



# Quality Enhancement Review Report

## Institutional review

Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague



Preliminary Visit: 19<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup> February 2018

Main Visit: 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018

## Contents

Introduction .....	3
1. Institutional mission, vision and context .....	6
2. Educational processes.....	13
2.1 The curriculum and its methods of delivery .....	13
2.2 International perspectives.....	18
2.3 Assessment .....	20
3. Student profiles .....	22
3.1 Admission/Entrance qualifications .....	22
3.2 Student progression, achievement and employability .....	25
4. Teaching staff .....	28
4.1 Staff qualifications and professional activity .....	28
4.2 Size and composition of the teaching staff body .....	30
5. Facilities, resources and support .....	32
5.1 Facilities.....	32
5.2 Financial resources.....	33
5.3 Support staff .....	34
6. Communication, organisation and decision-making .....	36
6.1 Internal communication process .....	36
6.2 Organisational structure and decision-making processes.....	37
7. Internal Quality Culture .....	40
8. Public interaction.....	46
8.1 Cultural, artistic and educational contexts.....	46
8.2 Interaction with the artistic professions .....	48
8.3 Information provided to the public.....	49
9. Summary of the Institutes compliance with EQ-Arts Standards .....	52
10. Summary of commendations and recommendations .....	55
Annex 1 – List of supporting documents .....	62

## Introduction

- *Context of the review*

At the instigation of the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design (AAAD) the EQ-Arts Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Chair of the Board met with the Rector Professor Jindrich Smetana and senior staff on the 7<sup>th</sup> June 2017 in Prague. The meeting's aim was to understand the needs and wishes of AAAD and identify the best way forward for AAAD in light of new national legislation incorporated in the Amendment to the Higher Education Act No. 111/1996 Coll. for higher education by the Czech Ministry of Education which, amongst other things, introduced a new process for Quality Assurance evaluation across the sector. This will result in the Academy undertaking a formal institutional accreditation review, embracing the new principles and methodology in 2020. As this was a totally new procedure for the Academy, the Rector requested EQ-Arts to help prepare AAAD for this event. This extensive amendment to the Higher Education Act became applicable on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017 and has resulted in a considerable number of changes, especially in terms of the organisation of studies including change of the accreditation authority, cancellation of courses of study without replacement, introduction of mandatory areas of study and internal quality evaluation procedures. The outcome of the meeting in June was a formal invitation from the Academy to EQ-Arts, with the aim of carrying out a comprehensive Institutional Review in 2018, following the European Standards and Guidelines (2015), the Czech Standards and Guidelines<sup>1</sup> and according to the EQ-Arts Principles and Standards In Quality Assurance and Enhancement<sup>2</sup> (QAE).

- *The Academy*

The School of Decorative Arts (SDA) started its activities in 1885 as the first and only state art school in Bohemia and with the Act No. 53/1946 Coll. it became the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague. The Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague (hereinafter 'the AAAD') is a university-type public higher education institution in accordance with Act No. 111/1998 Coll; on Higher Education Institutions and on Amendments to Other Acts (the Higher Education Act).

AAAD currently consists of five departments arching over twenty-three studios in the fields of architecture, design, visual art, applied art and graphics. A sixth department provides teaching of art history and aesthetics across all programmes. As in the past, all the studios are run by important local and national personalities of art and design, and in many cases they are Academy's graduates.

- *The Review Process & Team*

For the AAAD Institutional Review, applying the EQ-Arts process of evaluating the internal and external institutional quality processes involved, beyond the full institutional review, the Academy selecting an area/discipline of study programmes the Review Team would investigate to understand how the quality

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<sup>1</sup> see Annex 5: Government regulation No. 274/2016 Coll., on standards for accreditation in higher education

<sup>2</sup> see Annex (a) EQ-Arts Framework for Accreditation and Assessment

culture and QA measures are embedded and implemented at programme level. At the preparatory meeting in June 2017 it was agreed that the Design programmes would be the focus off the second visit, which would include all three cycles (BA, MA and PhD) of the Design (Industrial Design, Furniture and Interior Design, Product Design); Applied Arts 1 (Glass, Ceramics and Porcelain, K.O.V.) and Applied Arts 2 (Fashion Design, Fashion and Footwear Design and Textile Design).

The review followed a three-stage process:

- AAAD prepared a Self-evaluation Report (SER) and supporting annexes, using the EQ-Arts SER template and based on EQ-Arts standards and guidelines for institutional review. This evaluation was also aligned to the Czech National Quality Standards for accreditation;
- An international Review Team studied the SER and conducted two site-visits at AAAD, a preliminary visit<sup>3</sup> on 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018 and the main visit<sup>4</sup> on 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018. The first visit enabled the Team to gain a better understanding of the Academy and the national context and focused on the Institutional evaluation aspect of the review. The second looked mainly at the Design programme as a reference to understand how the institution guides, monitors and enhances the quality of its study programmes.

During the Preliminary Visit the Review Team had five meetings with senior staff (Governance, QA, Research & Enterprise, Support & Administration) to gain a greater understanding of the leadership, management and operational aspects of AAAD's quality culture. The remaining five meetings were with representatives of key stakeholders across AAADs academic provision (students, teachers, researchers, alumni and employers/professional representatives).

At the Main Visit the Review Team had two meetings with senior staff (Governance & QA) for an update on recent developments and the remaining seven meetings with key stakeholders specifically in the Design programmes (students, teachers, researchers, alumni and employers/professional representatives).

At both visits the Review Team was able to visit studios and workshops for all study programmes as well as exhibitions and presentations and was able to access central learning resources (library, IT etc.). This enabled the Review Team to gain a clear overview and understanding of the overall resources of AAAD as well as those available for each study programme, to enable them to confidently arrive at their assessment.

- The review team produced a comprehensive evaluative final report that follows and is structured in alignment to the EQ-Arts Standards.

The Review Team:

- Professor John Butler, (Chair), Chief Executive Officer of EQ-Arts, former Head of Birmingham School of Art, UK ([j.butler@eq-arts.org](mailto:j.butler@eq-arts.org));
- Kieran Corcoran, Head of the Dublin School of Creative Arts, DIT Dublin, Eire ([kieran.corcoran@dit.ie](mailto:kieran.corcoran@dit.ie));
- Dr Soledad Garcia Ferrari, Senior Lecturer in Architectural Design, Edinburgh School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture ([s.garcia@ed.ac.uk](mailto:s.garcia@ed.ac.uk));
- Emma van der Kammen, EQ-Arts Board member, student representative ([e.jarvenpaa@eq-arts.org](mailto:e.jarvenpaa@eq-arts.org));
- Marta Svecova Lamperova, Vice-Dean, Film and Television Faculty, DAMU, Czech Republic ([marta.lamperova@gmail.com](mailto:marta.lamperova@gmail.com));

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<sup>3</sup> see annex (b) *Schedule for Preliminary Visit*

<sup>4</sup> see annex (c) *Schedule for Main Visit*

The Review Team believes AAAD is a high quality institution in transition to become an internationally leading arts academy. It is a well-led Academy with a very loyal and supportive team of staff and students.

The Review Team would like to express its gratitude to the Rector, his colleagues and students for the professional manner in which the review was carried out and the positive and constructive attitude of all parties to this enhancement process. We would also thank Michaela Bizova for the excellent organisation of the site-visits and for supporting the Review Team.

## 1. Institutional mission, vision and context

**Standard: the programme goals are clearly stated and reflect the institutional mission**

### a) The Academy's mission, vision and aims

The AAAD's mission is defined in the Statutes of the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague<sup>5</sup>. The mission<sup>6</sup> is stated as being *“to educate and train experts in the area of art, research and scientific activities, cultivate free thinking, independent academic research and distinctive art creation and support the creative spirit of human society in all its aspects.”*

According to the Act the Academy's subject of activity<sup>7</sup> consists of:

- Educational activity;
- Creative Activity (including art, science and research, development and innovation or other creative activity);
- Cooperation with the application sphere, connecting art and industry, and/or the application sphere, artistic creation and research.

In the Academy's Self-Evaluation Report (SER)<sup>8</sup> it states the Vision of AAAD is *“The Academy wants to be an a highly selective institution, making a point of its studio form of teaching and individual approach to students and applying in teaching to the fullest extent not only the latest technologies, but also traditional materials and craft techniques. Its teachers and prominent graduates will be among the leading personalities in their disciplines, not only at home but also internationally. Both at the national and international level, the Academy will be one of the key institutions generating new practical and theoretical approaches in the areas of architecture, design, applied and fine arts. It will have a significant impact on society through the active development of education, science, and research and through its cooperation with industry. Through an open presentation of the results of its work, it will strengthen both his reputation and the position of the entire Czech visual culture both domestically and abroad”.*

In the SER it also states the AAAD Goals<sup>9</sup> (aims), which the Review Team found commendable and achievable and aligned to its mission.

What became clear to the Review Team through honest and open discussions with senior management and through its meetings with teaching staff and students, is that the Academy's current working practices in areas such as research impacting on learning and teaching, interdisciplinary practice, knowledge transfer, and student-centred learning are not exactly aligned with their key mission, vision and aims/goals statements in the SER.

The Academy is at an interim stage in terms of redefining systems and structures in the self-evaluation process necessary for approaching the new formal national accreditation review (as described in the previous section). Key strategic aspects of these developments will have an impact on, and bring new opportunities to, re-define their mission as well as help them in achieving aspects expressed in their current vision. Another key factor in this interim stage is the Academy's long-term ambition to add an

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<sup>5</sup> see annex 64: *Statutes of the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design* in accordance with Section 9 Paragraph 1(b) point 3 and Section 17 Paragraph 1 (a) of Act No. 111.1998 Coll; on Higher Education Institutions and on the Modification and Amendment of other Acts (the Higher Education Act).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, Article 3, (p.2)

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*

<sup>8</sup> see Appendix 1: *The AAAD Self-Evaluation Report* (p.5)

<sup>9</sup> see SER pp.5&6

additional building to its resources. This is now close to realisation with the finances all in place to meet the additional increase in building costs. The Review Team believes this is a commendable achievement in itself. This new space is enabling the Academy to re-think and realise its academic aims, as well as their learning and teaching strategies. Planning the purpose and use of this new building is also helping bring opportunities for re-thinking the Academy's studio-based practices, with the provision of shared workshops facilitating collaborative practices. Both current students and external stakeholders have celebrated the future availability of these shared spaces.

### **Recommendations**

- The Academy is utilising this key moment in its history, with the imminent realisation of its new building, to review its working practices and to refine its vision and mission that fully embraces the highest level of craft skills, research, enterprise and interdisciplinary practice, in order to meet the demands of industry and the professional world of work. AAAD will also benefit from listening to its student, staff and stakeholder cohort in order to ensure decisions meet the needs of teaching and learning demands as well as of professional practice.

### **b) The Academy's major threats and challenges**

In the SER<sup>10</sup> and through meetings with Senior Management<sup>11</sup> the Academy identified the following as major threats and challenges:

- *The immediate negative impact of the Amendment to the Higher Education Act on existing studies in accredited courses of study.* (SER) - The Review Team believes a key outcome of the changes brought about by this amendment (from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017) is the transfer of responsibility for quality evaluation now resting with the Academy. This regulation includes and defines the procedures and processes, standards and measures ensuring the quality of all activities and their evaluation, which can only help the Academy move forward if it is clear in its vision and mission;
- *Regional schools, which are starting in the area: If AAAD wishes to keep its position; it needs to be a leader. Thus offering distinctiveness and (permanent) competition.* (Rector & SER) – The Academy is still the only HE institution offering the full range of art and design visual arts study programmes and the Review Team is convinced that, if AAAD better defines the distinctiveness, aims and objectives, of its study programmes as well as research and enterprise activities, it can be equally compared with leading European HE arts institutions;
- *Small school, both an advantage and disadvantage* (Vice Rector Research) – The Review Team acknowledges a key strength of this Academy is the strong sense of community and accessibility at all levels, which is helped by the relatively small scale of the institution, but recommends it to be cautious of the over emphasis and repetition of this statement by all parties. AAAD must understand that their scale can be taken as an aspect to define their identity and not as an excuse avoiding the implementation of certain practices;
- *Research assessment, both challenge and threat. We are not scientific institution, but research is still a part of our institution* (Vice Rector Research) – The Review Team were informed at meetings with Research staff and saw evidence through exhibitions and publications of high level research and enterprise activities involving national and international partners and brands. By far the most successful in terms of external funding and publications is the Department of Theory and History of Art, but there were other successful areas in the Studio of Textile Design, Studio of “Digital Design” – Architecture III and the Studio of Industrial Design. However, the Review Team experienced through

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<sup>10</sup> see SER p.6

<sup>11</sup> meetings with the Rector & Rector's Board

their meetings with research leaders, teaching and research staff a lack of clear definitions by the Academy of criteria for practice-based/led research (aligned to the wider sector definitions of practice based research) and a policy and guidelines for enterprise with industry.

- *We insist on our programmes, it is not necessary to be innovative (like new ateliers, or following trends)* (Rector);
- *80% of the budget is fixed by the state. We can freely work with it. 15% grants, 5% own resources* (Bursar);
- *During last 7 years big problem was the dialogue with the government, represented with 8 ministers* (Rector);
- National Ministry's unwillingness to accept/recognise Practice-based research (*Unequal and insufficiently systemised conditions for the evaluation of scientific and artistic outputs*) – The Review Team is fully sympathetic to the Academy's situation and recommends the Ministry of Education reviews its policy not to recognise and financially support practice-based research;
- *Unstable framework for the funding of state higher education institutions;*
- *Polarisation of society and the global political situation.*

### **Recommendations**

- The Academy states that research is essential to their mission and vision and identifies current challenges generated by the changing national regulatory context. The Academy should develop and implement a research policy and strategy which begins with understanding the definition of practice-based/led research for the Academy, and reflecting on current knowledge development taking place;
- The Academy should make an executive decision on teaching staff's engagement in research and enterprise, as well as introducing strategies for research development for staff, which will direct how research will become a key feature of the Academy.

### **c) The Academy's long-term strategy in relation to its mission**

The long-term strategy is currently formulated in the AAAD's *Strategic Plan for Educational and Scientific, Research, Development and Innovation, Art and Other Creative Activities for 2016-2020*<sup>12</sup>; *Institutional Plan for the Period of 2016–2018*<sup>13</sup> & the *Plan for the Implementation of the AAAD's Strategic Intent for 2018*<sup>14</sup>

The Academy is in the process of redrafting their *Five year Strategic Plan* in light of the new developments, policies and strategies, which includes:

- Devolving responsibility for AAAD's quality development and evaluation to the Artistic Board;
- Establishing a new Degree Programmes Board responsible for reviewing Annual and Periodic Review reports (utilising new qualitative and quantitative metrics) and making recommendations to the Artistic Board;
- Developing a new Research strategy, including new criteria for Artistic Practice-based/led Research);
- Developing new Enterprise & Knowledge Transfer strategy, procedures and guidelines);
- Introducing a new operational, management strategy for workshops and studios.

The Review Team fully acknowledges the Academy is at an interim stage in its development and is

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<sup>12</sup> see Annex 1: *Strategic Plan for Educational and Scientific, Research, Development and Innovation, Art and Other Creative Activities for 2016-2020*

<sup>13</sup> see Annex 3: *Institutional Plan for the Period of 2016–2018*

<sup>14</sup> see Annex 2: *Plan for the Implementation of the AAAD's Strategic Intent for 2018*



clearly addressing its new responsibilities as outlined in the new Amendment to the HE Act (2017).

**d) The Academy's educational programmes in relation to the institutional mission?**

During the two visits to AAAD, the Review Team carried out tours of the studios, observed student work presented in exhibitions and illustrated in high quality publications of international exhibitions. It is clear, in line with AAAD's mission, all studios are committed to developing the technical craft skills of the students. There were examples of good practice in various educational aspects across the Departments (research- Art History & Architecture; enterprise – Applied Arts & Industrial Design)

Through the practice and aims as expressed and delivered for each of the study programmes being reviewed, the Review Team were able to conclude that – on the basis of the evidence seen – the study programme goals largely reflect the current institutional mission and aims. It is also clear to the Review Team that the institutional mission of the Academy and the purposes of its study programmes are closely aligned with national imperatives.

However, the Review Team found it was evident through the documentation and through the meetings with senior management and teachers that there is little external financial support given to practice-based research, and on further enquiry the Review Team understood that the Ministry of Education does not give financial support to this research practice. The impact of this action is detrimental to the student learning experience. Research underpins the currency of the curriculum and new strategies in learning and teaching. It enhances the teacher's knowledge, expertise and promotes job satisfaction, all to the benefit of the learner. An institution that is engaged at the cutting edge of research attracts the best teachers and post-graduate students, which places it at the forefront of the international arena. It also enables the Academy to generate considerable external funding, essential in today's economic climate. This finance facilitates the creation of centres of excellence, both in terms of people and resources/equipment, which again enables all learners to observe/share these experiences. Art & Design is a major contributor to the creative economy, which is internationally one of the fastest growing economies. To restrict this fields' entry into the European Research Area has a far-reaching negative impact on the Academy and significantly on its learners, which is contrary to the *Bologna* principles. Therefore we recommend the Ministry to reconsider its policy and support practice-based research, in line with many of its European partners.

**Commendations**

- The Review Team commends the Academy for allocating funds to support individual teachers and studios carrying out practice-based research.

**Recommendations**

- The study programmes need to define more clearly what their specific aims are and express their distinctive nature;
- The Academy has to more clearly define what their understanding is of 'student-centred learning', and how it practices it, and ensure this is clearly communicated and understood by all the key stakeholders;
- The AAAD should strengthen inter and trans-disciplinary practice through closer cooperation between the studios and the relevant stakeholders, from within (alumni and other

Academies/Universities) and outwith the academic sector (employers, professional organisations etc.), utilising the full potential of the new building;

- The Ministry should reconsider its current policy and support practice-based research, in line with many of its European partners.

#### e) **The Academy's priorities (in the regional, national and international context) and the areas emphasised**

AAAD has identified the following five focus topics as priorities of its long-term strategy:

1 *Maintaining exclusivity:*

*To maintain and strengthen the position of the AAAD as the only institution in the Czech Republic, which covers the whole range of art education with high demands on students admitted to study and teachers.*

2 *Stability of the basic Academy parameters: To develop and improve the traditional form of studio based individual teaching based on long-term experience in art education, which relies not only on the knowledge of traditional practices, but also on the use of progressive technologies and practices.*

3 *Sharing experiences with a selected range of European and non-European universities of a similar nature.*

*To focus not only on academic cooperation and exchange programmes for teachers and students, but also to share experience in the area of the presentation of scientific research and artistic output, use of new technologies, nature and quality of support activities, provision of care for employee development, etc.*

4 *Close co-operation of 4 Czech public arts universities (autonomy within a natural association)*

*To jointly define and maintain basic standards for the quality of education throughout the arts, to educate leading professionals in individual artistic fields, to cooperate in the development of doctoral studies and define the specifics of art education.*

5 *Spatial and technological background for the development of individual field*

*To establish a spatial and technological background for the continuous development of individual specialisations, which responds to the current demands on the quality of output of the creative and research activities of students and teachers while reflecting the anticipated development over the next 30–40 years.*

#### **Recommendations**

- The Review Team commends the majority of these focused topics, but recommends the Academy to consider in 1. the emphasis should be on the quality and appropriateness of the study programmes to the professional world, which is more important and significant than just the range of study programmes; and in 2 it should also include meeting the needs of industry and the professional world.

#### f) **The national legal context/framework in which the Academy operates**

AAAD is one of four public Arts Universities<sup>15</sup> in the Czech Republic bound by the following Acts which govern its procedures:

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<sup>15</sup> See Annex 6: *National Higher Arts Educational Structure*

Act No. 111/1998 Coll.<sup>16</sup>, On Higher Education Institutions and on Amendments to Other Acts (Higher Education Act), as amended; Government Regulation No. 274/2016 Coll.<sup>17</sup>, On Standards for Accreditation in Higher Education; Government Regulation No. 275/2016 Coll., On Fields of Study in Higher Education; Decree No. 343/2002 Coll., On Procedures and Conditions for Publication of Admission Processes at Higher Education Institutions; Act No. 500/2004 Coll. – Administrative Procedure Code; Act No. 262/2006 Coll. – Labour Code; Act No. 121/2000 Coll. – the Copyright Act, the Rights Related to Copyright, and the Amendment of Certain Laws (the Copyright Act); Act No. 89/2012 Coll. – Civil Code; Act No. 130/2002 Coll., Act on the Support of Research and Development from Public Funds and on Amendments to Certain Related Acts (Act on Support of Research and Development), as amended; Act No. 25/2017 on Budgetary Responsibility, Act No. 320/2001 Coll. on Financial Control, Act 134/2016 on Public Procurement.

**g) The Academy's equal opportunities policy as embedded in the institutional mission/vision**

The Review Team were informed by the senior management that the Academy's approach to equal opportunities is framed by national legislation and that AAAD conforms to all the dimensions of the national equal opportunities policy in all aspects of its activity. All study programmes are required to conform to these policies, which are also applied to the recruitment process in relation to staff appointments and to all aspects of student recruitment.

**h) Quantitative and qualitative data/information collected, and how is it supports the Academy's mission/ vision**

Until the introduction of the new amendment to the HE Act in 2017 there has been little requirement for the Academy to carry out in depth critical self-evaluation as part of an internal or external quality assurance process. The Academy's internal and external quality evaluation has in the past been limited to preparing an Annual Report, which is discussed and approved by Academic Senate and by the Board of Trustees and sent to the Minister of Education. Over the past five years the Academy has carried out three Student Surveys<sup>18</sup> (non mandatory), evaluating the quality of the studio education; the attitude of the Head of the Studio; satisfaction with the teaching of supplementary, professional and theoretical subjects; the equipment of the Academy and the standard of the administrative support provided; etc. In 2016 the Academy conducted a poll among graduates for the first time, with a surprisingly good response rate, which was repeated in 2017 and will be again in 2018.

The Review Team could find little evidence of either guidelines or templates provided by the institution or study programmes to help collect the required data, although the Team were informed quantitative and some qualitative data are collected in the Academy Study Information System, but this data-base has severe limitations for exporting this data into a specified structure.

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<sup>16</sup> See Annex 4: *Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on higher education institutions*

<sup>17</sup> See Annex 5: *Government regulation No. 274/2016 Coll., on standards for accreditation in higher education*

<sup>18</sup> See Annexes 7&8: *Student evaluation feedback\_abstract\_2012, 2014, 2016*

During the meetings over both visits with the alumni and the employers, the Review Team were informed that neither had been invited nor contributed to the self-evaluation process, although both expressed a strong willingness and belief that it would benefit the Academy and the programmes to utilise their knowledge and experience. Students who participated in surveys and questionnaires, at four meetings with the Review Team all stated they were not informed of any outcomes, nor had any idea of the impact their responses had.

The new Amendment to the HE Act (2017) states that the Academy's internal quality assurance system now has to be based on the *interconnection* between its educational, creative and related activities.

The Academy is now introducing a quality review process involving a five-year (comprehensive) review aligned to the accreditation cycle, supported by an annual (interim) review.

### **Recommendations**

- The Academy needs to be more transparent in the internal quality process and ensure stakeholders (students, alumni and employers) contribute to, and are informed of, the outcomes of the surveys and feedback.

#### **i) How internal quality assurance processes support the Academy's mission and vision**

In light of the new Amendments to the Higher Education Act (2017), the Academy is currently in the process of reviewing and radically changing its quality review process<sup>19</sup> and implementing qualitative and quantitative metrics to measure and evaluate the Academy teaching, learning and research practices and its programmes.

### **Recommendations:**

- The Review Team recommends that the Academy revisits its mission-vision statements to ensure their key objectives (research & enterprise, interdisciplinary, industry, professional development) are supported and embedded in the institution and their study programmes;
- Research is central to the Academy's vision, mission and aims, but the Review Team found that there is a need for the Academy to make an executive decision on what it defines as research (including enterprise and knowledge transfer), how its quality is assessed and the contractual obligations of the staff to engage in it;
- The Review Team recognises the value of the Academy's 'studio-centred' learning approach, which is rooted in a traditional 'craft-based' teaching methodology for the range of design disciplines, such as typography, lithography, printing, etc. However, the Review Team also recognises the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century art, design and architecture practices, which could be reflected on an approach to teaching linked with 'Design Thinking' and rooted in developing learning strategies that address contemporary challenges of a networked society. In this context, the American Institute of Graphic Arts notes a conflict between 'the well designed object', referring to a craft-based design approach and the 'design for now', referring to a design approach that aims to resolve the above range of challenges. Through meetings over the two visits with employers and alumni, the Review Team found that a conflict between the traditions and the ethos of the Academy with regards to the above 'craft-based' approach to teaching and the needs of contemporary practices, may be present. In this context, it could benefit the development of teaching approaches that enable students to survive in the 'real' world of practice, which in collaboration, and drawing on the close relationship between the Academy, their alumni and current practitioners, this conflict could be addressed.

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<sup>19</sup> see Annex 15 *The Rules of the Quality Assurance System, Creative and Related Activities and for the Internal Quality Assessment for Education, Creative and Related Activities of the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design, Prague*

## 2. Educational processes

### 2.1 The curriculum and its methods of delivery

#### **Standard: the goals of the programme are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its methods of delivery**

The AAAD curriculum is based on one fundamental principle *“the original concept of teaching,”* which holds that all design education is based on *“individual studio teaching of an art specialisation which rests upon the theoretical visual arts subjects as well as specialised professional subjects and supplemented by general background subjects, which prepare students for real life after graduation.”*<sup>20</sup> The entire educational philosophy of the Academy is based on the primacy of the individual Professor led studio supported by an intensive grounding in traditional craft and design techniques supported by a traditional art historical contextual studies programme.

There are 24 individual studios encompassing 9 Design specialisations and 6 Graphic Design specialisations; 4 studios focusing on architecture and 5 studios dealing with Fine Art and photography.<sup>21</sup> The specialist studios host a number of different programmes in Architecture, Design, Graphic Design and Fine Art. The studios are supported by a number of specialist workshops such as Lithography, Book Binding and Plaster Casting, where students are given intensive technical instruction and assistance in developing their individual projects. Each studio has a Head and one or two assistants, and the studios are grouped into departments each with a Guarantor who is appointed to oversee and coordinate the activity of the studios. The Guarantor oversees teaching and can comment on assessment. It is an active role but not very specific in a particular way and Guarantors also teach in the studios. Primarily Guarantors are responsible for the quality of projects and teaching in the studios and ensure that the studios are meeting the needs of industry.<sup>22</sup>

Students register with one studio and work with the Head of Studio and assistants through to graduation. In Fine Art and Design this will be 4 years (BA) and/or 2 years (postgraduate MA) while Architecture will be 4 years (BA) and/or 2 years (postgraduate MA). The fundamental pedagogical principle in all of the studios is student-centred practical project-based work, which takes place in blocks of one semester.<sup>23</sup> Students work very closely with the Studio Head and assistants and complete one major practical project per semester.<sup>24</sup> The relationship between teacher and student in the studio is central to this process and studios have a very low Staff Student Ratio, which facilitates this kind of coaching-influenced pedagogical approach.<sup>25</sup>

The briefs for studio projects are generally developed by the Studio Head and Assistants and handed out as a paper document at the beginning of the semester.<sup>26</sup> The selection of briefs is varied and will change from year to year as decided by the Head of Studio and Assistants. In certain circumstances the Head of Studio brings in a commercial brief from a company and students will work on this instead and occasionally a visiting curator or theoretician will generate a brief.<sup>27</sup> While the brief is handed out by the Head of Studio it is clear that the student is allowed and expected to develop the brief and as the design

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<sup>20</sup> see SER p.10

<sup>21</sup> ibid

<sup>22</sup> meeting with Guarantors from all levels

<sup>23</sup> see SER p.11

<sup>24</sup> meeting with Design Teachers

<sup>25</sup> ibid

<sup>26</sup> ibid

<sup>27</sup> ibid

process evolves may actually change the brief, which can lead to a different approach to assessment.<sup>28</sup> In Year 1, in the more technically focused studios such as Furniture, the initial period is spent on a number of set technical exercises focused on developing students technical knowledge and skills in advance of tackling a design brief.<sup>29</sup> Students can transfer to another studio temporarily as part of a studio internship but can also transfer permanently to another studio.

It is not clear if there is a formal written description of the curriculum or each individual Head of Studio chooses a wide ranging brief which students can interpret and develop as they progress through the semester. The process for design, approval and re-approval of programmes is currently not clear and patchy at best. Currently there is an informal arrangement that programmes or parts of programmes should be reviewed every 3 years.<sup>30</sup> There is an annual meeting between Studio Heads, Guarantors and the Rectorate at the end of each year to discuss how programmes have performed during the year but it appears to be a quite informal process. The Guarantors have a role in ensuring that the curriculum meets industry needs but this also appears to be informal.<sup>31</sup>

The AAAD process for the design, approval and re-approval of programmes is described in the Annex on Programme Review.<sup>32</sup> The Review is conducted informally with staff, two externals and students and a report is sent to the Degree Programmes Board. A new Programme Specification has been developed and is being rolled out gradually. The Programme Specification has been revised to include Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria. No programme has completed the new Programme Specification for re-approval as the template for this has not been completed.<sup>33</sup>

The design of programmes in terms of objectives and intended learning outcomes and their alignment with the Academy's aims is in the process of being developed, and the process of mapping programme LO's with the aims has only just commenced. The Review Team believe most staff need development training in this area. Aligning Learning Outcomes with assessment criteria has already been successfully carried out in some theoretical subjects, but has not been implemented across AAAD or any other Czech university to date at the level of study subjects (not study programmes).<sup>34</sup>

The process of connection between study programmes and progression between different cycles of study programmes has been described in various documents.<sup>35</sup> However, in practice this is not clearly understood by staff and students.<sup>36</sup> The difference between BA and MA study programmes, for example, is often described superficially in terms of volume of work.

The processes to ensure objectives and learning outcomes remain current and the involvement of stakeholders in achieving this goal is largely informal. Staff understand the importance of these processes but there is no formal process other than the proposed programme review. Involvement with

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<sup>28</sup> meeting with Design Students

<sup>29</sup> meeting Design Teaching staff

<sup>30</sup> meeting with Study Programme Guarantors

<sup>31</sup> meeting with Employers & Professional Bodies

<sup>32</sup> see Appendix 4 AAAD Methodology for Internal Programme Review

<sup>33</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting with Senior Managers

<sup>34</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting Senior Management

<sup>35</sup> see Annex 11: Design Study Plans & Annex 5: Standards for accreditation of study programmes Field of Education - Art

<sup>36</sup> meetings with Design teaching staff and students from all levels

stakeholders is informal and industry stakeholders are not formally consulted on curriculum design.<sup>37</sup> However, Studio Heads all have an active professional practice, which is current and they introduce commercial projects into their studios.

Programme outcomes are compatible with the Subject Dublin Descriptors' learning outcomes (e.g. ELIA Dance, Film, Fine Art and Design subject descriptors) and with the national qualifications framework only in theoretical subjects. The process of formulating Programme outcomes and recording them has only commenced in Architecture (this programme was not part of the review process).<sup>38</sup>

'Student Centred' has been identified as a key feature of the AAAD curriculum in the SER. However, the concept is not understood consistently across all study programmes and staff and students have given different accounts to the Review Team of what it means to them. It is often interpreted and presented as the freedom of the student to work in a very independent manner in the studio.<sup>39</sup> It is not understood in terms of clear assessment criteria and guidelines, agreed feedback procedures and the use of Learning Outcomes to describe the curriculum.

The development of individualised study profiles by students is presented as a key feature of design education at AAAD. The individual atelier model for the studios allows for a large amount of self-directed learning in the last 2 years of the studio programmes.<sup>40</sup> However, if a student decides s/he wants to work in another studio or change studios this can be a challenging process and depends on the custom and practice of the individual studio. The Industrial Design, Product Design and Interior Design study programmes are addressing the sharing of studios and staff expertise in an informal manner and developing an interdisciplinary approach to their curriculum.<sup>41</sup> The development of the new building will help enable the Academy to address this issue in a more structured and formal manner.

The Academy is aware of the need to utilise different learning methodologies in the delivery of programmes. Each studio employs a slightly different approach to teaching with some studios introducing commercial project briefs as early as Year1 while others use more standard '*imaginative*' briefs.<sup>42</sup> Some studios operate as very independent and self contained units while others like Interior Design, Product Design and Industrial Design cooperate on a regular basis and involve Theory staff in the development and research phase of project briefs.<sup>43</sup>

Research including artistic practice is encouraged and supported by AAAD and supported through the RIV/RUV process. Lecturers/Professors are also involved in external commercial design consultancy work with a number of companies and occasionally use the commercial connection as a source of relevant design briefs. By bringing in commercial briefs to the Studio lecturers can expose their students to the

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<sup>37</sup> meeting with employers and professional bodies

<sup>38</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting with Senior Management

<sup>39</sup> meetings with Design staff, Students, Alumni & Employers

<sup>40</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> meetings with Students & the Alumni

<sup>41</sup> meeting with Design Teaching Staff

<sup>42</sup> meetings with Design Teaching Staff and Students

<sup>43</sup> meeting with Design Students

workings and operation of the design industry and ensure that the students' education remains relevant to industry's needs.

There is little or no evidence that programmes are designed using objectives and learning outcomes (LOs) and teaching staff are not very well informed about the concept and operation of LOs.<sup>44</sup> However, theoretical programme staff are familiar with the TUNING process and have read the TUNING documents for their specialist areas.<sup>45</sup> Teaching staff have an informal and intuitive understanding of a connection/progression among and between the study programmes/cycles.<sup>46</sup> The SER<sup>47</sup> states that '*In the future, Study Programmes Board will be jointly responsible for evaluating the quality of study programmes, updating study plans, extending or narrowing accreditation, proposals for new accreditation and re-accreditation*'. It appears that this process has not yet begun and guidelines have not been issued to Guarantors.<sup>48</sup>

Research including artistic practice is encouraged and supported by AAAD and supported through the RIV/RUV process. Lecturers/Professors are also involved in external commercial design consultancy work with a number of companies and occasionally use the commercial connection as a source of relevant design briefs. By bringing in commercial briefs to the Studio lecturers can expose their students to the workings and operation of the design industry and ensure that the students education remains relevant to industry's needs. Research, enterprise and knowledge transfer are conducted in different ways throughout the Academy such as PhD projects, post-MA projects, grant-aided projects in the theory of design and contractual research.<sup>49</sup> An example of good practice is the cooperation between the Fashion Studio and a major Slovakian university on wearable technology.<sup>50</sup> Developing a general research strategy for the academy has proven difficult due to a number of issues such as: different approaches in the different departments;<sup>51</sup> difficulty in defining artistic research;<sup>52</sup> too many commercial partners with different commercial demands and a general difficulty with explaining practice based research to staff and students.<sup>53</sup> In relation to practice based or artistic research the Academy is cooperating with a number of other Czech academies on this question but have not produced a final report.<sup>54</sup> The Academy established a Special Research and Project Office in 2016 and the Office for Cooperation with Applied Sphere in 2017, with responsibility for developing Research, Enterprise and Knowledge Transfer centres. An additional problem identified by staff was the lack of clarity (%) in the staff contract in relation to research, enterprise and knowledge transfer activities as opposed to teaching. It is possible for staff to negotiate an additional research contract to improve their financial position. Additionally the grant system had only one deadline per year.<sup>55</sup> The national indicators for research success were problematic

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<sup>44</sup> meeting with Teaching Staff

<sup>45</sup> ibid

<sup>46</sup> meeting with BA & MA Guarantors

<sup>47</sup> see SER p.30

<sup>48</sup> meeting BA,MA and PhD Guarantors

<sup>49</sup> meeting with Design, Research & Enterprise Staff

<sup>50</sup> meeting with Research Staff

<sup>51</sup> ibid

<sup>52</sup> ibid

<sup>53</sup> meeting with Research Staff

<sup>54</sup> ibid

<sup>55</sup> meeting with Design Teaching staff



for staff as they measured quantity of outputs and not quality. The development of a QA system for research was being hampered by the emphasis on quantitative as opposed to qualitative data and this needed to be addressed nationally.<sup>56</sup>

Critical reflection and self reflection happens as part of the practical work carried out by students in answering various briefs. There are group critiques (Crits) and informal tutorial sessions with individual students in all studios. Feedback practices vary from studio to studio but informal verbal feedback is the common direct practice.<sup>57</sup> There is no written feedback at BA level but this is given at MA level, although all students at all levels (BA, MA, PhD) requested greater critical feedback and discussion about their work.<sup>58</sup> Career and professional development advice varies from studio to studio and is not formalised within the Academy; all students requested more formal instruction in this area.<sup>59</sup> This point was identified as necessary and endorsed by the Alumni<sup>60</sup> and some employers.<sup>61</sup> In 2016 the Academy introduced a number of Soft Skills modules<sup>62</sup> and while it is early in the process the initial response from students has been positive and they would like to see the scheme expanded.<sup>63</sup>

### **Commendations**

- The review panel commends the Academy's work in setting up a quality culture including processes for the review of programmes and courses and more clear pathways for implementing curriculum changes. Through the development of these QAE systems, it will facilitate the definition and understanding of the learning and teaching requirements for progression and development of studies at each level;
- There are examples of good practice in the use of different teaching strategies in some studios. The Academy's new internal quality policy and culture should help promote sharing best practice.

### **Recommendations**

- The Review Team acknowledge the work carried out in the development of the new benchmark statements for programmes, however the expected achievements at each level and the links between levels in study programmes should be explored in detail and communicated through programme specification documents;
- The programme specification should demonstrate how the level learning outcomes are mapped through the programme and how they are assessed;
- There are useful informal processes for engaging with wider stakeholders, however the review panel recommends that participation from stakeholders is more clearly embedded in the development of the programmes of studies – such as with the 'Programme/Degree Review Board', that has recently been set up is a good step towards this. Clear guidelines, including quality indicators that the institution requires, should be given to programme leaders (guarantors) and stakeholders to understand the purpose of the above exercise;

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<sup>56</sup> meeting with Research Staff

<sup>57</sup> meeting with Students

<sup>58</sup> ibid

<sup>59</sup> ibid

<sup>60</sup> meeting with Alumni

<sup>61</sup> meeting with Employers

<sup>62</sup> see SER p.14

<sup>63</sup> meeting with Students

- The Academy should review, re-think and clearly define ‘student-centred learning’, which relates not only to student’s opportunities for independent development, but also consider their involvement in defining learning outcomes, assessment structures, study pathways, etc.
- Students have some flexibility to move across studios but this is not consistent across all programmes of studies. The new building and carefully considered programme review structures should contribute to developing more flexible study pathways;
- The development of specific programme for staff development on learning, teaching and assessment methodologies;
- The Review Team found that there is no clear understanding of how research informs the curriculum and the Academy’s teaching practices, and therefore we recommend that a reflection on how research, teaching and learning are interlinked is included in the definition of the Academy’s research strategy.

## 2.2 International perspectives

### Standard: the programme offers a range of opportunities for students to gain an international perspective

The Academy has a long record of international involvement and is a founder member of CUMULUS and has participated in a number of CUMULUS initiatives and working groups.<sup>64</sup> It “*participates in the CEEPUS programme and accepts government scholarship holders and Visegrad Fund scholarship holders.*” It also cooperates with a number of non-European universities and colleges and has had a reciprocal free fee arrangement with these colleges for a number of semesters. The Academy has an International Office, which looks after foreign exchange students’ needs such as accommodation etc. and provides some English language support. The International Office also works closely in support of AAAD students who wish to study abroad and there is an on-line forum where students can exchange experiences and advice about studying abroad. Pre-departure training and extra language classes are offered to students and there is a back up service for students who do not do well abroad or are refused their first choice.<sup>65</sup>

It also offers a number of other services<sup>66</sup> such as:

- *Buddy* – contact with student applicants through social media;
- *UniBuddy* - a new programme launched in 2017/18 linking local with international students;
- Accommodation – limited places for students from Visa countries;
- Orientation Day – tours etc. for new students;
- Mid Year Evaluation Meeting;
- Access to a range of other support services.

The Academy has strategy for creating an International Environment<sup>67</sup>, which involves:

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<sup>64</sup> see SER p.14

<sup>65</sup> see SER p.14

<sup>66</sup> see SER p.15

<sup>67</sup> see SER p.16

- Providing an accredited visual arts programme in English;
- Integrating foreign students into studios;
- Supporting collaboration of studios with international partners;
- Partial instruction in studios in English;
- Extensive programme of visiting international figures from practice and theory;
- International members of evaluation committees;
- Active participation of students in international presentations;
- International exhibitions in the UM gallery.

At the academic level Internationalisation takes place primarily in two ways. Firstly through an extensive set of Erasmus agreements,<sup>68</sup> which seem to be organised by individual studios and through participation in international conferences and exhibitions.<sup>69</sup> The Erasmus exchange programme has seen a reduction in the number of home students travelling abroad and there seems to be a number of reasons for this including a lack of portfolio preparation by outgoing students, a reluctance among students to leave the ‘home’ studio where they hope to graduate from and a lack of recognition of the ECTS credits earned abroad when students return to AAAD.<sup>70</sup> This phenomenon is not restricted to AAAD but is a topic of discussion on online forums throughout the Czech Republic.<sup>71</sup> The Masters programme in Visual Arts is rated highly by international exchange students<sup>72</sup> and AAAD has 7 foreign professors working in the Academy for the academic year 2017/2018.

### **Commendations**

- We commend the Academy for its successful participation in the main international design education network Cumulus, as well as in participating from key international exhibitions and fairs;
- The Academy encourages and supports staff to attend international conferences and exhibitions and staff and students exhibit regularly at the Milan Salon;
- Students are given opportunities to present their work at national and international events, as well as to include their work in current Academy publications;
- The introduction of the *Soft Skills* module offered at BA level, enhancing the employability of the students;
- We commend that the Academy has a reciprocal fee-free arrangement with a range of academic institutions. We are aware of the Academy’s international office, which takes care of exchange students. The Academy also has an international forum to exchange experiences and offers international language training for students who will be going abroad.

### **Recommendations**

- In the Contents of Bachelor Study there is no mention of internationalisation, nor in the Graduate Profile, the Academy should add this element in their study programme profiles and Programme Specification;

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<sup>68</sup> see Annexes 21 *Partner Universities Exchange* & 22 *Student International Exchanges 2011-17*

<sup>69</sup> meetings with Study Programme Guarantors & Senior Management

<sup>70</sup> meetings with Teaching Staff & Students

<sup>71</sup> meeting with Teaching Staff

<sup>72</sup> meeting with Students

- As previously mentioned, the review team commends the soft skills module offered, but following discussion with current students and alumni, we recommend that the Academy addresses the need for more professional and career guidance;
- The Academy's current strategy does embrace internationalisation, however the review team recommends that the Academy further reflects on how this strategy feeds and integrates into the curriculum. In other words, how international experiences are recognised and accredited, how these are reviewed through QAE processes, etc., which should be made explicit by programme specifications (see BA Programme);
- Staff development should also be linked with the Academy's internationalisation strategy, as staff could benefit from more international experiences. In this context, recruitment of international staff would enrich teaching and research approaches across the Academy;
- In line with the Academy's introduction of new internal quality measures, the review panel recommends that the internal QAE processes are also considered in relation to international experiences in the existing exchange programmes such as ERASMUS.

### 2.3 Assessment

#### Standard: assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes

Assessment is carried out in a number of ways in AAAD depending on the type of subject to be assessed and the type and timing of assessment. Firstly, if the subject is professional, technological or theoretical the study information system (SIS) specifies in detail how the subject is to be assessed.<sup>73</sup> The SIS covers the range of knowledge and skills, the structure of classes and the number of credits in a particular subject.<sup>74</sup> It also states how often the subject can be re-assessed. These regulations are contained in the *Study and Examination Code*.<sup>75</sup> The assessment is based on 'tests, orals, written essays or a combination of all these.' If the student fails, s/he can repeat the subject or carry it over to the next year. The number of examination repeats is limited and the *Study and Examination Code* regulates the possibility of transferring the subject.<sup>76</sup>

In the case of studio based subjects the process is different and focuses on 'adequate creative activity.' The Head of the Studio and assistant conducts the assessment process at the end of each semester.<sup>77</sup> The Programme Guarantor can comment on assessment in a subject but only in a very general way.<sup>78</sup> The Head of the Studio assesses the artistic outputs and also the commitment of the student to his/her work over the semester, the quality of the materials used and the method of presentation.<sup>79</sup> This process is supplemented by a series of 'Crits' throughout the semester.<sup>80</sup> Briefs are usually distributed in

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<sup>73</sup> see SER p.17

<sup>74</sup> see SER p.17

<sup>75</sup> see Annex 5 *Standards for accreditation of study programmes* p.8

<sup>76</sup> see SER p.17

<sup>77</sup> see SER p.17 & meeting with Teachers

<sup>78</sup> meeting with Study Programme Guarantors

<sup>79</sup> see SER p.17

<sup>80</sup> meeting with Teaching Staff

written form but the practice of using LO'S and matching assessment criteria is uneven.<sup>81</sup> In technical subjects specific objectives are specified and assessed accordingly.<sup>82</sup> In the meeting with Senior Management the Review Team were informed that using LO'S in the studio subjects has proven to be very difficult but did not elaborate on reasons for this difficulty.

The main end of semester exam takes the form of a public defence of a final project in front of a jury of up to 9-12 people including studio staff, theoretical staff and invited outside experts. The jury mark/assess each student individually according to their own specialist interests and then come together to agree a mark. The jury takes into consideration the following: *"the originality of the solution, the quality of supporting documentation (visualisations, sketches, plans, models, mood-boards, etc.), the choice of material and technological processing, the quality of the output and its presentation, as well as the ability of the student to respond adequately to the questions asked."*<sup>83</sup> Students do not receive assessment criteria in advance with each project brief and depend on peer group consultations in the studio and individual consultations with lecturers.<sup>84</sup> There is an exception in the Interior Design and Furniture Design studio where students are supplied with assessment criteria especially in technical subjects. Feedback is given orally and some students reported a wish for more detailed feedback in a written form.<sup>85</sup> The process in the final submission was described as a *"pitch"* and while every student knew what the jury were looking for in general there were no specific assessment criteria. Students reported that there was no feedback at this stage only a set of marks.<sup>86</sup> The Design staff contradicted this<sup>87</sup>, stating that there was extensive oral feedback from the jury and extra feedback was available afterwards from the Head of Studio.

The review team finds that there is currently inconsistency in assessment practices across the Academy as well as in the alignment of assessment criteria to learning outcomes. The exception is the rigorous alignment and application of the definition of learning outcomes to assessment criteria in the Theory and History department.

### **Recommendations**

- The Academy does not have set criteria for assessment by the final jury. The review panel recommends that, for all levels, this is set up at the study programme level, ensuring that the assessment criteria is aligned with the objectives and learning outcomes of each course and programme;
- The Academy formalises a feedback process for students which aligns to the criteria for each course and programme level;
- The final assessment should use a set classification, for which definition of achievement is given at each level.

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<sup>81</sup> ibid

<sup>82</sup> ibid

<sup>83</sup> see SER p.17

<sup>84</sup> meetings with MA/PhD Students & Design Students

<sup>85</sup> meeting with Students

<sup>86</sup> ibid

<sup>87</sup> meeting with Design Teaching Staff

### 3. Student profiles

#### 3.1 Admission/Entrance qualifications

**Standard: there are clear criteria for student admission, based on an assessment of their artistic/academic suitability for the institution**

The enrolment conditions, procedure and criteria for student admission are appropriate and clearly defined in the SER for the Bachelor's, Master's, Post-Graduate Master's and Doctoral study programmes of Visual Arts and Theory & History of Visual Arts.<sup>88</sup> The Academy has the status of national HEI and conforms to the general admissions process in accordance with the local Higher Education Act.<sup>89</sup>

The UMPRUM aims to be a highly selective institution, which will enable the small-scaled studio form of teaching and an individual approach to the students among others.<sup>90</sup> Therefore, the entrance examinations are demanding and only a limited number of applicants will be accepted for the Academy's study programmes.<sup>91</sup> The Student Affairs Office is responsible for the administrative part of the admission procedure.<sup>92</sup>

Information and requirements for the participation in the entrance examinations for all study programmes are published at least four months in advance on the Academy's website. Applicants will moreover receive a letter, which holds information regarding the admission procedure.<sup>93</sup> The clear criteria, accessible, rigorous and extensive procedures for admissions at the BA and MA programmes are praised by the students and commended by the review team.

The enrolment process begins with the submission of an application form within the deadline that has been established in the yearly schedule for each academic year. As described in an additional document provided by the Academy for the second visit of the review team, the admission procedure is "typically multi-round, based on elimination. Depending on the nature of the study programme, the admission procedure may include, beyond talent, study and creative prerequisites and knowledge of history of art, also an assessment of the ability to think corresponding to the discipline."<sup>94</sup> Each department decides the theme/structures of admission.<sup>95</sup>

Per study programme, the student admission procedure is the following<sup>96</sup>:

- The BA, MA and Post-Graduate MA study programmes of Visual Arts, taught in Czech, have a two-stage admission procedure. For the first round the applicants have submitted their portfolio and mandatory documents<sup>97</sup> attached to the application form. The first round may also include an artistic task, which requires personal attendance. The second round consists of the assessment of

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<sup>88</sup> see Annexes 10: *Study and Examination Code* and 29: *Admission requirements and interview procedure*

<sup>89</sup> see SER p.18 and Annex 10: *Study and Examination Code*, pp.1-3

<sup>90</sup> see 'Vision' in SER p.5

<sup>91</sup> see SER p.11 - in Art Education, "the optimal number of students in one studio is 20"; in Art Theory Education, "the optimal number of students in one year is 10."

<sup>92</sup> see SER p.18

<sup>93</sup> meeting with BA, MA and PhD Design students

<sup>94</sup> see Appendix 4: *BA, MA, Doctorate Study Programmes/ Standards for accreditation of study programmes*, p.6

<sup>95</sup> Meeting with the Heads of Design Programmes

<sup>96</sup> see SER p.18 and Annex 10: *Study and Examination Code*, pp.3-6

<sup>97</sup> see Annex 29: *Admission requirements and Interview Procedures*

documents attached to the application form; results of artistic tasks performed within a set deadline at AAAD; interviews with the Studio Head, their Assistant and possibly also other specialist staff appointed by the Studio Head; results of a theoretical test. For this round applicants' personal attendance is always required. The key evaluation criterion is the applicants' talent, which will be primarily demonstrated during the entrance examinations.

- Study programmes of Visual Arts taught in English consist of a one-stage admission procedure. Applicants' attendance is not required.
- The Post-graduate Master's Degree Programme of the Theory and History of Visual Arts has a two-stage admission procedure. First round consists of a test and an essay for which personal attendance is required. In the second round applicants will be personally interviewed. During the admission procedure the applicants will be tested for their specialist knowledge, formulation ability and knowledge of the field.
- The entrance examination for the Doctoral study programme of Visual Arts has one round consisting of a personal interview with the Board appointed by the Rector after previous consultation with the Doctoral Board.
- The entrance examination for the study in the Doctoral study programme of Theory and History of Visual Arts takes place in two rounds. During the first round the knowledge of a foreign language is tested; second round is a personal interview, which includes a presentation and defence of the project and a discussion about it.

For the assessment each applicant is assessed individually by committees, which are appointed and composed by the Rector.<sup>98</sup> These committees are:

- Studio Committee for the assessment of the results of the first stage of the BA, MA and Post-Graduate MA study programmes of Visual Arts, taught in Czech; second round is assessed with marks and points by a Department Commission;
- Studio Board for the assessment of the application to the study programmes in English;
- Commission composed of the teachers of the department Theory and History of Visual Arts programme for the assessment of the application to the (Post-graduate) MA study programmes of this department. Second round is assessed by a commission, which assesses the knowledge of the field, the ability to argue, study results and specialist practice.<sup>99</sup>

For the enrolment procedure for Doctoral study programmes, the Rector sets each year the details regarding documents and attachments required by the applicant and the assessment method after a consultation with the Doctoral Board. The second round of entrance examination for the study in the Doctoral study programme of Theory and History of Visual Arts is assessed by a Commission appointed by the Rector, after prior consultation with the Doctoral Board.

Based on the results the Department Commission suggests individual applicants for enrolment. The Rector has the final deciding vote about the admission of an applicant, based on the recommendations by the Main Admission Committee. As stated in SER, the applicant may in exceptional cases be invited after the first round to proceed to the second round in another studio, or may be enrolled after the second round in a study programme taught by another studio.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> see SER p.18 and Document 4: *BA, MA, Doctorate Study Programmes/ Standards for accreditation of study programmes*, p.6

<sup>99</sup> see SER p.18 and Annex 10: *Study and Examination Code*, pp.3-6

<sup>100</sup> see Annexes 10: *Study and Examination Code*, pp.3-4 & 29: *Admission requirements and Interview Procedures*, pp.1-2

The Academy stresses the equal access of applicants: *“applicants are not limited by age or nationality.”*<sup>101</sup> Since *“UMPRUM often accept students with a previous experience in their field of art gained in practice or at other universities”*, is the percentage of mature students (at least thirty-year-old) quite high both in Bachelor’ and Master’s studies<sup>102</sup>

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of 30 years old students (% of the total)	49 (9,6%)	61 (11,7 %)	40 (7,9%)	43 (8,4%)	
Bachelor’s study programme	4 (8,2%)	8 (13,1%)	7 (17,5%)	6 (14%)	21,5%
Master’s study programme	23 (47%)	23 (37,7%)	12 (30%)	6 (14%)	9,5%
Follow-up master’s study programme	8 (16,3%)	16 (26,2%)	9 (22,5%)	16 (37,2%)	33,3%
Doctoral study programme	14 (28,6%)	14 (23%)	12 (30%)	15 (34,9%)	35,7%

Figure 1 - The percentage of thirty-year-old students in the group of all thirty-year-old people in a given year (from 2011 to 2014 in the brackets). Source: Annex 33: *Students over 30 years old 2011-14*.

Non-native speaking applicants must prove their knowledge of the Czech language when applying for a study programme taught in Czech. Applicants with special needs must themselves *“consider to what extent their problems can affect their performance during the entrance examination.”*<sup>103</sup> To date there has not been any issues surrounding the application procedure of applicants with special needs.<sup>104</sup> However, it would be recommendable for the Academy to clearly define the accessibility of its study programmes, as not all of the study programmes are accessible to students with physical or mobility disabilities due to the nature and equipment of the workshop.

The Academy collects data on applicants in a form of survey.<sup>105</sup> In addition, *“a report is kept on the progress of the talent examination, recording the assessment of each component of the admission examination, and stating facts of relevance for admitting or not admitting the applicant.”*<sup>106</sup> However, the Review Team has seen no evidence of the collected data in relation to admissions being assessed and analysed by the Academy. The review panel recommends that this data is assessed and analysed, as this would contribute in defining the profile of students that apply for entry.

### **Commendations**

- The Review Team commends the Academy for their clear criteria, accessible, rigorous and extensive procedures for admissions at the BA and MA programmes.

<sup>101</sup> see SER p.18

<sup>102</sup> see Annex 33: *Students over 30 years old 2011-14*

<sup>103</sup> see SER p.18

<sup>104</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> meeting with the Teaching staff

<sup>105</sup> see Annex 30: *Survey among prospective students*

<sup>106</sup> see Appendix 4: ‘BA, MA, Doctorate Study Programmes/ Standards for accreditation of study programmes’, p.7



## **Recommendations**

- The Review Team recommends that the data collected in relation to admissions, is assessed and analysed, as this would contribute in defining the profile of students that apply for entry, as well as demonstrating the Academy's equal opportunities policy.

### **3.2 Student progression, achievement and employability**

#### **Standard: the institution has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students**

Student progression and achievement is mainly monitored in the form of statistics, which consist of the following data: the number of applicants; results of the entrance examinations; students at the individual stages of study up to the level of individual studios; successful completion of the semester/year; repetition of the year; number of interruption of studies and reasons for interruption; fulfilment of prerequisites for graduation; successfully and unsuccessfully completed studies; number of internal internships, both national and international; student mobility.<sup>107</sup> However, how frequently this information and data is collected and how it is analysed and assessed by the Academy remains unclear to the Review Team.

The Study Information System (SIS) is *“not yet able to generate required student progression through the study statistics automatically.”*<sup>108</sup> Due to this, the Student Affairs Office processes the statistics by hand, *“one by one”*.<sup>109</sup> The current system is not effective and makes it challenging to achieve a clear picture of student progression for analysis.<sup>110</sup> As stated in SER, Academy is considering acquiring new software to meet these requirements, which is commended by the Review Team.<sup>111</sup> The Academy is furthermore planning *“to develop a set of criteria and measures that captures successes and failures in a constructive and transparent manner”* by optimising *“collection of information and data, including student progression and success rates in the information system; to introduce a set of indicators supporting the implementation of the strategic plan and functioning of individual degree programmes.”*<sup>112</sup>

The Academy has defined a system for the recognition of previous studies.<sup>113</sup> As mentioned before in this report, the recognition of studies abroad is inconsistent.<sup>114</sup>

- According to the recent alumni questionnaire survey, the employment rate of graduates is high: 92% of the graduates found full or partial employment in the studied discipline, and 57% of graduates had

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<sup>107</sup> see SER pp.18-19

<sup>108</sup> see SER p.19

<sup>109</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting with Rector & Rector's Board

<sup>110</sup> *ibid*

<sup>111</sup> see SER p.19

<sup>112</sup> see Appendix 2: *Strategy for developing a quality culture at AAAD*, p.1

<sup>113</sup> see SER p.1

<sup>114</sup> see SER p.28

no problem finding employment in the field.<sup>115</sup> At the same time, however, the alumni surveys<sup>116</sup> reveal that in some study programmes graduates are more successful than in others:

- architecture graduates – 80 % and graphic design graduates – 76 % have found the best employment in the studied discipline
- fine arts graduates – 60 % have accepted work in another discipline
- applied arts graduates – 18 % and theory and history of art graduates – 15 % find their employment the worst
- 57 % did not have a problem to find a job in their discipline

The majority of graduates are self-employed. Many graduates obtain a teaching position at the Academy, but also at regional art universities or other levels of education. Successful graduates often work in the positions of artistic directors, design/creative department managers, including companies operating internationally such as Vitra.<sup>117</sup> After graduation many of the graduates cooperate with the Academy as evaluators in different committees, opponents of the final Bachelor and diploma thesis and as providers of professional traineeship for students and/or their employers.<sup>118</sup>

The contact between the Academy and graduates will likely increase in the future as “*active work with graduates is one of the key tasks of the Academy*”. Apart from intensifying mutual contact between the Academy and its alumni, the direct involvement of talented MA & PhD graduates in the operation of AAAD through short-term work positions [...] also has an important role to play. [...] An average of two work positions a year (‘post-doc’ and ‘post-MA’) is foreseen for the period 2016–2018, 0.5 part time position each (i.e., 1.0 per year in total). The length of individual projects shall be 1–2 years.<sup>119</sup> The majority of graduates welcome this development.<sup>120</sup>

The studio of their chosen study programme mainly monitors the employability and career development of graduates. Studios keep in touch with the most successful alumni, which tends to happen informally.<sup>121</sup> In addition, the Academy conducts alumni questionnaire surveys and monitors the number of registered graduates on the local Labour Office and the number of unemployed graduates twice per year on the national Labour Office MLSA website.<sup>122</sup>

Surveys on the alumni are a quite recent development. The first poll of the graduates was carried out in 2016, which was followed by a second survey in 2017. For 2018 the AAAD is preparing a structured survey, which will focus on the employability among successful graduates.<sup>123</sup> The fact that the Academy has since 2016 annually prepared and conducted an alumni survey, is a positive development. However, the collection of data on graduates is not consistent, and partially not sufficient for a detailed analysis,

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<sup>115</sup> see SER p.20 and Annex 35: *Questionnaire survey among the alumni 2017*

<sup>116</sup> see Annex 35: *Questionnaire survey among the alumni 2017*

<sup>117</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> meeting with the Alumni and Employers, & see SER p.20

<sup>118</sup> see SER p.20

<sup>119</sup> see Annex 3: *Institutional Plan 2016-18*, pp.7-8

<sup>120</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> meeting with the Alumni

<sup>121</sup> Both meetings with the Alumni

<sup>122</sup> see SER p.19 & Annex 36: *Graduates registered at labour office*

<sup>123</sup> see SER p.19

such as the obtained data from the MLSA website.<sup>124</sup> It is especially challenging for the Academy to track employability of international students who leave the country after graduation.<sup>125</sup> Therefore, the Review Team recommends that the Academy develops their own internal processes for tracking graduates' employability pattern. Since there is evidence that students are successful in their careers and contribute to the enhancement of cultural life locally, nationally and internationally, the Academy will benefit from analysing this information.<sup>126</sup> This would also contribute to the Academy retaining connection with their alumni, which currently takes place in a more informal manner.

From the meetings with students, alumni and employers it was stated that there is a demand for more teaching on entrepreneurial and management skills.<sup>127</sup> At the same time many of the interviewed students acknowledged that there has lately been more possibilities for learning these skills which will be needed "in real life" after studies.<sup>128</sup> The introduction of the 'Soft Skills' module in November 2017, based on the feedback from alumni, has especially been helpful. Despite that not all of the students have attended the course, as it is not compulsory. Students who have attended this course found it useful, but wish for more guidance in business-related areas such as pricing and invoicing. Majority of the students agreed that there should be more teaching on entrepreneurial and management skills and more professional development guidance, some students even suggested it to be mandatory in most programmes.<sup>129</sup>

### **Commendations**

- The Academy recognises the issues regarding the collection of data of student progression with the SIS and has plans for acquiring a new software to meet the requirements for generating required student progression through the study statistics automatically.

### **Recommendations**

- Through the recently developed Quality processes, the Academy should improve the processes for monitoring, collection and analysis of student progression and achievement;
- Data collected about alumni could be analysed to help develop the curriculum;
- In some programmes students tend to find more opportunities for employment than in others and this may need to be analysed by the Academy in order to include any necessary changes in the curriculum;
- The Academy develops its own internal processes for tracking graduates' employability pattern. There is evidence that students are successful in their careers, and the Academy will benefit from analysing this information. This would also contribute to the Academy retaining connection with their alumni, which currently takes place in a more informal manner.

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<sup>124</sup> ibid

<sup>125</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> meeting with the Teaching Staff

<sup>126</sup> see Annex 89 AAAD Red-Dot Student & Staff Awards 2007-17

<sup>127</sup> Both meetings with the Students, Alumni and Employers

<sup>128</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> meeting with the students

<sup>129</sup> Both meetings with the students

## 4. Teaching staff

### 4.1 Staff qualifications and professional activity

**Standards: members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/pedagogues/researchers**

The Review Team believe that AAAD academic staff providing compulsory education in accredited study programmes have the required qualifications and are in full compliance with legal requirements and valid accreditation standards. AAAD has fully applied *The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports' Selection Procedure Code for the Employment of Academic Staff in accordance with Section 36(2) of Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on Higher Education Institutions and on the Modification and Amendments to Other Acts (the Higher Education Act), on 25 July 2017 under reference No. MSMT-20295/2017*<sup>130</sup>. This new amendment is introducing new requirements and strategies in learning and teaching for all programmes, which the teaching staff will need to understand to be able to deliver them, therefore the Review Team believes strongly that there is a need for comprehensive staff development programme to be introduced.

A member of the academic staff is employed on the basis of a successful interview procedure. Teachers at AAAD are recruited mainly from professionals, who demonstrate a commitment to teaching while often also maintaining their own professional practice. Teachers normally work full-time and mainly work with students on one-to-one basis in the Studio. Specialised subjects are taught by visiting teachers, experts who ensure that the students are in contact with current practices in the professional field.

The Review Team noted that the majority of staff teaching across the Design departments (Design, Applied Arts and Graphics), whether they were part of the staffing establishment, some visiting tutors offering specialist teaching input or professional practitioners, were also graduates of AAAD, often from the programmes they studied. The Review Team acknowledge that in the past it was only possible to study at a HE level Design, Applied Arts and Graphic Design in the Czech Republic, but In the view of the Review Team, in these subject areas this may give rise to a tendency to perpetuate and privilege established pedagogic approaches whilst marginalising innovative learning and teaching methodologies. It could also reinforce a hierarchy within the teaching staff and limit the development of younger staff.

While the Faculty undoubtedly benefits from the input made by visiting international pedagogues, this could also be further enhanced by a more focused approach to the gathering of feedback from graduate students and the field of professional practice on the skills, understanding and processes that were demanded by the industry and employers. Both the alumni and employers felt they could be more engaged and offer more to the study programmes in a more formal way.

The Academy's policy and strategy, (review & evaluation, funding etc.) that supports and enhances the teaching staff's artistic/pedagogical/research activity is constrained by funding limitations. 80% of AAAD's annual budget is earmarked for specific fields, leaving little room to manoeuvre, but the Review Team commends the Academy for re-allocating considerable financial support for staff research and enterprise. The Academy has allocated funds to which individual members of teaching staff can apply for research grants, in the form of internal open competitions: academic grant competition (AGS); a tender for support of publishing activities within the AAAD publishing house; external projects – support of the processing of applications and their subsequent administrative support (GA CR, Norwegian Funds,

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<sup>130</sup> see Annex: 37: Selection procedure code

European Structural Funds, projects of MEYS, MC, MPO, newly TACR, etc.); and, participation in conferences, symposiums, lectures in the CR and abroad, short-term study visits, expert activities,<sup>131</sup>

Staff artistic and enterprise activity – an expected part of a teacher’s engagement within the Academy is her/his own creative practice, an activity that the Academy *“even requires and provides its teachers with sufficient room for its realisation and presentation – e.g., through covering travel expenses, full salary when on the semester sabbatical leave, collaborates in the promotion of artistic outputs, etc.”*<sup>132</sup> However the Review Team learnt during its visits<sup>133</sup> to the Academy that the staff contracts do not include the allocation of any research and/or enterprise time.

Similarly, there is no policy to provide staff members with continuing development with the latest skills and knowledge in teaching, learning and assessment, and recent developments such as the requirements and guidelines published in the European and Standards Guidelines 2015 document. There are no regular annual reviews of teaching staff carried out to track and support enhancement of the teaching staff’s artistic, pedagogical and research activity.<sup>134</sup>

The Teaching Staff in the practical areas are practising artists or professionally active in their fields. This activity provides the practical engagement for individuals to reflect on and participate in events nationally and in many cases internationally. This strong practical engagement feeds directly into the content of courses and projects to the direct benefit of students and greatly enhances the programmes.

### **Commendations**

- The Review Team commends that teachers are fully engaged in exhibitions and presentations; and staff are taking initiatives in organising these events, which do not only reflect on their personal practice but also on the work of their students;
- The Review Team commends the Academy on re-allocating considerable financial support for staff research and enterprise from a limited budget.

### **Recommendations**

- In considering the new amendment in the Higher Arts Education Act, the Review Team recommends that staff development programs be put in place to ensure their understanding of the new requirements, strategies and benchmark statements, for learning and teaching;
- The Academy needs to re-define their research policy and strategy, which would also guide staff development on their professional and research practices;
- The Academy should consider adding research and enterprise allocations into the teaching staff’s contracts.

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<sup>131</sup> see SER, p.21

<sup>132</sup> see SER p.21

<sup>133</sup> meetings with Senior Staff, Research Staff and Teaching Staff

<sup>134</sup> meeting with Design teachers

## 4.2 Size and composition of the teaching staff body

### Standard: there is sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programme

Students at AAAD study their practice based largely in a Studio, which is run by a Professor who is supported by at least one Assistant (minimum two full-time teachers<sup>135</sup>). The Studio is *'the focus of the educational process at AAAD,*<sup>136</sup> which has an optimal number of 20 students (3-4 in each year). Visiting national and international teachers/experts who provide lectures and workshops support these teachers. The students also receive teaching for professional and supplementary subjects and for theoretical subjects from the history of art, by the Department of Theory and History of Art. It is clear to the Review Team that there are sufficient qualified teaching staff for the student numbers on the study programmes, but not all students receive the same level and breadth of learning experience, as this varies in some studios.<sup>137</sup>

Under the Higher Education Act 1998 minimal constraints were placed on successive fixed-term employment contracts for academic staff, but since 2012 this relative freedom has been curtailed by the Labour Code, made applicable to all employees. To meet the ever-changing demands on studio teaching in its endeavour to meet the developing world of work, AAAD has opted after extensive consultation to *define serious operational/technical reasons and the special nature of the work of the studio heads and their assistants under Section 39, Act No. 262/2006 Coll. as a prerequisite for the regular verification of the motivation of the studio heads and their assistants for work in the studio management and tools for quality assessment of the studio teaching, the degree of its innovation and the reflection of fundamental changes in the field.*<sup>138</sup> As an outcome, with the approval of the academic community, Senate approved this directive and as a consequence successive fixed-term employment contracts for academic staff for the position of Studio Head and Assistant are possible, enabling for new recruitment and a repetitive admission process of new teaching staff every three years.

The Review Team noted AAAD has a declared practice of identifying individuals as future teachers from its own student cohort via its MA and PhD programmes. Whilst this practice is understandable, it could constrain the development of study programmes in the future by limiting the pool of experience, ideas and practices to those that already exist within the institution.<sup>139</sup>

### **Commendations**

- The Review Team commend the Academy on the introduction of the short (one-year) term contracts for alumni, as this enables new developments within the programmes and allows for further reflection of practical work;
- The Review Team notes the loyalty and enthusiasm of the teaching staff to contribute to the success of the Academy.

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<sup>135</sup> see SER p.22

<sup>136</sup> *ibid*

<sup>137</sup> meetings with the Students and Alumni

<sup>138</sup> see SER p.23

<sup>139</sup> meetings with Design Teachers and Heads of Departments

### **Recommendations**

- The Review Team recommends that, in order to support the current three-year staff review, a formal annual appraisal/review process be introduced, to understand, identify and record staff needs, interests, and development opportunities;
- The Review Team recommends the Academy to *throw the net as widely as possible* (nationally and internationally) when it has the opportunity to recruit new teaching staff.

## 5. Facilities, resources and support

### 5.1 Facilities

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

The SER presents a detailed overview of all buildings and teaching spaces, studios, gallery, lecture rooms, classrooms studio's.<sup>140</sup> During the two visits the Review Team made a tour of all the studios, workshops, lecture/seminar rooms, gallery spaces and central resources (library, etc.). From this experience the Review Team believes the resources for the large majority of programmes are appropriate, but as the Academy grows the workspaces are already insufficient. Also at the meetings with students and teachers, both expressed that there is a severe lack of workshop and storage space.<sup>141</sup> The current building occupied was not purpose built and therefore many facilities are not ideally fit for purpose.

The Review Team were shown detailed plans and given a presentation by the Rector on the Academy's new building, which will house the majority of the workshops and enable a major rethink in the learning and teaching strategy, including facilitating a more interdisciplinary approach. The Review Team therefore supports this decision to move workshops to this new more purpose-designed building as soon as possible. The Review Team also advises the senior management to engage with students and teaching staff at the earliest opportunity in the debate on the use of the new building.

The Review Team finds the equipment for the majority of the study programmes to be adequate and appropriate for professional standards and students are generally satisfied with the equipment provided. However, the Review Team observed and the students stated there was too little or lack of equipment appropriate for professional world in certain studios (e.g. Textile, Fashion).<sup>142</sup> It was also mentioned that many students rely on their own computers and in some studios the software needs to be improved in order to meet the professional standards.

The SER gives a clear and detailed overview of the libraries and its (educational) materials, including subscriptions to world databases, which the Review Team was able to see and verify. At the meetings with students (both home and international) they stated they would like more international publications and in the SER no information is provided on the percentage of international material available in English as part of the collection, in the different libraries.<sup>143</sup>

#### **Commendations**

- The Review Team commends the academy on the quality of certain resources – such as library, exhibition spaces, and some specialised workshops (typography, lithography, bookbinding, glass).

#### **Recommendations**

- The Academy engage with students and teaching staff at the earliest opportunity to discuss the use and layout of the new building;

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<sup>140</sup> see SER p.24 & Annex 47: *Information on Facilities*

<sup>141</sup> meetings with Students, Teachers and Alumni

<sup>142</sup> ibid

<sup>143</sup> see SER p.25



- The Review Team recommends the Academy to review its strategy for resourcing the provision of materials. There are different practices across the Academy, with some students having to spend a significant amount of their own resources to buy materials, whereas other students do not require this expense. These differences in practices and access to resources could directly impact on the Academy's equal opportunities policy and recruitment.

## 5.2 Financial resources

### Standard: the institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the programme

The SER states that according to the legislation, public universities are 80% financed by the government, which guarantees continuous functioning for the different programmes and for the Academy as a whole. The SER states that the contribution from the state through the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to the educational and creative activities of the state make 75-80% of the Academy's total revenue; 15-20% of the Academy's total revenue come from project funding (recent increase due to the good results in RIV and RUV)<sup>144</sup> and 5-10% income comes from its own activities – rentals, book sales, sale of services, cooperation contracts with public entities, private sector and NGOs.

Academic Senate and the Board of Trustees approves both the annual budget and the two-year budget forecast, presenting in detail individual budget lines. The draft budget is prepared by the Bursar on the basis of documents from the individual Academy departments and, after being discussed in the Rector's Board, the Rector submits it to the prescribed Authorising Authorities. The budget for the current year is submitted to the authorities for approval in the spring of a given year as soon as the amount of the contribution from the approved state budget for the Academy's educational and creative work is known. The budget implementation report, changes proposal and the budget forecast for the following two years are submitted to Senate and the Board of Trustees in the autumn of the given year when there is information available on the on-going budget implementation is available for the current year as well as general drafts of the state budget for the next calendar year from, which will enable a prediction of the key part of the Academy's income to be made.

The Review Team understands the budgetary process at the Academy and received clear information of that during the visit,<sup>145</sup> but it did not receive enough information<sup>145</sup> on how the Academy deals with budgetary issues at programme level nor did it understand how the consequences of an overall budget cut would work through to study programme level and the effect on them. As mentioned in the SER, *“Considering the size of the Academy, the wage and salary expenditures are not divided among individual study programmes or Academy departments on the budget level. They can be kept within a single budget line and managed independently, giving the Academy more flexibility.”*

In relation to decision making, specifically with regards to budgeting and expenditure, the Review Team was made aware that the Academy is completely free in allocating its resources according to accredited study programmes. It was stated that the current contribution of MEYS on running expenses for current study programmes is approximately 90% which leaves only 10% space for developing new and/or

<sup>144</sup> meeting with Design Research staff

<sup>145</sup> see SER p.26 & meeting with Rector's Board

investing in improvements. But there are other resources (grants, own revenues etc.) that only the 10% of the Academy's budget is available for discussion and this is allocated on demand.<sup>146</sup> However a more structured framework for presenting requests and justifying decisions with regards to budget, could help the Academy to reflect over their teaching and learning priorities associating expenditure with development needs<sup>147</sup>.

### **Commendations**

- From the presentation by the Bursar and the accounts presented, it is clear to the Review Team that the Academy is currently in a healthy financial position;
- The Rector and Bursar have been able to raise the 20% (State funded) increase in budgeted building costs for the new building.

### **Recommendations**

- The Review Team recommends that a structured framework for considering expenditure demands is developed in order to include not only staff but also student's needs. In addition this would help ensuring support is provided across all disciplines and studios, which currently may seem lacking transparency;
- Decision-making around budget and expenditure should be linked with the QAE review of programmes and courses and a transparent process for financial requirements and resource investment should be implemented and clearly communicated.

## **5.3 Support staff**

### **Standard: the institution has sufficient qualified support staff**

The SER states that AAAD has sufficient support staff with a sufficient level of qualification to continuously secure functioning of the programmes,<sup>148</sup> which the Review Team agreed with, with the exception of the growing need and demand for appropriately qualified support for students with personal issues (including psychological, health, welfare etc.). The Review Team believe this should be someone outside the teaching staff, who are the first point of contact, but they should refer the student to this qualified person(s). The Academy has recently hired new support staff for QAE and R&D agenda. The Review Team, found during their visit, the workshops, library, etc. were well supported with qualified technical staff and no issues were raised in any of our meetings with the students and teachers, in fact students spoke very highly of the support staff.

### **Commendations**

- The Review Team commends the quality of support staff at the Academy, and particularly the appointment of new staff members tasked with leading QAE and R&D strategy development.

### **Recommendations**

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<sup>146</sup> meeting with the Rector's Board

<sup>147</sup> meeting with Design Students

<sup>148</sup> see SER p.28

- Some informal policies for staff development of support staff are in place but these are not formalised. The Review Team recommends that a formal system of appraisals and staff development should be set up, which should also include support staff;
- The Academy should appoint an appropriately qualified person to deal with the increasing mental health and social issues students are experiencing.

## 6. Communication, organisation and decision-making

### 6.1 Internal communication process

#### Standard: effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the institution

The Academy has clear means for communicating information to students and the review shows that there is a clear flow of information. The Academy bases its communication strategy on the fact that it is a small institution where informal personal interaction takes place on a regular basis. Main mean for formal communication with staff and students is by email<sup>149</sup>. Students have access to the AAAD intranet, where they can find information on key standards and regulations across programmes. However, 'day to day' information about teaching-related activities and assignments is shared with students by email, led by each individual studio. As stated in the SER, the study information system (SIS) allows students to have access to progress data, such as courses completed, credits gained, study paths, etc.<sup>150</sup> The students at both meetings informed the Review Team that the information on the SIS was not very informative and very basic.

The Teacher's Plenary includes all teachers, including part time staff and takes place twice a year. This is seen by staff and management as a useful opportunity for sharing strategic developments and inform about forthcoming changes in the Academy<sup>151</sup>. Although this was seen by the Review Team as an open and honest meeting, students stated that there were not significant opportunities for discussion at this meeting. In particular, for presenting and discussing any more personal matters or even comments that may be controversial.

The principal management meeting is the Extended Rector's Board, which includes all Heads of Department and is held once a month. At the Department level, informal meetings take place on a regular basis. Any comments or decisions at these meetings are passed to the Heads of Department and discussed at the Rector's Board (above). In addition, there are a range of meetings that take place at the department level involving Heads and individual staff members, when required. However, these are not formal meetings, such as for mentoring or appraisals, nor are these recorded for future reference. The importance of meeting the whole academy regularly was mentioned by teaching staff (Extended Academy Board).

Overall the Review Team commended the Academy for their openness and transparency in their ability to accommodate a series of informal interactions across staff and also including students. In particular, we commend the Academy as it is clearly responding to changes that are led by government policy development, students' interests and staff needs. However, not all participants (acknowledging that each studio staff member had received the SER translated in both Czech & English) from meetings had read the SER report or were aware of some overarching strategies the Academy is developing<sup>152</sup>. The

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<sup>149</sup> see SER p.28

<sup>150</sup> see SER pp 28 & 29

<sup>151</sup> meeting with BA, MA and Research teaching staff

<sup>152</sup> meetings with BA, MA & Research teaching staff and meeting with graduates/alumni

Review Panel is conscious that the incorporation of quality and enhancement procedures and the review process will be implemented over time and the visit took place at an early stage.

Due to that discussions around teaching and learning strategies and approaches tend to take place within each programme and at each atelier's level, teaching and learning experiences do not tend to be shared across departments. In addition, although information clearly flows in the Academy across staff and students, means vary across departments. It would be useful to develop more structured forms of communication that can be used broadly across the Academy.

Students and staff value the rich studio environment of the Academy and the opportunities the institution offers for interacting with the public as well as with industry. However, in studio and Atelier work, it would be beneficial to introduce transparent means of communication with students when developing projects that are the result of practice-led briefs. This should note the available income and how resources can be used. In addition, students value the possibility of accessing the building, studios and some workshops at weekends; however, practice is not the same across all departments.

Alumni find the 'newsletter' circulated among them on a regular basis very helpful<sup>153</sup>. Although the Academy's website is useful for students and external stakeholders, it may benefit the institution to reflect over the website's content, in relation to information required by students as they move through the programmes. It was noted at the 'Graduates and Alumni' meeting that although the website is getting better in terms of providing information, it is perceived as too complicated to navigate and graduates expressed they find it difficult to find information around the site.

The newly developed quality review systems to be implemented are expected to provide opportunities for measuring the effectiveness of processes and structures of the academy. Due to that these systems are under development, the panel was not provided with exact information on how an overarching review of the Academy, including research, support structures and decision making, will be implemented.

### **Commendations**

- The Review Team commends the Academy for their openness and transparency in their ability to accommodate a series of informal interactions across staff and also include students;
- In particular, we commend the Academy as it is clearly responding to changes that are led by government policy development, student's interests and staff needs.

### **Recommendations**

- The Review Team recommends senior management discuss the plans for the new building at its early stages of development with current staff and students, as well as with alumni and employers, since they can all offer a clear view of possible future needs and opportunities for collaboration;
- The Review Team recommends that the AAAD explores and develops means for more structured communication. This should lead to identifying forms of cooperation across departments as well as with alumni and employers. In other words, more formal mechanisms could be established to sharing best practice, where different department can learn from internal changes, e.g. such as the glass

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<sup>153</sup> meeting with graduates/alumni

department, which was recently restructured. This may present an opportunity for internal reflection and learning across subjects;

- Considering the above note, the Review Team recommends that these quality review and enhancement systems allow for the development of more opportunities for interaction between theoretical and practical subjects. Across the Academy it would be beneficial to develop and communicate a clear timetable for BA and MA students, stating the expectations of the courses and programmes in relation to student's dedication and required effort. This should link with course and programme descriptors. The expected student effort needs and dedication, should be set up in relation to the specific number of credits in each course;
- With regards to quality assurance and enhancement process under development, the Review Team recommends that communication in relation to feedback from students should focus on sharing information with the Academy student's cohort on how their comments have generated changes, in order to 'close the loop' in this aspect of the review process.

## 6.2 Organisational structure and decision-making processes

### Standard: the institution is supported by an appropriate organisational structure and decision-making processes

The Academy is structured around a series of self-governing bodies with powers and responsibilities defined by the Higher Education Act: the Academic Senate; the Rector; the Artistic Board; the Internal Evaluation Board (not yet established and its authority is temporarily executed by the Artistic Board) and the Disciplinary Committee.<sup>154</sup>

There is also a Board of Trustees; the Bursar; the Doctoral Board; and the Degree Programmes Board (newly established). Other boards and committees are also part of the Academy's management structure such as: grants, exhibitions, editorials, etc.

Students now have representation<sup>155</sup> on Academic Senate, Teacher's plenary and participate in the Admissions Committee, which the Review Team recognise as good developments. The Artistic Board<sup>156</sup> is the self-governing body of the public arts academy and at least one third of its members are major representatives of the fields in which the AAAD carries out its educational and creative activities.

All the above structures have clearly defined responsibilities. However, under the recently developed quality procedures, these structures will need to revise their remit. It will be essential that as part of the development of the Academy's quality culture and implementation process, a structured communication plan for QAE and programme enhancement procedures is put in place. The Review Panel noted that there is little transparency around decision-making. Therefore, a strategic approach to communication should include opportunities for interaction with staff, students, alumni and employers, in order to ensure a transparent decision making process which considers and includes a broad range of opinions.

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<sup>154</sup> see SER p.30

<sup>155</sup> *ibid*

<sup>156</sup> see Appendix 6: *Rules of Procedures of the Artistic Board, membership*

**Recommendations:**

- Decision making around estates, budget and expenditure should be linked with the review of programmes and courses and a transparent process for resource investment should be implemented and clearly communicated. To this aim, workshop leaders should be formally included in the decision-making process, as well as in the quality review process. This would ensure that there is parity across programmes when accessing technical staff and machinery.

## 7. Internal Quality Culture

**Standard: the institution has in place effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures**

### **a) Quality assurance and enhancement procedures in place within the institution.**

The Amendment to the HE Act (2017) has resulted in the Academy being fully responsible for evaluating the quality of the institution and study programmes for the first time. Before this, the Academy's internal and external quality evaluation has been limited to preparing an Annual Report, which is discussed and approved by Academic Senate and by the Board of Trustees and sent to the Minister of Education. The data collected and used as part of the internal quality process for producing this report has largely been quantitative.<sup>157</sup>

The initial reaction to this devolvement of responsibility has been largely negative by the Academy with it being listed as the first *Threat*<sup>158</sup> in the SER SWOT analysis and by the teaching staff "*critical because academic staff (guarantors and heads) gives a lot of work. They're not used to such process and they are very negative because of 'bureaucracy'*" (Vice Rector Graduate Studies<sup>159</sup>), "*As a result of the unfortunate experience of the 1970s, certain mistrust to monitoring of performance and quality, its comparison, evaluation and recording is still rooted in the Czech society...., some Academy teachers perceive the effort to systematically monitor selected studio education parameters or the students' quality of study assessment as a manifestation of the Academy management's distrust of its kind in their dedication and attempt to control them.*"<sup>160</sup>

Over the past five years the Academy has carried out three Student Surveys<sup>161</sup> (non mandatory) evaluating the quality of the studio education; the attitude of the Head of the Studio; satisfaction with the teaching of supplementary; professional and theoretical subjects; the equipment of the Academy and the standard of the administrative support provided; etc. In 2016 the Academy conducted a poll among our graduates for the first time, which the Academy claimed was "*a surprising good response rate*".

The Review Team is very impressed at how the Academy has started addressing these *quality* issues and between the two institutional visits, it has produced documents with clear principles, strategy and guidelines for embedding a quality culture into AAAD and the study programmes, including:

- *Standards for accreditation of study programmes*,<sup>162</sup> which references key national and European texts including the ESG 2015;
- *A mapping of the Academy's Quality Standards to the National Standards*<sup>163</sup>;
- *AAAD PhD Assessment Criteria & Process*<sup>164</sup>;

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<sup>157</sup> see SER: pp.8&9

<sup>158</sup> see SER: p.6

<sup>159</sup> meeting with Senior Managers

<sup>160</sup> see SER: p.7

<sup>161</sup> see Annexes 7&8: *Student evaluation feedback\_abstract\_2012, 2014, 2016*

<sup>162</sup> see Appendix 4: Standards for accreditation of study programmes

<sup>163</sup> see Appendix 3: A mapping of the Academy's Quality Standards to the National Standards

<sup>164</sup> see Appendix 5: *AAAD PhD Assessment Criteria & Process*



- *Strategy for developing a quality culture at AAAD*<sup>165</sup>

Key policies and strategies that have been developed help the Review Team understand the direction and methodologies and will be supportive building blocks for the Academy to develop and build their quality culture, both for the institution and for their study programmes.

The Review Team also fully endorses the Academy's proposed change of emphasis to now focus on enhancement rather than compliancy.

The Review Team commends the AAAD for setting the following quality targets<sup>166</sup> in the new proposed Strategic Plan:

- *To incorporate components of quality culture;*
- *To develop a set of criteria and measures that captures successes and failures in a constructive and transparent manner;*
- *To implement effective communication that relies on multiple communications channels and ensures feedback loops;*
- *Change from an informal and implicit to a formal and explicit quality culture/processes;*
- *Promotion of the concept of student-centred learning so that it becomes known and accepted by AAAD's academic community;*
- *To build an QA organisational structures fit for the AAAD's purposes, reflecting its specific needs and culture;*

### **Commendations**

- The Review Team commends the Academy for all the new QA additional material and recognises that there is a great deal of new and strategic material now available.<sup>167</sup>

### **Recommendations**

- The AAAD should consider developing a quality culture which is inclusive and coherent, and sets out in clear terms the strategic steps it will take towards maintaining a comprehensive overview of its three key elements – its *educational activities, creative activities and related activities*;
- To date, the data collected and used as part of the internal quality process has been almost totally quantitative. The Academy realises and the Review Team recommends there is a need to define what data (qualitative and quantitative) is mandatory for the quality review process, and develop the introduction of more qualitative data;
- To produce a comprehensive Academy Quality Handbook to help all stakeholders (students, staff and external contributors) understand AAAD's quality policy and strategy;
- To establish a series of staff development workshops for the different levels of staff to understand, accept and implement these new quality developments and procedures;
- To organise a series of seminars/workshops for students, alumni and employers to help them understand these new developments and explain how can they contribute to these processes.

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<sup>165</sup> see Appendix 2: Strategy for developing a quality culture at AAAD

<sup>166</sup> see Appendix 2: *Strategy for developing a quality culture at AAAD*

<sup>167</sup> see Appendices 1, 2, 4, 5, 6

## **b) How often and by whom are the programmes being reviewed?**

The Academy is now introducing a new quality review process involving a five-year (comprehensive) review aligned to their study institutional and programme accreditation cycle, and this will be supported by an annual (interim) review. This will bring the Academy in line with the *Amendment to the HE Act* introduced in 2017.

The Academy has decided that the *Artistic Board*<sup>168</sup>, currently AAAD's self-governing body, should take lead responsibility for the study programme internal quality evaluation. The Board will be supported by the new Degree Programmes Board, which has recently been set up and is also another key building block in the establishment of a quality culture.

### **Commendations**

- We commend the Academy on introducing (interim) reviews and 5 Year (Periodic) Reviews.

### **Recommendations**

- The Review Panel recommends AAAD to produce guidelines and templates for Study Programme Review reports, which clearly explain the quality review cycle, including how the reflection undertaking through the review process will generate the implementation of necessary changes, and how the participants in this review (e.g. staff and students) will be informed of any changes generated by their comments and suggestions.

## **c) How and by whom are the quality assurance and enhancement procedures monitored and reviewed at both institutional and programme levels?**

The process of AAAD internal quality evaluation is led by the Artistic Board, which has following responsibilities:

- preparation and approval of the Quality Evaluation report,
- evaluation of the quality assurance system as whole,
- recommendations for improvement.

The Chair of the Artistic Board is the Rector, who stipulates the number of Artistic Board members, and undertakes the appointment and rejection/termination of their input. The Artistic Board members are prominent representatives from both the educational and creative activities and at least one third of the members are not members of AAAD academic community.

The Artistic Board is supported by the newly created Degree Programmes Board<sup>169</sup>, which works at an institutional level and participates on developing policies for educational activities. In particular, the Degree Programmes Board receives and evaluates the five-yearly **comprehensive reports**, and the annual **interim reports** and makes recommendation to the Artistic Board. Its conclusions are included in an Internal Quality Evaluation Report.

At AAAD, the commitment to introduce a degree programme review is defined by the "Rules of the Quality Assurance System of Education, Creative and Related Activities and For the Internal Quality Assessment For Education, Creative and Related Activities of the Academy of Arts, Architecture and

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<sup>168</sup> see Appendix 5: *AAAD Internal quality assurance system* (according to the article 12 of the Rules) p.3

<sup>169</sup> see Appendix 5: *AAAD Internal quality assurance system* p.3

Design in Prague" (hereinafter referred to only as "Rules", Article 22, as an integral part of the systematic quality assurance of educational activities.

In the past, the Academy acknowledges, "The quality of degree programmes has so far been assured by a one-time accreditation process that has not granted the programme sufficient room for continuous development and improvement."<sup>170</sup>

**d) How do quality assurance and enhancement procedures inform/influence each other?**

AAAD is in the process of introducing a new rigorous process for quality self-evaluation, engaging with all the key stakeholders. The new management QA Boards are being established with new Terms of Reference and the Review Team believes the Academy will start to use the process to inform the changes and strengthen the delivery of study programmes. The Review Team has observed that this has not fully taken place in the past.

**e) Does the institution set clear benchmarks/metrics for programmes to measure their success?**

For the past five years the Academy has used the following metrics for programmes<sup>171</sup>:

- number of applications, of students admitted and enrolled
- structure of applicants in the admission procedure (gender, age, nationality, school)
- structure of students (gender, age, nationality)
- number of completed and unsuccessful studies
- results of the final semester projects/state final examinations
- study success rate (from a given cohort - by semesters) and average length of study
- grade-point average
- continuity of studies (where do students continue/where do students come into the post-graduate programme from)
- structure of academic staff
- number of outbound and inbound mobility (student-day)
- proportion of graduates who have completed a foreign internship
- foreign institutions which students travel to/foreign institutions from which students arrive
- countries which students travel to/countries from which students arrive
- subjects taught in foreign languages

The Review Team observed, and the Academy acknowledged, that the vast majority of metrics are quantitative and there is a need to identify qualitative measures to evaluate the success of the teaching programmes at all levels.

The Review Team could not find any documents setting out benchmarks/targets (%) to measure the level of success or failure of the study programmes, and were informed at meetings with the Senior Management that these do not currently exist at AAAD.

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<sup>170</sup> see Appendix 4: *Programme Review Methodology* p.1

<sup>171</sup> see SER p.8 & Appendix 4: *Programme Review Methodology* p.4

### **Recommendations**

- The AAAD should define qualitative and quantitative metrics to be used for both, institutional and study programme quality reviews (five yearly and annual) as well as develop the benchmarks/targets it wishes to set to measure the success or failure of the institution and their study programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

#### **f) What happens to the programme if they do not achieve these measures?**

Under the current quality review process there appears to be no measures set to evaluate the success or failure of the Academy or its study programmes [see e) above].

#### **g) How are staff/students/alumni/representatives of the creative industries profession/quality assurance experts involved in the quality assurance and enhancement procedures and how is their feedback used to enhance the institution/programme?**

At the meetings with students and staff the Review Team were informed that some had seen the SER, but they had not really been engaged in the writing process nor formally invited to contribute to the evaluation process. Some students had voluntarily participated in surveys, but it is hard for the Review Team to understand the impact of these questionnaires in the quality process. Similarly, alumni and employers expressed over the institutional review visits, that none had been asked or contributed to the review process.

However, in the recently developed AAAD QA documents (*Annex 2 Strategy for developing a quality culture at AAAD*<sup>172</sup>, *Annexe 5 AAAD Internal quality assurance system*<sup>173</sup> and *Annexe 4 Programme Review Methodology*<sup>174</sup>) it is clear that the Academy will fully engage with these key stakeholders, and will involve them in the quality assurance and enhancement procedures.

### **Recommendations**

- The AAAD should formalise the procedures that reflect on how key stakeholders will contribute to the QA and enhancement process at institutional and programme levels;
- The Review Panel also recommends including students in senior Boards and Councils that can have an impact upon the student learning experience.

#### **h) How are these procedures used to inform decision-making?**

See D) – G) above

#### **i) How are staff and students informed of changes made?**

The senior management informed the Review Team that the formal process for staff and students being informed of changes being made is through their representatives on the Academy's senior management Boards and Committees. However, as there was no Board in the Academy with responsibility for QA until this year and the Artistic Board has only just received its new Terms of Reference and has not met to discuss their new duties, communication has not been very effective yet.

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<sup>172</sup> see: Appendix 2 *Strategy for developing a quality culture at AAAD*

<sup>173</sup> see: Appendix 5 *AAAD Internal quality assurance system*

<sup>174</sup> see: Appendix 4 *Programme Review Methodology*

**j) How are students and staff informed if their feedback has led to change?**

At the meetings with students and staff they informed the Review Team that they were not made aware of the impact of their feedback nor the changes made as a result.

**Recommendation**

- The Academy provides formal feedback to students and staff on changes made as a result of their feedback.

**k) How would the overall quality culture within the programme be characterised (e.g. individual vs. collective – innovative vs. traditional – self-determined vs. system-controlled – managerial vs. professional)?**

As previously stated this is a time of rapid and major strategic change in the Academy and the Review Team believes AAAD is positively addressing the changes it needs to make to establish a quality culture owned and directed by itself. There is a very strong bond between all the stakeholders and the Academy, all committed to making the AAAD an internationally renowned arts community. This transition will take time but the Review Team is convinced that the culture will embrace collective, innovative but strongly linked to traditional skills, self-determined and professional values.

**l) What external quality assurance activities take place and how does it affect internal quality assurance and enhancement policy?**

AAAD has to undergo five yearly quality accreditation reviews by the Czech Ministry of Education and under the new *Amendment to the HE Act 2017* the Academy now has responsibility for, and has to carry out regular annual evaluation reviews of the quality of art, science and research, development and innovation or other creative activity. The new quality policy and process AAAD is adopting is aligned to the new rules and regulations stated in the *Amendment Act*. The Review Team believes the two processes will complement each other and both align closely to the ESG.

## 8. Public interaction

### 8.1 Cultural, artistic and educational contexts

#### Standard: the institution engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts

##### **a) Does the institution engage in the public discourse on cultural/artistic/educational policies and/or other relevant issues and if so, how?**

The Review Team confirmed during the meetings that all AAAD leading studio Professors are active practitioners, publicly recognised in the local, national and occasionally international disciplinary spheres. This brings the development and concerns identified in the public discourse around the range of artistic disciplines taught at the Academy. In addition, the success of these leaders in their artistic field attracts students to the AAAD. However, the Review Team recognised that this engagement relies on the specific links to practice that each studio leader and associated teachers have and could benefit from developing a more formal and structured approach when engaging with external cultural, artistic and educational contexts.

AAAD regularly participates in international events and engages with international networks. The Academy opens to the public during the Prague Museum Night and organises a series of evening lectures (in particular through the Department of Theory and History<sup>175</sup>). The Review Team recognises that alumni from the Academy heavily influence the glass industry in Prague.

##### **b) Is the institution involved in pre-higher education, either in itself or in partnership with other institution(s)?**

The AAAD has a more 'observant' attitude to higher education, collecting data of students accessing the Academy, such as gender, background, nationality, etc.<sup>176</sup> Within this approach, members of the Academy recognise that the level in which students access the Academy from secondary education used to be stronger in the past.<sup>177</sup> This demonstrates a general interest at the Academy for understanding the development of skills previously to arriving to higher education, and it is evidenced by regular visits that the management of some studios undertake to secondary schools<sup>178</sup>. However, besides selected specific cases mentioned in the SER report (e.g. Glass Studio), no formal mechanisms for engaging with pre-higher education were identified through the Review Team visit.

##### **c) What are the contributions of the institution to cultural/artistic/educational communities at the local, national and international level?**

The Academy organises regular exhibitions, which are open to the public. The Review Team commends the AAAD for the high quality level of these exhibitions as well as for the engagement of students in their organisation and setting up.

It is significant to highlight the national and international strength of the Academy's Heads of Studios who are heavily involved in practice and the importance of the cooperation with industry that this

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<sup>175</sup> see SER p.32

<sup>176</sup> meeting with Three Heads of Design Departments

<sup>177</sup> ibid

<sup>178</sup> see SER p.32

generates. The Review Team commends the Academy for continuing ensuring that their teaching leaders share their practice knowledge, which is the result of their own experience. The collaboration with industry is a strength of AAAD teaching practice, it encourages continual exposure to professional work and engagement with alumni. However, this is not formalised through internal review systems.

The Review Team commends the Academy for the openness of their public gallery which contributes to developing their engagement with the cultural life in the city. It was highlighted at meetings with management that the new building is expected to provide more opportunities for engaging with the public, as it will be the '*second art centre in Prague*'.<sup>179</sup> This will reach a higher level of impact due to its location opening further possibilities for interacting with the public, and the number of visitors is expected to increase.

**d) Is the institution involved in the development of cultural and social/enterprise projects on the local, national and/or international levels (outside the institution)?**

The Academy offers some support to studios for professional development and knowledge exchange, inviting external speakers, and supporting the development of specific projects in the studios.<sup>180</sup> Both staff and students at the Academy appreciate this and more investment on these types of activities would be welcomed. In addition, students are often engaged in projects that are led by industry interests, enabling the development of project briefs that link with industry needs and therefore respond to the real pressures of the world of practice.

**e) Does the institution prepare its students to advance society through the use of their knowledge and skills, and if so, how?**

Students are exposed to the realities of practice through their work in the studios, which often relates to industry needs or emerges from collaboration with companies working in the country. Although this helps students' understanding of the requirements and characteristics of the creative industries, more structured means for engaging with practitioners might be beneficial, as well as more structured learning and teaching frameworks when collaborating with practice. This would contribute to further reflection between the student cohort, and further development of the skills required to work in industry.

Students value the 'Soft Skills' training module developed by the Academy on career guidance, employability, preparation for entering practice, etc. This module was a direct response to an increased number of unemployed graduates, recorded in 2016 and to the suggestion of graduates during year-surveys.<sup>181</sup>

**Commendations**

- The Review Team commends the AAAD for the high quality level of public exhibitions as well as for the engagement of students in their organisation and setting up;
- The Review Team commends the Academy for the openness of their public gallery with contributes to developing their engagement with the cultural life in the city.

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<sup>179</sup> meeting with Senior Management Team

<sup>180</sup> meeting with Three Heads of Design Departments

<sup>181</sup> see SER p.19

## **Recommendations**

- The Review Team recommends the development of more structured systems for engaging with practitioners and alumni across all years of education, i.e. inviting practitioners to tutorials or presentations during the process of design development, or providing a series of lectures in which external practitioners reflect over their professional experience;
- Although the 'Soft Skills' course is appreciated by students and graduates the Review Team recommends the inclusion of content that reflects on the international practice environment, which could aid students to develop their work outside the country.

## **8.2 Interaction with the artistic professions**

### **Standard: the institution actively promotes links with various sectors of the music and other artistic professions**

#### **a) How does the institution engage with various sectors of creative industries and other artistic professions?**

The AAAD actively promotes engagement with the profession principally through their nationally recognised studio Professors. Cooperation takes place across a range of scales: at studio level, through specific engagement with commissions from industry. In addition, the AAAD promotes professional activities and knowledge exchange involving industry and generating engagement with artistic sectors. However, these engagements would benefit from more structured interaction with the study programmes.

#### **b) What are the long-term plans for the (continued) development of the links with the artistic professions?**

In the long term, the AAAD aims to increase its contact both with the capital city of Prague and the surrounding towns across the artistic disciplines taught<sup>182</sup>. Their aim is to continue developing interaction with the industry through the work across the studios, engaging in real commissions from practice, as well as through developing innovative project briefs involving teachers and students.

#### **c) How does the institution support its programmes in interacting with the artistic professions?**

Cooperation takes place through the studio teaching, which implies that the level of exposure of students working in the range of studios to practice-related commissions and the experience these students encounter varies across disciplines. In this context, the Academy notes that a more systematic system for these cooperations could be developed, which could include regular evaluation of students' work from cooperating partners, assessment of placement, etc. The Review Team found this development essential for supporting structured engagement from students in practice.

#### **d) How does the institution assess and monitor the on-going needs of the professions?**

Currently assessment of the on-going needs of the profession takes place through engagement with industry in each studio work. Therefore, the information is not gathered at the Academy level, but at the

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<sup>182</sup> see SER p.33



level of each studio and this may cause AAAD to miss opportunities for institutional reflection and action.

**e) How does the institution engage in and promote Lifelong Learning opportunities?**

Lifelong learning opportunities were not described or mentioned in the SER or at the meetings.

**Recommendations**

- The Review Team recommends a more structured inclusion of placements and internships within the curriculum. These experiences should have clear aims and objectives and should be assessed;
- The Review Team recommends the development of more flexible pathways that include placements, internships, and skills development as well as international experiences could be developed in the Academy over the two BA and MA programmes. This would allow for more opportunities for interaction between students and real practitioners and could help exposing students to the realities of practice, gaining knowledge of needs of markets and industries.

**8.3 Information provided to the public**

**Standard: information provided to the public about the institution is clear, consistent and accurate**

**a) What resources and delivery systems are used to convey information to the public?**

The Academy uses press-releases, news on their website, social networks, as well as email and printed information to communicate with the public.<sup>183</sup> Academy members also travel to conferences to present their work and the work of their students is often included in national and international fairs.

**b) How does the institution ensure that information given to the public (students, audiences, parents, arts education institutions at other levels, etc.) is consistent with its activities, programmes etc.?**

The Academy decides internally (and principally with the approval of the Rector), the information that is shared with the public. Only authorised persons in the Academy are allowed to share and promote communication. Most information related to students is released by the Student Affairs Office, which provides an academic calendar, study plans, and information about exams, information about admissions and matriculation, as well as graduation ceremonies and other study related information.<sup>184</sup>

Other departments in the Academy are tasked with providing specific information in relation to their remit. The International Office provides information about student exchange opportunities and partner Universities. The office for the study programmes in English provides all information about English programmes and languages studies. The Exhibition Office provides information about public exhibitions, including press releases. The Editorial Office provides information about new publications from the

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<sup>183</sup> see SER p.34

<sup>184</sup> ibid

AAAD Publishing House.<sup>185</sup> Students and staff value the quality of the publications produced by the Academy.<sup>186</sup>

The AAAD shares information about results of admission, student survey analysis, news, awards, etc. However, the Review Panel found that this information tends to be made available to staff and students often without reflection and analysis.

**c) What mechanisms are in place to review information before it goes public?**

All information to be released to the public is approved by the Rector.<sup>187</sup>

**d) How does the programme ensure ethical considerations are addressed before going public?**

This is guaranteed by the fact that only authorised persons in the Academy release communications.<sup>188</sup>

**e) How is the accuracy of the information ensured on an on-going basis?**

Published information regarding indicators, student admissions, progress, etc. is based on a preliminary set of data. However, the Academy is aware of the need for more in-depth set of data including gender, retention, access to internationalisation experiences, etc. This could be available at the Academy, as well as at the programme level. The Academy also highlighted the importance of following the trajectory of each student.<sup>189</sup>

**f) Which results of QA review process does the institution publish?**

Results from admissions, data analysis and feedback questionnaires are published on a yearly basis. However, the Academy has recently developed a series of procedures and for a more enhancement-led quality culture. This new system and associated structures are currently in the process of implementation. This will allow for a more structured review of current activity and teaching & learning practice in the Academy. The reviewed procedures will also include information on the cycle of appointment and review of staff as well as an analysis of creative and research activities.<sup>190</sup>

It is important to note that the Review Team was not able to assess the revised QAE procedures, nor the format and depth of analysis of associated published information, due to that these are in the process of approval and have not been implemented yet.

**Recommendations:**

- The Academy would benefit from promoting their individual staff profile and practice engagement across all members of the teaching teams;

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<sup>185</sup> see SER p.35

<sup>186</sup> meeting with Design Students

<sup>187</sup> see SER p.34

<sup>188</sup> ibid

<sup>189</sup> meeting with Senior Management for QAE

<sup>190</sup> ibid

- The Academy's website is useful and contains information about the institutional aims and their teaching offer for the public, however, following meetings with students and alumni, the Review Team believes it would be beneficial for the Academy to further engage with the public through social media. The website could be a vehicle for promoting student's (current and past) and stakeholders work and showcasing on-going projects;
- Internally, it would be useful for the Academy to circulate information about research and knowledge exchange opportunities on a regular basis;
- The Review Team recommends that the Academy includes issues related to public interaction in the newly developed QAE procedures, as this would benefit engagement with alumni and other stakeholders.

## 9. Summary of the Institutes compliance with EQ-Arts Standards

**(THE FOLLOWING ARE INDICATIVE GRADES MADE BY THE EQ-ARTS TEAM WHICH WOULD BE PRESENTED AT AN ACCREDITATION ASSESSMENT – THEY HAVE NO FORMAL SIGNIFICANCE IN THE CURRENT PROCESS)**

EQ-Arts Standards	Compliance: Fully – F Substantially – S Partially - P Not - N	Remarks
<i>Standard 1</i> The institute goals are clearly stated and reflect the institutional mission.	S/F	AAAD revisits its mission-vision statements to ensure their key objectives (research & enterprise, interdisciplinary, industry, professional development) are supported and embedded in the institution and their study programmes
<i>Standard 2.1</i> The goals of the programmes are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its methods of delivery.	P/S	There is little evidence of this and this is exacerbated by the lack of clarity in relation to assessment.
<i>Standard 2.2</i> The institute assures that programmes offer a range of opportunities for students to gain an international perspective.	F	AAAD should add this element in their study programme profiles and Programme Specification and there is a need for consistency practice in recognising study abroad
<i>Standard 2.3</i> The institute assures assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes	P/N	In the art & design studios there is no evidence of this, but there is evidence this is achieved in the courses delivered by the Department of Theory and History of Art
<i>Standard 3.1</i> The institute has clear criteria for student admission, based on an assessment of their artistic/academic suitability for the programmes.	F	Data collected in relation to admissions, should be analysed, as this would contribute in defining the profile of students that apply for entry, as well as demonstrate its equal

		opportunities policy
<i>Standard 3.2</i> The institute has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students.	P/S	AAAD is aware and in the process of introducing better systems and mechanisms for gaining this data, but it needs to establish the metrics (quantitative & qualitative) to define achievement at each programme level.
<i>Standard 4.1</i> The institute assures members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/pedagogues/researchers.	S	AAAD needs to introduce more staff development support including an appropriate form of staff appraisal
<i>Standard 4.2</i> There are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programmes.	F	Inclusion of more external/ international teachers would strengthen the learning experience
<i>Standard 5.1</i> The institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programmes.	S	The new building and resource development will support and improve this aspect
<i>Standard 5.2</i> The institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the study programmes.	F	Analysis of student spend across programmes will better inform financial distribution
<i>Standard 5.3</i> The institution has sufficient qualified support staff.	F	AAAD can still improve this with increased student welfare support
<i>Standard 6.1</i> Effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the institution.	F	AAAD explores and develops means for more structured communication to identifying forms of cooperation with all stakeholders and share best practice.
<i>Standard 6.2</i> The institution is supported by an appropriate organisational structure and clear decision-making processes.	S	AAAD is in a process of transition in introducing new operational management procedures and organisational structures to be compliant with the requirements of the

		new law. Greater transparency in decision- making and better feedback to all stakeholders will improve engagement and understanding.
<i>Standard 7</i> The institution has in place effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures.	P/N	AAAD is fully aware of the QA requirements and has appointed senior members of staff and established an office with responsibility for this major area. As stated in 6.1 AAAD has a great deal to carryout to bring all stakeholders on board.
<i>Standard 8.1</i> The institution engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts.	F	Greater review and analysis of this area would strengthen their work in all contexts.
<i>Standard 8.2</i> The institution actively promotes links with various sectors of the artistic professions.	F	AAAD includes issues related to public interaction in the newly developed QAE procedures, as this would benefit engagement with alumni and other stakeholders.
<i>Standard 8.3</i> Information provided to the public about the institution is clear, consistent and accurate.	F	All stakeholders thought the website could be improved to make information more accessible.

## 10. Summary of commendations and recommendations

This section offers a summary of the institutional attributes which stand out as being strong relative to the EQ-Arts standards for institutional review, as well as an outline of the areas in which potential for further development emerged.

### ***List of commendations***

#### 1. Institutional mission, vision and context

- The Review Team commends the Academy for allocating funds to support individual teachers and studios carrying out practice-based research.

#### 2. Educational processes

- The review panel commends the Academy's work in setting up a quality culture including processes for the review of programmes and courses and more clear pathways for implementing curriculum changes. Through the development of these QAE systems, it will facilitate the definition and understanding of the learning and teaching requirements for progression and development of studies at each level;
- There are examples of good practice in the use of different teaching strategies in some studios. The Academy's new internal quality policy and culture should help promote sharing best practice;
- We commend the Academy for its successful participation in the main international design education network Cumulus, as well as in participating from key international exhibitions and fairs;
- The Academy encourages and supports staff to attend international conferences and exhibitions and staff and students exhibit regularly at the Milan Salon;
- Students are given opportunities to present their work at national and international events, as well as to include their work in current Academy publications;
- The introduction of the *Soft Skills* module offered at BA level, enhancing the employability of the students;
- We commend that the Academy has a reciprocal fee-free arrangement with a range of academic institutions. We are aware of the Academy's international office, which takes care of exchange students. The Academy also has an international forum to exchange experiences and offers international language training for students who will be going abroad.

#### 3. Student profiles

- The Review Team commends the Academy for their clear criteria, accessible, rigorous and extensive procedures for admissions at the BA and MA programmes;
- The Academy recognises the issues regarding the collection of data of student progression with the SIS and has plans for acquiring a new software to meet the requirements for generating required student progression through the study statistics automatically.

#### 4. Teaching staff

- The Review Team commends that teachers are fully engaged in exhibitions and presentations; and staff are taking initiatives in organising these events, which do not only reflect on their personal practice but also on the work of their students;
- The Review Team commends the Academy on re-allocating considerable financial support for staff research and enterprise from a limited budget;

- The Review Team commend the Academy on the introduction of the short (one-year) term contracts for alumni, as this enables new developments within the programmes and allows for further reflection of practical work;
- The Review Team notes the loyalty and enthusiasm of the teaching staff to contribute to the success of the Academy.

#### 5. Facilities, resources and support

- The Review Team commends the academy on the quality of certain resources – such as library, exhibition spaces, and some specialised workshops (typography, lithography, bookbinding, glass);
- From the presentation by the Bursar and the accounts presented, it is clear to the Review Team that the Academy is currently in a healthy financial position;
- The Bursar and the Senior Management have been able to raise the 20% increase in budgeted building costs for the new building;
- The Review Team commends the quality of support staff at the Academy, and particularly the appointment of new staff members tasked with leading QAE and R&D strategy development.

#### 6. Communication, organisation and decision-making

- The Review Team commends the Academy for their openness and transparency in their ability to accommodate a series of informal interactions across staff and also include students;
- In particular, we commend the Academy as it is clearly responding to changes that are led by government policy development, student's interests and staff needs.

#### 7. Internal Quality Culture

- The Review Team commends the Academy for all the new QA additional material and recognises that there is a great deal of new and strategic material now available;
- We commend the Academy on introducing (interim) reviews and 5 Year (Periodic) Reviews.

#### 8. Public interaction

- The Review Team commends the AAAD for the high quality level of public exhibitions as well as for the engagement of students in their organisation and setting up;
- The Review Team commends the Academy for the openness of their public gallery with contributes to developing their engagement with the cultural life in the city.

### ***Recommendations for further development***

#### 1. Institutional mission, vision and context

- The Academy is utilising this key moment in its history, with the imminent realisation of its new building, to review its working practices and to refine its vision and mission that fully embraces the highest level of craft skills, research, enterprise and interdisciplinary practice, in order to meet the demands of industry and the professional world of work. AAAD will also benefit from listening to its student, staff and stakeholder cohort in order to ensure decisions meet the needs of teaching and learning demands as well as of professional practice;
- The Academy states that research is essential to their mission and vision and identifies current challenges generated by the changing national regulatory context. The Academy should develop and implement a research policy and strategy which begins with understanding the definition of practice-based/led research for the Academy, and reflecting on current knowledge development taking place;



- The Academy should make an executive decision on teaching staff's engagement in research and enterprise, as well as introducing strategies for research development for staff, which will direct how research will become a key feature of the Academy;
- The study programmes need to define more clearly what their specific aims are and express their distinctive nature;
- The Academy has to more clearly define what their understanding is of 'student-centred learning', and how it practices it, and ensure this is clearly communicated and understood by all the key stakeholders;
- The AAAD should strengthen inter and trans-disciplinary practice through closer cooperation between the studios and the relevant stakeholders, from within (alumni and other Academies/Universities) and outwith the academic sector (employers, professional organisations etc.), utilising the full potential of the new building;
- The Ministry should reconsider its current policy and support practice-based research, in line with many of its European partners;
- The Review Team commends the majority of these focused topics, but recommends the Academy to consider in 1. the emphasis should be on the quality and appropriateness of the study programmes to the professional world, which is more important and significant than just the range of study programmes; and in 2 it should also include meeting the needs of industry and the professional world;
- The Academy needs to be more transparent in the internal quality process and ensure stakeholders (students, alumni and employers) contribute to, and are informed of, the outcomes of the surveys and feedback;
- The Review Team recommends that the Academy revisits its mission-vision statements to ensure their key objectives (research & enterprise, interdisciplinary, industry, professional development) are supported and embedded in the institution and their study programmes;
- Research is central to the Academy's vision, mission and aims, but the Review Team found that there is a need for the Academy to make an executive decision on what it defines as research (including enterprise and knowledge transfer), how its quality is assessed and the contractual obligations of the staff to engage in it;
- The Review Team recognises the value of the Academy's 'studio-centred' learning approach, which is rooted in a traditional 'craft-based' teaching methodology for the range of design disciplines, such as typography, lithography, printing, etc. However, the Review Team also recognises the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century art, design and architecture practices, which could be reflected on an approach to teaching linked with 'Design Thinking' and rooted in developing learning strategies that address contemporary challenges of a networked society. In this context, the American Institute of Graphic Arts notes a conflict between 'the well designed object', referring to a craft-based design approach and the 'design for now', referring to a design approach that aims to resolve the above range of challenges. Through meetings over the two visits with employers and alumni, the Review Team found that a conflict between the traditions and the ethos of the Academy with regards to the above 'craft-based' approach to teaching and the needs of contemporary practices, may be present. In this context, it could benefit the development of teaching approaches that enable students to survive in the 'real' world of practice, which in collaboration, and drawing on the close relationship between the Academy, their alumni and current practitioners, this conflict could be addressed.

## 2. Educational processes

- The Review Team acknowledge the work carried out in the development of the new benchmark statements for programmes, however the expected achievements at each level and the links between levels in study programmes should be explored in detail and communicated through programme specification documents;
- The programme specification should demonstrate how the level learning outcomes are mapped through the programme and how they are assessed;
- There are useful informal processes for engaging with wider stakeholders, however the review panel recommends that participation from stakeholders is more clearly embedded in the development of the programmes of studies – such as with the ‘Programme/Degree Review Board’, that has recently been set up is a good step towards this. Clear guidelines, including quality indicators that the institution requires, should be given to programme leaders (guarantors) and stakeholders to understand the purpose of the above exercise;
- The Academy should review, re-think and clearly define ‘student-centred learning’, which relates not only to student’s opportunities for independent development, but also consider their involvement in defining learning outcomes, assessment structures, study pathways, etc.
- Students have some flexibility to move across studios but this is not consistent across all programmes of studies. The new building and carefully considered programme review structures should contribute to developing more flexible study pathways;
- The development of specific programme for staff development on learning, teaching and assessment methodologies;
- The Review Team found that there is no clear understanding of how research informs the curriculum and the Academy’s teaching practices, and therefore we recommend that a reflection on how research, teaching and learning are interlinked is included in the definition of the Academy’s research strategy;
- In the Contents of Bachelor Study there is no mention of internationalisation, nor in the Graduate Profile, the Academy should add this element in their study programme profiles and Programme Specification;
- As previously mention, the review team commends the soft skills module offered, but following discussion with current students and alumni, we recommend that the Academy addresses the need for more professional and career guidance;
- The Academy’s current strategy does embrace internationalisation, however the review team recommends that the Academy further reflects on how this strategy feeds and integrates into the curriculum. In other words, how international experiences are recognised and accredited, how these are reviewed through QAE processes, etc., which should be made explicit by programme specifications (see BA Programme);
- Staff development should also be linked with the Academy’s internationalisation strategy, as staff could benefit from more international experiences. In this context, recruitment of international staff would enrich teaching and research approaches across the Academy;
- In line with the Academy’s introduction of new internal quality measures, the review panel recommends that the internal QAE processes are also considered in relation to international experiences in the existing exchange programmes such as ERASMUS;
- The Academy does not have set criteria for assessment by the final jury. The review panel recommends that, for all levels, this is set up at the study programme level, ensuring that the assessment criteria is aligned with the objectives and learning outcomes of each course and programme;
- The Academy formalises a feedback process for students which aligns to the criteria for each course and programme level;

- The final assessment should use a set classification, for which definition of achievement is given at each level.

### 3. Student profiles

- The Review Team recommends that the data collected in relation to admissions, is assessed and analysed, as this would contribute in defining the profile of students that apply for entry, as well as demonstrating the Academy's equal opportunities policy;
- Through the recently developed Quality processes, the Academy should improve the processes for monitoring, collection and analysis of student progression and achievement;
- Data collected about alumni could be analysed to help develop the curriculum;
- In some programmes students tend to find more opportunities for employment than in others and this may need to be analysed by the Academy in order to include any necessary changes in the curriculum;
- The Academy develops its own internal processes for tracking graduates' employability pattern. There is evidence that students are successful in their careers, and the Academy will benefit from analysing this information. This would also contribute to the Academy retaining connection with their alumni, which currently takes place in a more informal manner.

### 4. Teaching staff

- In considering the new amendment in the Higher Arts Education Act, the Review Team recommends that staff development programs be put in place to ensure their understanding of the new requirements, strategies and benchmark statements, for learning and teaching;
- The Academy needs to re-define their research policy and strategy, which would also guide staff development on their professional and research practices;
- The Academy should consider adding research and enterprise allocations into the teaching staff's contracts;
- The Review Team recommends that, in order to support the current three-year staff review, a formal annual appraisal/review process be introduced, to understand, identify and record staff needs, interests, and development opportunities;
- The Review Team recommends the Academy to *throw the net as widely as possible* (nationally and internationally) when it has the opportunity to recruit new teaching staff.

### 5. Facilities, resources and support

- The Academy engage with students and teaching staff at the earliest opportunity to discuss the use and layout of the new building;
- The Review Team recommends the Academy to review its strategy for resourcing the provision of materials. There are different practices across the Academy, with some students having to spend a significant amount of their own resources to buy materials, whereas other students do not require this expense. These differences in practices and access to resources could directly impact on the Academy's equal opportunities policy and recruitment;
- The Review Team recommends that a structured framework for considering expenditure demands is developed in order to include not only staff but also student's needs. In addition this would help ensuring support is provided across all disciplines and studios, which currently may seem lacking transparency;
- Decision-making around budget and expenditure should be linked with the QAE review of programmes and courses and a transparent process for financial requirements and resource investment should be implemented and clearly communicated;

- Some informal policies for staff development of support staff are in place but these are not formalised. The Review Team recommends that a formal system of appraisals and staff development should be set up, which should also include support staff;
- The Academy should appoint an appropriately qualified person to deal with the increasing mental health and social issues students are experiencing.

#### 6. Communication, organisation and decision-making

- The Review Team recommends senior management discuss the plans for the new building at its early stages of development with current staff and students, as well as with alumni and employers, since they can all offer a clear view of possible future needs and opportunities for collaboration;
- The Review Team recommends that the AAAD explores and develops means for more structured communication. This should lead to identifying forms of cooperation across departments as well as with alumni and employers. In other words, more formal mechanisms could be established to sharing best practice, where different department can learn from internal changes, e.g. such as the glass department, which was recently restructured. This may present an opportunity for internal reflection and learning across subjects;
- Considering the above note, the Review Team recommends that these quality review and enhancement systems allow for the development of more opportunities for interaction between theoretical and practical subjects. Across the Academy it would be beneficial to develop and communicate a clear timetable for BA and MA students, stating the expectations of the courses and programmes in relation to student's dedication and required effort. This should link with course and programme descriptors. The expected student effort needs and dedication, should be set up in relation to the specific number of credits in each course;
- With regards to quality assurance and enhancement process under development, the Review Team recommends that communication in relation to feedback from students should focus on sharing information with the Academy student's cohort on how their comments have generated changes, in order to 'close the loop' in this aspect of the review process;
- Decision making around estates, budget and expenditure should be linked with the review of programmes and courses and a transparent process for resource investment should be implemented and clearly communicated. To this aim, workshop leaders should be formally included in the decision-making process, as well as in the quality review process. This would ensure that there is parity across programmes when accessing technical staff and machinery.

#### 7. Internal Quality Culture

- The AAAD should consider developing a quality culture which is inclusive and coherent, and sets out in clear terms the strategic steps it will take towards maintaining a comprehensive overview of its three key elements – its *educational activities*, *creative activities* and *related activities*;
- To date, the data collected and used as part of the internal quality process has been almost totally quantitative. The Academy realises and the Review Team recommends there is a need to define what data (qualitative and quantitative) is mandatory for the quality review process, and develop the introduction of more qualitative data;
- To produce a comprehensive Academy Quality Handbook to help all stakeholders (students, staff and external contributors) understand AAAD's quality policy and strategy;
- To establish a series of staff development workshops for the different levels of staff to understand, accept and implement these new quality developments and procedures;
- To organise a series of seminars/workshops for students, alumni and employers to help them understand these new developments and explain how can they contribute to these processes;

- The Review Panel recommends AAD to produce guidelines and templates for Study Programme Review reports, which clearly explain the quality review cycle, including how the reflection undertaken through the review process will generate the implementation of necessary changes, and how the participants in this review (e.g. staff and students) will be informed of any changes generated by their comments and suggestions;
- The AAD should define qualitative and quantitative metrics to be used for both, institutional and study programme quality reviews (five yearly and annual) as well as develop the benchmarks/targets it wishes to set to measure the success or failure of the institution and their study programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels;
- The AAD should formalise the procedures that reflect on how key stakeholders will contribute to the QA and enhancement process at institutional and programme levels;
- The Review Panel also recommends including students in senior Boards and Councils that can have an impact upon the student learning experience;
- The Academy provides formal feedback to students and staff on changes made as a result of their feedback.

#### 8. Public interaction

- The Review Team recommends the development of more structured systems for engaging with practitioners and alumni across all years of education, i.e. inviting practitioners to tutorials or presentations during the process of design development, or providing a series of lectures in which external practitioners reflect over their professional experience;
- Although the 'Soft Skills' course is appreciated by students and graduates the Review Team recommends the inclusion of content that reflects on the international practice environment, which could aid students to develop their work outside the country;
- The Review Team recommends a more structured inclusion of placements and internships within the curriculum. These experiences should have clear aims and objectives and should be assessed;
- The Review Team recommends the development of more flexible pathways that include placements, internships, and skills development as well as international experiences could be developed in the Academy over the two BA and MA programmes. This would allow for more opportunities for interaction between students and real practitioners and could help exposing students to the realities of practice, gaining knowledge of needs of markets and industries.
- The Academy would benefit from promoting their individual staff profile and practice engagement across all members of the teaching teams;
- The Academy's website is useful and contains information about the institutional aims and their teaching offer for the public, however, following meetings with students and alumni, the Review Team believes it would be beneficial for the Academy to further engage with the public through social media. The website could be a vehicle for promoting student's (current and past) and stakeholders work and showcasing on-going projects;
- Internally, it would be useful for the Academy to circulate information about research and knowledge exchange opportunities on a regular basis;
- The Review Team recommends that the Academy includes issues related to public interaction in the newly developed QAE procedures, as this would benefit engagement with alumni and other stakeholders.

## Annex 1 – List of supporting documents

### AAAD Annexes & Appendices

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Visit

- 1 Strategic Plan 2016-20
- 2 Plan for implementation Strategic intent 2018
- 3 Institutional Plan 2016 -18
- 4 The Higher Education Act
- 5 Standards for Accreditation in HE
6. National Higher Arts Education diagram
- 7 Student feedback 2012,14,16
- 8 Student feedback 2016-17
- 9 Student Evaluation numbers per programme 2012 -17
- 10 Study & Examination Code
- 11 Programme Study Plans
- 12 Registered Programme applications 2011-18
- 13 Number of student graduates 2016-17-18
- 14 Student exchanges 2016-17-18
- 15 rules of Quality Assurance
- 16 Example of dissertation thesis
- 17 Example research project Spectrum – ceramics
- 18 Academic staff & Students grants competition
- 19 AAAD Information Guide
- 20 VA Information Guide 2017-18
- 21 Partner Institution student exchange numbers 2011-17
- 22 Student Erasmus/CEEPUS/bilateral exchange numbers 2011-18
- 23 Student study and traineeships abroad 2011-17
- 24 Student traineeships in non-EU companies 2014-17
- 25 International visiting artists & designers
- 26 Staff Exchanges 2011-17
- 27 International student numbers on programmes (taught in English & Czech)
- 28 Feedback of international examination board members
- 29 Admission requirements & interview procedure
- 30 Survey among prospective students 2017-18
- 31 Examples of 3 cycles of Diplomas
- 32 Example of Diploma Supplement
- 33 Survey of mature students
- 34 Survey of dropout students 2011-16
- 35 Questionnaire survey of alumni 2017
- 36 Graduates registered at the Labour Office 2011-13
- 37 Staff selection procedure
- 38 Specific criteria for selection of staff
- 38 AAAD Annual Report 2016-17
- 40 Teachers of Architecture
- 41 Teachers of Applied Arts
- 42 Teachers of Fine Art
- 43 Teachers of Graphic Design

- 44 Teachers of History of Art
- 45 Habilitation, appointment of Professors
- 46 Number of staff 2017
- 47 Facilities report
- 48 AAAD Budget 2017
- 49 Budget for teaching & support staff 2017
- 50 Operational Management diagram
- 51 Minutes of Board of Trustees 2017
- 52 Rectors Directives on staff salaries
- 53 Head of Student Affairs Job Description
- 54 AAAD Organisational Rules 2017
- 55 Membership AAAD official boards/committees
- 56 Rules for collaboration with the Creative Industries
- 57 Collaboration with the Creative Industries 2017-18
- 58 AAAD exhibitions
- 59 UM Gallery Exhibitions
- 60 Life-long Learning evaluation feedback 2017
- 61 RUV, RIV points
- 62 RUV points of AAAD staff 2011-15
- 63 AAAD publishing house 2016-17
- 64 AAAD Statutes

2<sup>nd</sup> Visit

- 65 Study Plan, Assessment Criteria & Process for PhD studies
- 66 Standards for Accreditation for BA, MA and Doctorate Study Programmes
- 67 Graduates registered at Labour Office 2011-17
- 68 Internal Internships
- 69 Internal Student Transfers to New Programmes
- 70 BA Design Programme Student numerical data 2013-17
- 71 MA Design Programme Student numerical data 2013-17
- 72 PhD Design Programme Student numerical data 2013-17
- 73 PhD Research Plans
- 74 Professional Subject Workshop Practice
- 75 Alumni Questionnaire 2017
- 76 Fashion Design Final Semester Projects
- 77 Fashion Design Semester Projects
- 78 Semester Work Final Project
- 79 Semester Work Industrial Design
- 80 Supplementary Subject: Materiology
- 81 Theoretical Subject: Seminar on the history of Philosophy of Art
- 82 AAAD Budget & Finances
- 83 AAAD SaR Policy (full version)
- 84 AAAD Research Policy (short version)
- 85 Professional Subject Workshop Practice
- 86 AAAD PhD Assessment Criteria & Process
- 87 National Standards for accreditation of study programmes: Field of Art
- 88 Overview of Additional Information for 2<sup>nd</sup> Visit
- 89 AAAD Red-Dot Student & Staff Awards 2007-17

Appendix 1 AAAD Schedule of Accreditation Process  
Appendix 2 AAAD Strategy for developing an Internal Quality Culture  
Appendix 3 Mapping of AAAD Standards to National Standards  
Appendix 4 AAAD Methodology of Internal Programme Review  
Appendix 5 AAAD Internal Quality Assurance System Policy  
Appendix 6 Rules of Procedure of the Artistic Board, membership  
Appendix 7 Study Programmes Board membership  
Appendix 8 Relationship of Internal QA Boards & Committees  
Appendix 15 National Rules of the Quality Assurance System

Annex (a) EQ-Arts Framework for Accreditation and Assessment

Annex (b) *Schedule for Preliminary Visit*

Annex (c) *Schedule for Main Visit*