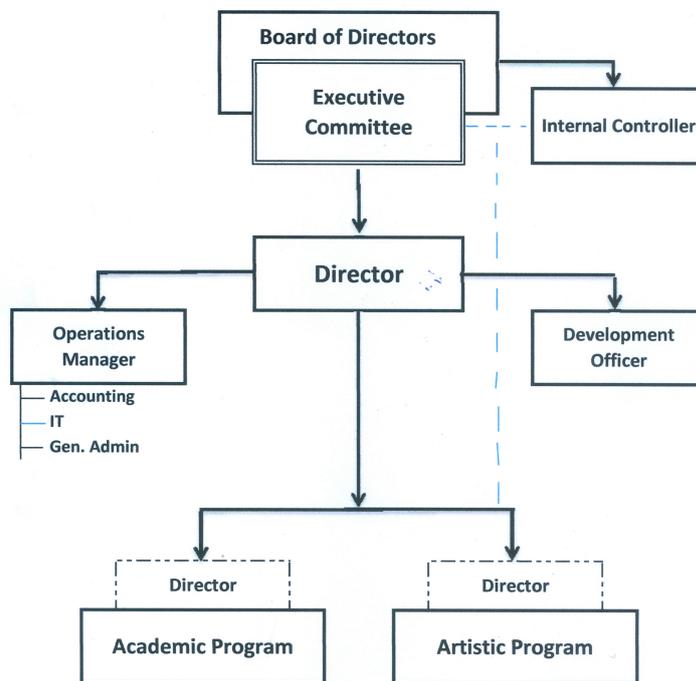
<sup>1</sup> Dr. Tina Sherwell IAAP Update Report April 2012

its local and international profile between 2008-2012. During this time the academy has continued working on evaluating and developing the BA Contemporary Visual Art programme while also creating stronger links between the Academy and the community through its Artistic Programme. Supporting this it has developed its governance and management operational systems and strategy, as well as forging more sustainable collaboration with its academic partner Oslo National Academy of the Arts (KHiO).

### 3.2 Organisational Management structure

PACA's International Academy of Art Palestine

Organizational Chart - Draft 22 October 2011



Since my previous visit in 2008 there has been a major reorganisation in the management strategy at the academy and in 2011 PACA received funding from the Ford Foundation to undertake strategic planning as part of this the operational structure of the IAAP was reviewed and a new model adopted which was implemented at the beginning of 2012. After extensive consultation, which included KHiO, the Board of Directors decided that Dr Tina Sherwell would step down as Director and take up the new position of Director of Academic Programmes and Khaled Hourani former Artistic Director would assume the role of Director. This took effect from the beginning of February 2012.

A further aspect of the new structure saw the introduction of the position of Development Officer, whose main tasks would involve fund raising and PR. In addition the role of Finance and Administration Manager was re-framed into position of Operations Manager.

The outcome of this strategy has resulted in the programmes of PACA/IAAP being clearly defined into two fields, namely the Artistic Programme and the Academic Programme, with Directors assigned to run each strand. The aim of the new division was to enable the effective implementation of the mission goals and strategic plan of the institution.

After discussions with the Chair of the Board of Directors and all the key academy management staff I believe this was a very positive and effective developmental move forward and showed strategic vision by the Board. It also was a very positive decision for Dr. Tina Sherwell, who before the change I believe was too stretched in her responsibilities and this had a detrimental impact on her health and wellbeing. It was also the right move to get the best out of, and focus, her considerable expertise.

This has also enabled the new Director Khaled Hourani to work to his strengths in developing a very high international profile for IAAP through international artistic projects (e.g. Picasso in Palestine.) and networking.

Operationally this change has had a very positive impact on academic development and cultural engagement for the academy, but I would stress caution in not letting these two key activities progress too independent of each other. This opinion is supported by the current External Examiner Susanne Bosch from the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland, who states *“The Academy has two very successful strands, its BA programme and its activities; but these forces – if not brought together and working as a synergy – could pull the Academy potentially apart”*<sup>2</sup> I believe the cultural programme has a strong direct impact on the students’ learning experience but the academy cannot afford the two elements to run too independently. As finance is key to the sustainability of the academy I strongly recommend a funding model is developed whereby external income generation supports both activities. It is often easier to generate project funding and much harder for revenue funding, therefore build in proposals which support a full-costing model (staff, premises, services and academic etc.).

The creation of the position of Development Officer with responsibility for income generation is an excellent and very necessary staff addition for the survival of the academy. This is a very difficult task in the arts and art education in times when economies are more stable, but for a number of years and probably for a number of years to come this has been an extremely difficult task when the global economy is in such a recession. My concern is this post has a number of other responsibilities and is being pulled to spend more time on these other tasks, which in terms of survival is definitely not an institutional priority. The post should be cleared of other responsibilities and focus full-time on the mission of income generation.

According to the Operation Management Structure diagram on the previous page the two new posts, the Development Officer and the Operations Manager are directly responsible to the Director/Artistic Director, which could skew their priorities and make it difficult for the Academic Director to place demands on them?

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<sup>2</sup> Susanne Bosch External Examiners report 2011 – 12 (p.2)

Recommendations:

- the Development Officer post should be cleared of other responsibilities and focus full-time on the mission of income generation;
- re-consideration to the lines of management to help the academy achieve its goals;
- clear achievable financial targets set and prioritised;
- quarterly reports to the Board updating on achievements, pending and future proposals;

#### **4. MISSION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

##### Mission Statement

*A Pioneering Institution in Palestine concerned with developing and advancing the practice and knowledge of contemporary visual arts, through learning, capacity building and resource networks, utilizing innovative programmes and its institutional model<sup>3</sup>*

In 2011 PACA underwent a critical strategic review with the consulting firm Idara, from which the following objectives<sup>4</sup> were identified:

- to pursue sustainability, both academic and financial to help the organisation to achieve its goals and to continue thriving and developing over the long term;
- to develop and expand existing and new contacts and organisational networks to engage the largest number of stakeholders in supporting and promoting the academy and its programmes to make a positive change within contemporary art in Palestine;
- to build bridges and better understanding between and among all key players in the communities at large;
- to develop an Institutional Model at PACA responsive to its environment, internally and externally, but flexible enough to allow for the creativity and innovations inherent in the work of the organisation, thus making it distinctive from many arts organisations around the globe;
- to generate and disseminate the relevant knowledge and information pertaining to contemporary visual art and ensure that this function is inseparable to the organisation. It will use the media and all information technology available at its disposal to disseminate and communicate with the widest possible audience and all concerned parties.

I believe all these objectives are appropriate and, considering PACA and the academy's achievement to date, achievable with the appropriate support. What PACA and this small academy have achieved with its modest support and resources is truly special and worthy of continuing with further increased financial and management support. It will need to prioritize these objectives and maintain a strict discipline of approach to realize them.

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<sup>3</sup> Dr Tina Sherwell IAAP Update Report 2012 (p.3)

<sup>4</sup> Strategic Plan

## 4.1 Aims

### A developed/advanced level of practice and understanding of contemporary visual art in Palestinian Society

- 1.1 Contemporary Visual Art at Higher Education Level:  
this to be achieved through strengthening the existing BA programme, developing a new MA programme and a Professional Training Programme in Curating and Visual Arts Management.
- 1.2 Research and Documentation:  
through the development of the Library and IT Resource Centre, development of Fellowships and exhibitions.
- 1.3 Community Projects and Activities:  
through development of Extra Curricular Art Projects, an Art Camp and specialised workshops.

These two activities have grown from strength to strength with the academy's international reputation being reflected in the demand by major arts institutions, both academic and professional, seeking to collaborate with it and their students being invited to participate in leading international art exhibitions and competitions and winning major awards. All this recognition far exceeds any similar small academies from around the globe.

### An innovative Institutional Model

- 2.1 Effective Organisational Structure:  
this is currently being achieved through developing and implementing a new management operational structure, defined roles and job descriptions, introducing staff review and evaluation process,
- 2.2 Effective Human Resource Management System:  
through a staff development and training programme, a competitive working environment and systems to attract high calibre employees.
- 2.3 Proper Financial System:  
through developing and implementing the new Financial Management System and procedures in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.
- 2.4 Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:  
through developing and linking existing components into an Integrated Management Information System.

Compared to the systems in place in 2008, when I last visited, the academy has appointed and implemented a much more thorough and robust operational management structure, better and more supportive Human Resources policy and practices, with a more accountable and transparent financial system.

One of the key decisions from this review was to dissolve the PACA-IAAP division, as IAAP has built up a considerable international reputation and credibility and was undertaking the majority of PACA's aims, thus while PACA will remain the official legal name of the NGO all activities will take place under the umbrella of the Academy. This decision was made to tackle the complexities of the fact IAAP had grown into a major project in which all of PACA's staff were employed and PACA had minimal profile and activities, therefore diverting resources and manpower to re-build

PACA was deemed fruitless. As a consequence PACA has relinquished its premises in Irsal Street and the resources became part of IAAP.

## **5. PROJECT ECONOMY AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The International Academy of Art, Palestine (IAAP) is currently funded through its grant from The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway and The Ford Foundation for its overall running cost and core expenditure. In addition it has received and receives additional funding, for student exchange programme visiting lecturers from The British Council, The Henrich Boell Foundation Kiel, The Belgian Consulate, The Palestinian Investment Fund and individual contributors. It receives extensive in-kind support through the donation of books and films as well in-kind work of visiting lecturers who are given a modest honorarium in comparison to their level of expertise and also contribute their knowledge for free. IAAP also works in order for international VL's are covered through additional grants or are part of visiting programme of the its institutional network with Al Mamal Foundation, Art School Palestine and Franco-Goethe Cultural Centre's residency programmes. IAAP also engages in range of activities including publications, extra curriculum programmes, artistic projects which contribute to the overall revenue of IAAP.

During the strategic planning in 2011, the process identified that the academy needed to turn IAAP's extensive network and international profile into a financial asset. It also identified that IAAP was at risk through not having a diversity of funding sources and urgently needed development in this area. In addition it was noted that IAAP needed to create income generation activities and this could be achieved through activities designated in its artistic programme, through specialist courses and workshops and a percentage from administration of projects. It was decided that IAAP needed to recruit a Fundraising Officer as the Artistic Director and Director were overloaded with work and this specialist area needed a designated expert member of staff. During strategic planning and development of new operational structure at IAAP this position was developed into a Development Officer.

Recently appointments to this post have been made with 2 p/t staff, Nancy Mahmoud (fundraising specialist) and Bayan Shbeib, with the intention to work intensively in 2012 on securing a diversity of funding sources at IAAP.

The main remit of work will include:

- collation of the networks of IAAP and an analysis how these can be sources of funding (individuals and organisations local, regional and international);
- identification of funding bodies and priorities and target audiences;
- identification of individual patrons;
- development of funding proposals for core funding and projects;
- development of projects for income generation;
- development of PR resources and IAAP profile.

What I found was two very committed people who were striving to do their difficult job, but were often pulled in other directions, or focusing on projects that would support the artistic programme but would offer little to underpin the critical financial shortfall in the development of the academic

programme. It is doubly problematic when one of the fundraisers is also the best theoretical teacher in the academy and responsible for introducing writing skills and essay construction to help students in an area they struggle most.

Recommendations:

The academy must allow these colleagues to focus on their task to make the academy sustainable. To achieve this the Directors/Board must:

- develop a full-cost financial model so that all fundraising supports both strands of the IAAP activities;
- set clear achievable annual targets, which can be reviewed and evaluated;
- quarterly financial reports showing achievement, pending and future activities/applications;
- develop a strategy to sell the academy's expertise (knowledge/skills transfer);
- review Job Descriptions to prioritise roles and responsibilities and set (quantify) targets;
- improve communication between Directors, Academic Board and teaching staff so all are aware and active in achieving the academy's objectives;

## **6. PROGRESSION OF PROJECT**

### **6.1 Agreed targets**

The current agreement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and partnership with KHiO for 2010-2013 states the following targets under the Consolidation of the IAAP.

Objectives as stated in agreement:<sup>5</sup>

1) *To contribute to a stable working and self-driven funding situation, so that IAAP is no longer dependent on Norwegian funding to cover basic operational costs. Main indicators: Self-generated funding 49% of total budget in 2010-11; 56% in 2011-12; allocation of funds from the Palestinian Authorities.*

2) *To secure professional and quality-assured higher education in the field of visual art for young talented Palestinians. Main indicators: Conferral of bachelor degrees in 2011/12/13 on students accepted in 2007/08/09; intake of new student 2011/12/13.*

3) *To contribute to the development of IAAP's professional and administrative competence as an educational institution on a college level.*

4) *To contribute to the process towards IAAP's academic accreditation and integration in the Palestinian system of higher education.*

5) *To stimulate professional contact, cooperation and exchange between IAAP, Norwegian and international institutions and individuals.*

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<sup>5</sup> Dr. Tina Sherwell IAAP Update Report 2012 (pp. 5-7)

## 6.2 Sustainability

IAAP has been in existence for a relatively short time and this has been made possible by the very generous financial support of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the commendable support and guidance of the Oslo National Academy of the Arts, without both this project would not have been possible.

I fully endorse the External Examiner Susanne Bosch's statement made in her 2011-12 annual report,

*The International Academy of Art Palestine is an exceptional institution, not only in location and context, but also in its entire set-up. A very personal and almost family-like working atmosphere defines the rather small Academy; at the same time it is the location for (international) cultural events. The Academy is fortunate enough to have ongoing input from many interesting and renowned artists, curators and theoreticians.*

but then she goes on to say

*One very severe problem of this success story under extreme circumstances is the serious burning out of local staff members. Not only is there the need to deal with daily incidences, but to host and welcome numberless guests, their needs and workshops, while keeping continuity with students and all the other daily tasks. The great danger of this setting is the failure of such an institution by losing valuable staff and with that knowledge, networks and experience. The Academy has two very successful strands, its BA programme and its activities; but these forces – if not brought together and working as a synergy – could pull the Academy potentially apart.*

The annual budget in any terms is very modest and as stated above relies very heavily on a very small core team to take on a multitude of academic, management and administrative tasks. What they have achieved to a high international standard in this relatively short and extremely difficult financial and politically time is develop and establish a successful higher education arts institution. This development post *Bologna* could put a large number of bigger, higher profile European HE arts institutions to shame.

IAAP has successfully achieved a number of the academic targets (see 6.1) set by the Norwegian Ministry but has fallen short of the financial targets objective, whereby the main indicators are: *Self-generated funding 49% of total budget in 2010-11; 56% in 2011-12; allocation of funds from the Palestinian Authorities.*<sup>6</sup> Although IAAP has undergone a major strategic review in 2011, which aimed to address these objectives and implemented changes in management, new staffing posts, a shift in teaching strategy to bring greater continuity to the student learning experience and enhancing and extending its external links and networks, it is unrealistic to expect such an increase in income generation in a climate of global financial recession. IAAP was offered 125,000 euros by the Palestinian Government but due to the financial constraints, like many cultural projects, the offer was never realised. This would have helped the academy achieve the set target. The academy has been successful in raising two-year strategic development funding from the Ford Foundation,

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<sup>6</sup> Memorandum of Understanding 2010-13 with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

but it is also conditional on IAAP achieving its objectives arrived at in the Strategic Plan.

The IAAP has set the target of £300,000 to be raised by the fundraisers, which is to offset core costs which is a daunting task in this financial climate. They are seeking find 3 sponsors to each donate £1000,000.

The other agreement objective seeing IAAP's academic accreditation and integration in the Palestinian system of higher education has seen little being achieved. But the academy is caught in a very difficult situation, whereby the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education requires an institution to have a minimum number of academic programmes, students, departments, levels of resources and teaching staff to gain this accreditation and recognition. In discussion with the Board representatives it is clear that the academy has reviewed all possibilities including amalgamating into one of the three larger universities. The problem is retaining the distinctiveness and autonomy of IAAP's academic programme of practice-based visual arts learning, the policy to recruit a range of students from disadvantaged backgrounds and most likely having to move from its politically and socially significant location.

There is now a real urgency in decision making by all the key stakeholders of this major project. The funding for this cycle from the Norwegian Ministry is due to finish in 2013 with no guarantee of future funding. It is difficult to see how the IAAP can continue to recruit if they cannot ensure the students will be able to finish there studies. The academy also has employees that it must protect and ensure it meets it employers responsibilities.

Recommendations:

- I strongly recommend the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs continues to support this exceptional project for a further period with revised realistic targets;
- the Board should take on an increased advocacy role to lobby strongly nationally and internationally on behalf of the academy;
- KHiO should vigorously lobby the Norwegian government on behalf of IAAP to continue, and if possible, increase their funding
- the academy should develop stronger links with regional 'feeder' schools;
- the academy must strive to retain its current autonomy and distinctiveness, but if it is forced to amalgamate with a larger institution it must try to ensure it can retain its vision, mission and uniqueness.

## **7. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

The current curriculum was approved in 2008 and implementation has followed with the first cohort graduating this year. For the cadre of IAAP the implementation of the curriculum with a VL structure was an important learning experience, in which each semester systems were tightened and made more comprehensive to ensure there was detailed, qualitative documentation of students participation, development and attainment.

The flexibility provided by KHiO within the implementation of the programme meant that IAAP had the opportunity to run a wide range of

courses delivered by a diverse range of artists, from local, regional and international arenas.

There was some consensus among the students I met across the four years that the curriculum was 'bity' only knowing one semester ahead so they were not sure of the developmental learning approach/strategy. They would like to know the academic programme for the coming year.

The vast majority of students would also welcome professional development earlier in their programme and a greater balance between theory and practice through increased theory courses. They would welcome the dissertation being introduced in year 3 giving them greater time to research and develop it and use it to inform their practice.

Recommendations:

- consider developing the BA programme to introduce areas such as *cultural management* and *arts and project management* that could lead to specialization in a new MA programme;
- review the curriculum in years 3 and 4 to reflect the time and workload committed to the dissertation as it should be recognized in the credit rating, and therefore reduce the *Specialisation* credit weighting;
- increase Professional Development in, at a minimum, years 3 and 4;
- consider facilitating students to increase practice in a discipline, allowing for negotiated variable credit points;
- involve the VLs more in curriculum planning to gain more buy-in in their engagement with the academic programme;
- present the full academic programme at the start of the year.

## 8. LEARNING, TEACHING & ASSESSMENT

The External Examiner Susanne Bosch has produced excellent annual reports, which highlight the strengths and areas of concern in the BA Visual Arts programme. It is pleasing to note that a considerable number of areas for improvement are already being addressed with considerable success. Some of these are expanded upon in the following section.

### Learning

IAAP has developed clear criteria in the area of knowledge and understanding and key transferable skills for the three main components of the programme, theory, studio practice and specialisation. Learning builds upon skills and knowledge attained at each level and culminating in the degree show final exhibition and dissertation in the final semester. Students are inducted into the curriculum and their learning experience in an introduction session. In addition the programme of study and method of accumulation of points are explained to students. Each student has their own study plan in which there are obligatory and optional courses (optional courses are limited in some semesters due to the availability of programming and student numbers) Study plans are discussed individually with students at the commencement of each semester. Students are closely monitored, including records of attendance and failure to meet with Director of Academic Programme for tutorials, feedback etc. In some cases study plans are adjusted in order to ensure the required study credits are achieved each semester.

At IAAP considerable discussions have taken place over the language of instruction and the need for competence in English on entry to the academy, but placing English as a requirement would discriminate against students from marginal groups and those who have studied in governmental schools. IAAP therefore has provided English language courses as part of the curriculum. I am very positive that IAAP has increased the delivery of courses in Arabic language and has been able to establish a cohort of expertise of tutors who are conversant in both languages. This is very important for the engagement of all students as my meetings with the student groups from each year revealed a very mixed ability of speaking and understanding a foreign language.

In her External Examiners report Susanne Bosch states *The delivery in workshops needs revision in terms of delivery of theoretical skills (research, writing, analysing texts and resources and presentation) and the relation between theory and practice*<sup>7</sup>

During my visit I saw written work and talked to the students and the tutor who now has responsibility for delivering these workshops and I believe that the tutor Bayan Shbeib is doing an excellent job and beginning to see improved results. This is also born out by the very positive comments made by the students.

There was a considerable range of positive and negative comments about the resources but key wishes included a reading study space in the library to carry out research, more studio space and workshops on site.

Students would also like greater flexibility from year two onwards, placing greater responsibility on them to develop their independent learning.

Recommendations:

- develop a course for VL staff to understand and utilize learning outcomes;
- introduce students to learning outcomes as part of their induction programme and through their first year of study;
- increase student mobility for external experience through placements and internships;
- look to developing e.learning and the use of a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

### **Teaching**

Due to the financial constraints IAAP has heavily relied on Visiting Lecturers (VL) to supplement the two permanent members of staff. This has brought a rich diversity of internationally acclaimed artists to visit and teach at the academy, often voluntarily or for travel/subsistence costs only. As the Academic Director clearly states *The pitfalls of this system have been the extensive scheduling required and ensuring delivery dovetails with the curriculum.* This can also lead to fragmentation in the student's learning experience, *as one tutor leaves and another arrives, there is often little overlap, tutors are often not fully aware of the overall framework in which their courses sit and what students have taken in preceding years or after their course. In addition this continually rotation can mean that there is not continual follow up with particular tutor.*

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<sup>7</sup> IAAP recommendations feedback document

Over the last two years there has been considerable development in the teaching strategy at the academy, with the objective to gain greater continuity in the learning experience with fewer international visiting lecturers, but I agree with the External Examiner Susanne Bosch<sup>8</sup> that this could be extended further. I also agree that testing and training local artists and locally based international artists in their ability to teach. All lecturers should have the experience and/or qualification to deliver teaching at a Higher Education level. These actions would create a pool of easily accessible staff, who ideally could be converted into fractional employed staff.). The delivery could also be done through e.learning teaching (e.g. blog, VLE), as traveling is expensive, but this must be complementary and additional to direct contact teaching.

In discussion with the VL teaching staff they expressed a desire to be more involved in the planning of the programme and its content. Some of the areas they perceived needed developing/addressing included:

- a danger that students only thinking of art as product, with a need for a greater balance between theory and practice;
- staff were willing to teach dissertations;
- introduce tutor groups, with students having designated tutors for both studio disciplines and theory;
- introduce team/collective teaching;
- need for planning a full years' programme – some thought this may be a problem between the Academic Board and the teaching staff?

Recommendations:

- all lecturers must be qualified and/or have the experience of teaching at a Higher Education level;
- look to developing e.learning and the use of a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to supplement contact teaching;
- the academy needs to find ways to 'embrace' the VLs to make them feel more part of the 'community' with a bigger say in the programme's development;
- consider introducing tutor groups, with students having designated tutors for both studio disciplines and theory;
- consider introducing team/collective teaching;

### **Assessment**

The vast majority of student I met across all four years stated they were satisfied with the assessment process and understood what the criteria they were assessed by – although some years had little understanding of learning outcomes.

Recommendations:

- engage more teaching staff in assessment especially those teaching the courses;

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<sup>8</sup> Susanne Bosch External Examiners report 2011 – 12 (p.3)

## **9. STUDENT RECRUITMENT**

Each year IAAP sends out an open call for applications, through emails, flyers, radio and newspaper adverts. The academy has developed its recruitment selection criteria and process, which includes open days and recruitment visits. Clear transparent entry requirement criteria, a two-tiered selection process, where applicants are shortlisted, then invited to a half day visit to IAAP in which they receive a lecture and Q+A session and assigned a project brief. 3 weeks later they return to present projects to a jury, which consists of a representative of the Academic board, Board of Directors, a representative from KHiO (brought in from 2011) and a VL staff member. Additionally IAAP has developed a student contract signed by both parties, which outlines each party's responsibility. Students are also required to provide a deposit on use of equipment and an annual studio fee of \$500, which can be paid in instalments.

IAAP has improved its process for student recruitment in 2011, with the objective of increasing the number and broadening the social base of applicants. In 2011-12 new students were accepted by IAAP from an average of between 45-60 applications annually, and is looking to undertake further outreach work to recruit talented individuals from across Palestine.

It is a strength that KHiO participates in the recruitment process supporting IAAP.

The first year students I met were very positive about the interview procedure and felt the selection was rigorous and fair. As most students had studied in HE somewhere previously they were well equipped to compare their experiences.

Recommendation:

- develop a marketing campaign to promote IAAP nationally and internationally;
- the academy should develop stronger links with regional 'feeder' schools and engage the students in the recruitment strategy;

## **10. RESEARCH**

Staff research is one area that needs developing, not only for raising the profile of the academy but also for stimulating and motivating the staff. This research will also feedback into the curriculum and enhance the learning experience.

Research culture has not been formally instituted by the Board, but both members of permanent staff are active in their respective fields - Khaled Hourani with local and international participation in exhibitions, conferences and presence on juries and committees and Tina Sherwell with publications, editing, curating, conferences and membership on committees. For a small team therefore there is considerable production of research and contribution to new knowledge in relation to contemporary art practice in relation to the Palestinian context.

The VL staff think that there is a serious need for greater emphasis on the

development of staff and the possibility for them to engage, and be supported in, further study (MA/PhD).

Recommendations:

- the academy to introduce a research staff development programme;

## **11. ACCOMMODATION & RESOURCES**

IAAP is a very small institution with a small student body in comparison to other local and international academic institutions. From 2007 to 2012 the IAAP student body has grown from the original 12 students in the first cohort to currently 32 students, with approximately 8 students in each year group. Accommodation for lectures, seminars, workshops and individual studios, as well as the computer lab and library, are in the Aref al Aref House in Al Bireh. Each student is provided with a studio at the beginning of their study for the duration of the 4yrs. Level 1 students have a specifically designated multi-purpose space, which was built with funding from the Belgian Consulate in 2009-2010. The 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students share studio spaces, in order to encourage peer learning across the year groups.

The academy has looked into acquiring additional space however real estate prices in Ramallah, Al Bireh and the vicinity have drastically grown, making this a considerably difficult venture.

IAAP has invested annually in its equipment and computing facilities since the inception of the institution.

A considerable disadvantage for the students is the lack of workshops on the campus, but it is fortunate that wood and metal workshops are in close proximity to the Aref al Aref House, which on request the staff and students can access.

## **12. QUALITY MANAGEMENT & ENHANCEMENT**

### **12.1 Quality management**

In 2009 a strategic development saw the formation of the Academic Board, which has Terms of Reference approved by KHiO and the Board of Directors. The Board is responsible for quality assurance and management of the BA programme and student matters. It meets a minimum of once a semester and often more frequently. The Board consists of two members of the Board of Directors, two members of IAAP teaching staff, a representative from KHiO, a student representative (who attends meeting on invitation of the Board), and a VL.

The responsibilities of the Board include:

- establishing the development of teaching at IAAP;
- establishing the overall vision and strategy of teaching, learning and education at IAAP;
- it constitutes the highest authority in regard to all academic matters at IAAP;
- it plays a key developmental role in forming the future policies and strategies of IAAP;

- it is responsible for appointing full time academic staff at IAAP;
- it plays a key role in meeting local requirements for registration with the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education

In addition the Board will:

- ensure the curriculum meets with KHiO's requirements;
- ensure that curriculum meets the required standards of teaching, through ensuring relevant mechanisms exist for monitoring and evaluation of teaching staff including student feedback;
- review evaluation of curriculum, providing recommendations for teaching and learning;
- ensure assessment is undertaken in compliance with regulations on criteria, moderation and external evaluation;
- discuss issues pertaining to student matters and recommendations or complaints brought by students to the Academic Board;
- deal with cases of failure or unauthorized absence;
- deal with students who break IAAP regulations;
- approve deferment and extended periods of sick leave and other such matters;
- approve 'special consideration' circumstances that affect students ability to undertake their course to their full ability;
- appoint the selection committee for the intake of new students and ensure representation from the Academic Board;
- ensure the mechanism for selection is transparent and fair;
- confer final degrees in collaboration with KHiO;
- co-ordinate on any issues of failure of degrees.

A regulation handbook was developed by the Academic Board, which is based on the KHiO handbook of study programmes and the Birzeit University handbook. It provides essential detailed information on IAAP attendance regulations, work requirements to achieve study points in each area of study, how many study points can be carried forward from semesters, and it also outlines the system of notification, academic warnings and consequences of failure and plagiarism at IAAP etc.

Nearly all 'local' VLs teach in other bigger art institutions/universities and largely rely on the other institutions infrastructures.

In terms of quality assurance each visiting lecturer is requested to provide a course outline prior to delivering it and to discuss the academic content with the Academic Director. All VL's have to fill in assessment feedback and tutorial sheets and record student attendance, which is all correlated at the end of semester to see how many points and level of attainment of students in relation to their study plan.

There is a noticeable lack of statistical quantitative data readily available to monitor the success and achievements of its courses, students and staff as well as signify trends. To develop an effective Quality Management process the Board should establish quality targets for the programmes and all parts of the organisation that should, along with qualitative data form part of an annual review/evaluation process.

Recommendations:

- to systematically embed an institutional Quality Assurance and Enhancement policy and processes into the academy, to be reviewed on a regular basis to test levels of achievement (accountability);
- to develop an effective Quality Management process whereby the Board establishes quality targets for the programmes and all parts of the organisation that should, along with qualitative data form part of an annual review/evaluation process;
- to ensure there are clear terms of reference for all the academy's boards and committees;
- to build on and develop the capacity of its VL teaching staff.

## **12.2 Student participation**

I found that the vast majority of students were very positive about their learning experience and strongly supportive of the academy. They felt there was good student representation and their voice would be listened to, which was effective in bringing about change.

Student feedback has been central in the academy's decision making regarding inviting and return use of VLs, this through both formal feedback sheets and also through informal discussion to glean information about the quality of the courses and workshops these tutors have delivered.

The alumni I met were excellent, articulate and intelligent who were very able to critically evaluate their learning experience and the consensus was they were very positive about their learning experience.

Recommendations:

- to engage with their alumni as they would make excellent ambassadors for the academy;

## **12.3 Staff development and engagement**

IAAP has worked to build a strong team atmosphere among staff members in which each staff member is responsible for their area of work. The aim of this ethos was to cultivate a strong sense of ownership of the project among the staff. IAAP has an extensive network of VLs and works hard to provide a comfortable and accessible working environment in which technical and support staff are on hand to assist them. All staff participated in strategic planning of the future of IAAP and play an active part in the decision making process at IAAP.

The representative of the Academic Board believes there needs to be a better vetting and management of external international artists as there is a danger of preconceived understanding of Palestinian art.

When meeting the staff it was clear that they had only just started being collectively engaged in the BA programme developments, but they welcomed this opportunity.

Recommendations:

- to introduce a Staff Development programme for all levels of the academy (including: financial management; managing change; quality

enhancement management; new developments in learning, teaching and assessment; outcomes-based learning etc.)

- engage the VLs in all aspects of the academic programme development;

## 12.4 Student progression and achievement

Another strong indicator of the high standard of achievement of IAAP's educational programme is the number of students invited to participate in regional/international exhibitions and competitions<sup>9</sup>, including:

- Oyma Salman Liverpool Festival;
- Toulouse Autumn Festival;
- Khaled Jarrar, FIAC Paris, Berlin Biennale, 52<sup>nd</sup> October Salon, Belgrade;
- Bisan Abu Eisheh, Istanbul Biennale, Jerusalem Show 2011;
- Noor Abed, Jerusalem Show 2011, Performance Festival, Kunstabaken Art Centre, Hamar;
- Ayed Arefeh, Contemporary Image Collective, Cairo, Qattan Young Artist Award, 2010;
- XIth Meeting of Mediterranean Art Schools, Batna Algiers;
- Oyma Salman, Moyad Almeh, Khaled Jarrar, Young Artists Biennale, Greece;
- If Inside to Get Out-If Outside to Get In, KHiO (Level 4 and Level 3 IAAP students);
- Other Possible Worlds NGBK, Berlin (selected video works of students);

## 12.5 Collaboration with KHiO

Since my last visit in 2008 one of the most noticeable changes has been the level of collaboration between IAAP and KHiO. In our 2008 report we were critical of the contribution of KHiO but this has now developed into a mature partnership with Oslo making a strong effort to support the academy. This welcome development owes a great deal to the commitment of the National Academy's Coordinator George Morgenstern. who has actively participated in building relations with IAAP through participation in the degree show assessment jury, the selection of students, strategic planning workshops and feedback and the end of term student critiques. IAAP have been in close cooperation with George Morgenstern on the grant application for 2010-2013, which was successfully secured from MFA with KHiO's support. In addition KHiO have been available for queries on grant requirements, student transcripts etc. Also students from IAAP and KHiO regularly undertake joint projects and visits including an annual visit to each institution. Staff from KHiO are part of the teaching programme at IAAP and the academy receives 1-3 tutors per semester to teach specialist courses at IAAP.

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<sup>9</sup> IAAP Annual Report

### **13. GOOD PRACTICE**

1. the 2011 critical strategic review to develop a sustainable IAAP;
2. the introduction in 2011 of very high quality international External Examiners who bring excellent evaluation and recommendations for development to the academy;
3. student exchanges which are fully funded by the Academy, as it undertakes separate fund raising for each exchange visit;
4. the strong and supportive collaboration between KHiO and IAAP;
5. the introduction of the position of Development Officer, whose main tasks would involve fund raising and PR. In addition the role of Finance and Administration Manager was re-framed into position of Operations Manager;
6. the academy's international reputation being reflected in the demand by major arts institutions, both academic and professional, seeking to collaborate with it and their students being invited to participate in leading international art exhibitions and competitions and winning major awards.
7. the high level of student engagement, representation and feedback with effective results on developing the programme – the student voice is listened to.

### **14. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following are key recommendations, with others to be found under the separate headings within the report. Susanne Bosch's excellent External Examiner Report 2011-12 has many other recommendations I fully support and recommend the management and course team consider.

1. I strongly recommend the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs continues to support this exceptional project for a further period with revised realistic targets;
2. the Board should take on an increased advocacy role to lobby strongly nationally and internationally on behalf of the academy;
3. KHiO should vigorously lobby the Norwegian government on behalf of IAAP to continue, and if possible, increase their funding
4. the academy must strive to retain its current autonomy and distinctiveness, but if it is forced to amalgamate with a larger institution it must try to ensure it can retain its vision, mission and uniqueness.
5. develop a full-cost financial model so that all fundraising supports both strands of the IAAP activities;
6. set clear achievable annual financial targets, which can be reviewed and evaluated;
7. quarterly financial reports showing achievement, pending and future activities/applications;
8. develop a strategy to sell the academy's expertise (knowledge/skills transfer);
9. review Job Descriptions to prioritise roles and responsibilities and set (quantify) targets;
10. improve communication between Directors, Academic Board and teaching staff so all are aware and active in achieving the academy's objectives;
11. the Development Officer post should be cleared of other

- responsibilities and focus full-time on the mission of income generation;
12. re-consideration to the lines of management to help the academy achieve its goals;
  13. to introduce a Staff Development programme for all levels of the academy (including: financial management; managing change; quality enhancement management; new developments in learning, teaching and assessment; outcomes-based learning etc.)
  14. to systematically embed an institutional Quality Assurance and Enhancement policy and processes into the academy, to be reviewed on a regular basis to test levels of achievement (accountability);
  15. to develop an effective Quality Management process whereby the Board establishes quality targets for the programmes and all parts of the organisation that should, along with qualitative data form part of an annual review/evaluation process;
  16. to ensure there are clear terms of reference for all the academy's boards and committees;
  17. to build on and develop the capacity of its VL teaching staff.
  18. consider developing the BA programme to introduce areas such as *cultural management* and *arts and project management* that could lead to specialization in a new MA programme;
  19. review the curriculum in years 3 and 4 to reflect the time and workload committed to the dissertation as it should be recognized in the credit rating, and therefore reduce the *Specialisation* credit weighting;
  20. increase Professional Development in, at a minimum, years 3 and 4;
  21. consider facilitating students to increase practice in a discipline, allowing for negotiated variable credit points;
  22. involve the VLs more in curriculum planning to gain more buy-in in their engagement with the academic programme;
  23. present the full academic programme at the start of the year.
  24. develop a course for VL staff to understand and utilize learning outcomes;
  25. increase student mobility for external experience through placements and internships;
  26. look to developing e.learning and the use of a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)
  27. to develop a marketing campaign to promote IAAP nationally and internationally;
  28. to develop stronger links with regional 'feeder' schools and engage the students in the recruitment strategy;
  29. to introduce a research staff development programme;
  30. to engage with their alumni as they would make excellent ambassadors for the academy;

I would like to offer my absolute support for this project, which I have found to be personally rewarding and energising. If there is any way I can support the academy it would be an honour to do so. I applaud all the people who contribute so much to this remarkable educational venture.

Professor John Butler  
1<sup>st</sup> August 2012