Beslissing van het Bestuurscollege

Datum	Kenmerk	Beleidsdomein
28-02-2025	BC/B/2025/BEAA/159053	Bestuurlijke aangelegenheden

HOGENT-regie voor de borging van de kwaliteit van de opleidingen: planning kwaliteitsbeoordelingen en actualisatie van de aanpak van de balansmomenten voor de opleidingen van de School of Arts

Situering binnen het strategisch plan 2023-2028
HOGENT leidt door experiment en innovatie de professional van de toekomst op. (SD1)

Adviezen
De planning van de kwaliteitsbeoordelingen van de opleidingen van de departementen kwam tot stand in overleg met de genoemde opleidingen.
De actualisatie van de aanpak van de balansmomenten voor de opleidingen van de School of Arts kwam tot stand in overleg met de decaan van de School of Arts.

Toelichting
Gelet op:
- de start van de nieuwe zesjarige kwaliteitscyclus binnen de geactualiseerde HOGENT-regie voor de borging van de kwaliteit van de opleidingen (BC/B/2023/BEAA/138598);
- de beoordeling door een externe revieworganisatie van de kwaliteit van de academische bachelor in de muziek, de master in de muziek, de Engelstalige variant, en de master-na-master in de hedendaagse muziek (juni 2022);
- de beoordeling door een externe revieworganisatie van de kwaliteit van de academische bachelor in het drama, de master in het drama en de Engelstalige variant (mei 2023);
- de beoordeling door een externe revieworganisatie van de kwaliteit van de academische bachelor in de audiovisuele kunsten, de master in de audiovisuele kunsten en de Engelstalige variant op basis waarvan de opleidingen een accreditatie verwierven van 1 oktober 2016 tot en met 30 september 2024 en het feit dat die opleidingen binnen de HOGENT-regie voor de borging van de kwaliteit van de opleidingen door een externe revieworganisatie opnieuw worden beoordeeld op 28, 29 en 30 april 2025;
- het feit dat de nieuwe beoordeling door een externe revieworganisatie van de kwaliteit van de academische bachelor in de beeldende kunsten, de master in de beeldende kunsten en de Engelstalige variant pas zal plaatsvinden in 2026,

en strevend naar:
- een evenredige spreiding van de kwaliteitsbeoordelingen binnen de zesjarige kwaliteitscyclus over de opleidingen en de departementen;
- een optimale afstemming tussen de kwaliteitsbeoordelingen en de jaarlijkse kwaliteitsdialogen per opleiding, waarbij de afspraken en aanbevelingen uit de kwaliteitsbeoordelingen worden besproken en opgevolgd;
- een realistische spreiding van de kwaliteitsbeoordelingen over de groep van zes externe voorzitters van de balanscommissies;
- het realiseren van een haalbare werkverdeling voor de beleidsmedewerkers Kwaliteitszorg van de Vlaamse Universiteiten en Hogescholenraad (Vluhr KZ) in samenwerking met de stafmedewerkers Kwaliteitsborging van de dienst Kwaliteitsborging;
- een vereenvoudiging van de aanpak van de balansmomenten voor de opleidingen van de School of Arts, waarbij het beoordelingsrapport van de externe revieworganisatie als het equivalent van een balansmoment wordt beschouwd en op basis waarvan het bestuurscollege een borgingsbesluit uitspreekt,

wordt aan het bestuurscollege voorgesteld om:

- de planning van de kwaliteitsbeoordelingen van de opleidingen van de departementen tot en met het academiejaar 2028-2029 goed te keuren (cf. bijlage 1);
- in functie van de planning van de kwaliteitsbeoordelingen van de opleidingen van de departementen tot en met het academiejaar 2028-2029 aan de volgende opleidingen een verlenging met een academiejaar van het borgingsbesluit toe te kennen:
    - bachelor in de biomedische laboratoriumtechnologie;
    - bachelor in de agro- en biotechnologie;
    - bachelor in het bedrijfsmanagement, afstudeerrichting marketing;
    - bachelor in het bedrijfsmanagement, afstudeerrichting accountancy-fiscaliteit;
    - bachelor in het bedrijfsmanagement, afstudeerrichting milieu- en duurzaamheidsmanagement;
    - bachelor in het bedrijfsmanagement, afstudeerrichting rechtspraktijk;
    - bachelor in de toegepaste fiscaliteit (banaba);
    - graduaat in het winkelmanagement;
- in functie van de planning van de externe kwaliteitsbeoordelingen van de opleidingen van de School of Arts de volgende opleidingen een verlenging met twee academiejaren van hun borgingsbesluiten toe te kennen: de academische bachelor in de beeldende kunsten, de master in de beeldende kunsten en de Engelstalige variant;
- aan de academische bachelor in de muziek, de master in de muziek, de Engelstalige variant, en de master-na-master in de hedendaagse muziek tot en met het academiejaar 2028-2029 een borgingsbesluit toe te kennen;
- aan de academische bachelor in het drama, de master in het drama en de Engelstalige variant tot en met het academiejaar 2029-2030 een borgingsbesluit toe te kennen;
- aan de academische bachelor in de audiovisuele kunsten, de master in de audiovisuele kunsten en de Engelstalige variant tot en met het academiejaar 2026-2027 een borgingsbesluit toe te kennen;
- een geactualiseerde versie van de HOGENT-regie voor de borging van de kwaliteit van de opleidingen, in het bijzonder voor de aanpak van de balansmomenten voor de opleidingen van de School of Arts (cf. bijlage 2), goed te keuren.

Bijlagen

Bijlage 1: Planning kwaliteitsbeoordelingen van de opleidingen van de departementen tot en met het academiejaar 2028-2029
Bijlage 2: HOGENT-regie voor de borging van de kwaliteit van de opleidingen
Bijlage 3: Beoordelingsrapport muziek
Bijlage 4: Beoordelingsrapport drama
Bijlage 5: Beoordelingsrapport audiovisuele kunsten

Juridisch

Codex Hoger Onderwijs, artikel II.122
BC/B/2023/BEAA/138598 HOGENT-regie voor de borging van de kwaliteit van de opleidingen

Budgettair

Niet van toepassing

Voorbereiding dossier

Marc D'havé

Beslissing
Het bestuurscollege beslist:
art. 1 de planning van de kwaliteitsbeoordelingen van de opleidingen van de departementen tot en met het academiejaar 2028-2029, toegevoegd als bijlage 1, goed te keuren;
art. 2 de borgingsbesluiten van de volgende opleidingen met een academiejaar te verlengen:
- bachelor in biomedische laboratoriumtechnologie;
- bachelor in de agro- en biotechnologie;
- bachelor in het bedrijfsmanagement, afstudeerrichting marketing;
- bachelor in het bedrijfsmanagement, afstudeerrichting accountancy-fiscaliteit;
- bachelor in het bedrijfsmanagement, afstudeerrichting milieu- en duurzaamheidsmanagement;
- bachelor in het bedrijfsmanagement, afstudeerrichting rechtspraktijk;
- bachelor in de toegepaste fiscaliteit (banaba);
- graduaat in het winkelmanagement;

art. 3 de borgingsbesluiten van de academische bachelor in de beeldende kunsten, de master in de beeldende kunsten en de Engelstalige variant te verlengen tot en met het academiejaar 2026-2027;
art. 4 aan de academische bachelor in de muziek, de master in de muziek, de Engelstalige variant, en de master-na-master in de hedendaagse muziek tot en met het academiejaar 2028-2029 een borgingsbesluit toe te kennen waaruit blijkt dat deze opleidingen kwaliteitsvol onderwijs realiseren, dat zich op een internationaal en maatschappelijk relevant niveau bevindt, dit op basis van het beoordelingsrapport van de externe revieworganisatie, toegevoegd als bijlage 3;
art. 5 aan de academische bachelor in het drama, de master in het drama en de Engelstalige variant tot en met het academiejaar 2029-2030 een borgingsbesluit toe te kennen waaruit blijkt dat deze opleidingen kwaliteitsvol onderwijs realiseren, dat zich op een internationaal en maatschappelijk relevant niveau bevindt, dit op basis van het beoordelingsrapport van de externe revieworganisatie, toegevoegd als bijlage 4;
art. 6 aan de academische bachelor in de audiovisuele kunsten, de master in de audiovisuele kunsten en de Engelstalige variant tot en met het academiejaar 2026-2027 een borgingsbesluit toe te kennen waaruit blijkt dat deze opleidingen kwaliteitsvol onderwijs realiseren, dat zich op een internationaal en maatschappelijk relevant niveau bevindt, dit op basis van het beoordelingsrapport van de externe revieworganisatie, toegevoegd als bijlage 5, op basis waarvan de opleidingen een accreditatie verwierven van 1 oktober 2016 tot en met 30 september 2024, en het feit dat die opleidingen binnen de HOGENT-regie voor de borging van de kwaliteit van de opleidingen door een externe revieworganisatie opnieuw worden beoordeeld op 28, 29 en 30 april 2025;
art. 7 de geactualiseerde HOGENT-regie voor de borging van de kwaliteit van de opleidingen, in het bijzonder voor de aanpak van de balansmomenten voor de opleidingen van de School of Arts, toegevoegd als bijlage 2, goed te keuren;
art. 8 de algemeen directeur opdracht te geven een afschrift van deze beslissing over te maken aan de commissaris van de Vlaamse Regering;
art. 9 de algemeen directeur te belasten met de uitvoering van deze beslissing.

Koen Goethals
Algemeen directeur

Paul Van Cauwenberge
Voorzitter

Quality Enhancement Review Report

Programme review

The Royal Academy of Fine Arts (KASK)
in Ghent

SCHOOLOFARTSGENT.BE

Main Visit: 3rd – 6th December 2018

Introduction

The EQ-Arts programme[1]review of Visual Arts was held in terms of an enhancement review (*critical friend*) approach, as the programme, Bachelor, Masters, English Master is now officially accredited until 2024. The Review essentially addressed the following questions: *What is the programme trying to achieve? How is it trying to achieve it? How does the institution/programme know if it's working? What capacity does the institution/programme have for improving the programme?* Following an extended period of conversations and consulting with both teachers, technical and administrative staff, the Self Evaluation Report (SER) was edited by Edwin Carels, Head of the Training Programme Commission for the Visual Arts, and Valerie Smet, Coordinator of Quality Assurance.

SER p6: *Visual Arts is a programme of the School of Arts KASK-Conservatorium. The School of Arts is part of University College Ghent (which is part of an Association of Ghent University), and Howest University College. Recently, further structural collaborations were also set up with Erasmus Hogeschool Brussel.*

Founded in 1752 the Royal Academy of Fine Arts is one of the oldest educational institutions in Ghent and the second oldest academy in Flanders. Teachers of the Academy played an essential role in the organisation of the Ghent World Exhibition of 1913. Belgian symbolist painting, as well as impressionism and the subsequent expressionist School of Latem had their roots in the academy. When in 1968 the painter and graphic artist Pierre Vlerick became Head of the institution, it quickly became the epicentre of avant-garde art where also experimental theatre, music and performance were intensively showcased. Photography and film were added to the curriculum, as well as a graphic studio that immediately became a very prolific and high-profile component of this vivid scene. In 1990-91 the next Head of the institution, Chantal De Smet added a department of Applied Arts, encompassing Graphic Design, Fashion, Textile, Costume Design and what was originally called 3D Multimedia.

In 1995 the Royal Academy of Fine Arts joined the University College Ghent. Since the Bologna agreement, the school adopted the bachelor-master structure. A further redrafting of the curriculum took place from 2003 to 2008, which led to the current constitution of the Visual Arts and its programme.

Flanders' higher education has a three-cycle degree structure: Bachelor's degrees, Master's Degrees and PhD degrees. The Flemish quality assurance system constitutes an integrated system for external quality assurance. Accreditation and institutional reviews are under the control of NVAO (Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders). Based on the judgments of NVAO, higher education programme is recognized and students receive a legally recognized degree.

Flanders has implemented an integrated external quality assurance system, comprising an institutional review, a review trail focused on the control of the quality assurance of programme, and accreditation of a well-defined group of programmes.
The institutional review is the periodic assessment of the quality of the educational policy pursued by a university or university college.

The assessment of the quality of the educational policy is based on the Framework for Institutional Reviews – Flanders 2015-2017. The institution's control over its quality assurance is based on the NVAO Quality Code. This Quality Code sets out the general points of departure to be met by this control, and how the institution will be held to account in this respect. University College Ghent was visited in April and May 2016: link (Dutch only). The Visual Arts programme was included in the institutional review of University College Ghent and therefore exempt from programme assessments and accreditations. It received its accreditation until 2024.

[1] The term Visual Arts Programme refers to all of the disciplines and specialisms that are available to study at BA, MA & PhD levels

EQ-Arts Review Team (RT) for the School of Arts

Robert Baker – IR (CHAIR)

Robert Baker is an artist and founding member of EQ-Arts. Previously he taught at Oxford Polytechnic School of Architecture (UK), University of Virginia School of Architecture (USA), Georgia Institute of Technology School of Architecture (USA) and at Limerick Institute of Technology, School of Art & Design (IRL) as Foundation Studies Course Leader, Painting Course Leader and Head of the Fine Art Department.

bobbakerlimerick@gmail.com

Dr. Bogdan Iacob – RO

Bogdan Iacob is an Art historian and art critic and works as senior lecturer, PhD at the University of Art and Design in Cluj – Napoca, Romania. He teaches Art History and Contemporary Art (since 2002) and is currently Director of the Department for Theoretical and Pedagogical Disciplines of the university. His institutional experience also includes work within the Department for Public and International Relations, as coordinator of the university's gallery, among other tasks (2006 – 2009), and holding the position of Chancellor of the university (2008 - 2011).

http://www.uad.ro/profesori/teoretice/bogdan_iacob/index.htm

iacob_uad@yahoo.com

Dr. Sarah Bennett – UK

Sarah Bennett is an artist and Head of the School of Art and Architecture at Kingston University, London, UK. Previous academic leadership positions held include - MA Fine Art Course Director at Exeter School of Art, and Head of Fine Art at Plymouth University where she subsequently became Interim Head of the School of Art and Media. She has worked in international HE partnerships with Piet Zwart Institute, Rotterdam, and Transart Institute, NYC. Examiner and adviser roles include Wimbledon College of Art (UAL); Birmingham City University; Gray's School of Art, Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen; and UWIC.

http://www.kingston.ac.uk/staff/profile/dr-sarah-bennett-444/

s.bennett@kingston.ac.uk

Klaus Jung – DE/NL

Klaus Jung is a fine artist, photographer, teacher and art-school manager and currently is Head of Fine Art at the Royal Academy of the Arts in The Hague, Netherlands. Klaus Jung worked within art schools in different places around Europe since 1989. Accordingly, his studio frequently had to be moved: from Düsseldorf, to Trondheim, to Bergen, to Glasgow and back to Düsseldorf.

http://www.klausjung.org/cv.html

k.jung@mac.com

Contrary to EQ-Arts' policy and practice, it was the decision and request of School of Art KASK that a student panel member was not included in this review process.

Timetable for Visit		
Sunday 2nd of December		
14h00 – 18h00	private meeting ET in the hotel 19h00	Hotel de Flandre
19h	Dinner	Free at choice

<u>Monday 3rd of December: focus Policy + Photography (Marissal:</u> MAR 1.013 + MAR 1.007)		
9h00 – 9h15	Operational meeting – laptops, refreshments, organisation etc**.**	Rachelle Dufour + Valérie Smet
9h15 – 09h30	**ET meet Liaison person**	Valérie Smet
9h30-10h	**ET meet the Dean and Head of Training programme commission**	Wim De Temmerman (Dean), Edwin Carels (Head of Training Programme Commission)
10h00 - 10h15	private meeting ET	
10h15 – 11h30	**Head and members of the Training programme commission, ET meet Chairs of Departments**	Edwin Carels (head of Training programme commission), Sofie Vandamme (chair of the department of Theory of Art Practices), Lars Kwakkenbos (chair of department of Film, Photography, Drama), Emmanuel Depoorter (chair of the department of Fine Arts), Wim De Temmerman (ad interim chair of the department of Design), Lecturer' members of the Training programme commission: KristienBuyse, Paul Casaer, Ronny Duquenne, Bram Jespers, Kristof Van Gestel, Paul Demedts , Els Huygelen Student members of the Training programme commission: Qiuyun Hu, Senne Vanderschelden, Martine Clierick (member of the department of Theory of Art Practices, member of the Board of the School of Arts)
11h30-11h45	private meeting ET	
11h45-12h-45	**tour of Marissal & Cloquet-building and facilities**	By Pat Vermeulen (Photography), Liene Aerts (Artistic activities), Ronny Duquenne (Graphic design) and Elisa De Schepper (*KASKcinema*) (showing: Photography, Graphic design, Drawing studios, illustration, Kiosk, Zwarte Zaal, *KASKcinema*, animation and film for minors)
12h45-13h45	working lunch (private ET) in the meeting room	*Sandwiches from KASKcafé*
13h45-14h30	**ET meet MA students Photography**	Sybren Vanoverberghe, Yury Van der Hoeven, Martha T'Hooft, Chelsea Bulteel, Jonas Beert, Thomas Vancoppenolle
14h30-14h45	private meeting ET	
14h45 – 15h30	**ET meet BA-students Photography**	1BA: Noah Neyrinck 2BA:Lennert De Lathauwer, Lien Lapanne, Arthur Loontjens 3BA: Barbara Debeuckelaere, Femke Saey, Lars Duchateau
15h30 – 15h45	private meeting ET	
15h45 – 16h45	**coordinators & teaching staff BA & MA Photography**	Dominique Somers (research and lecturer), Willem Vermoere (lecturer), Anne-Françoise Lesuisse (master coordinator), Peter De Smet (theory department), Véronique Govaert (coordinator 1BA), Nick Hannes (documentary photography 2BA)
16h45 - 17h00	private meeting ET	
17h00 – 18h00	**ET meet representatives**	Rein Desle (curator & editor Fotomuseum Antwerpen), Io Cooman (photo-editor for newspapers De tijd/ De Volkskrant), Lieve Blancquaert

	of the Photography professions and employers	(photographer & television maker), Bieke Depoorter (member of Magnum, photographer), Sanne De Wilde (photographer), Thomas Min (artist), Gaultier Platteau (editor and publisher Uitgeverij Kannibaal), An-Sophie Kesteleyn (freelance photographer for the Dutch daily de Volkskrant, de Standaard and Vrij Nederland)
18h00 – 18h30	private meeting ET	
19h30	private dinner ET	Pakhuis, Schuurkenstraat 4, 9000 Gent https://www.pakhuis.be/nl/

Tuesday 4th of December: Research, support services and Fine Arts (Media Art studio, 1st Floor Kunsttoren, GKUTO.1.013 and GKUTO.1.011)		
09h00 – 09h15	ET Operational meeting – laptops, refreshments, organisation	Rachelle Dufour+ Valérie Smet
9h15 – 10h00	**ET meet coordinator Research and Researchers**	Katrien Vuylsteke Vanfleteren (head of research), Johan Grimonprez, Maria Boto Ordonez, Jerry Galle, Max Pinckers, Michiel Decleene, Cathérine Willems, Sarah de Bondt, Filip Metten
10h00 – 10h15	private meeting ET	
10h15 – 11h15	**Tour Kunsttoren-site**	By Gerard Herman & Liselotte Van Daele (and Elias Heuninck for Formlab)
11h15 – 11h30	private meeting ET	
11h30 – 12h15	**ET meet programme technical and support staff: communication, infra-structure, finances, student affairs**	Ilse Den Hond (head of communication), Dries De Wit (head of finances), Pascal Desimpelaere (head of student affairs), Stephen Verstraete (facilities management)
12h15-12h45	**ET meet Student and Learning Track Counsellors**	Annelies Vlaeminck (student and learning track counsellor Visual Arts), Pascal Desimpelaere (head of student affairs)
12h45 – 13h45	working lunch (private ET) in the meeting room	*Cheese and fruit platter*
13h45 – 14h30	**ET meet BA-students Fine Art**	Installation art: Theo Wéry (2BA), Kristin Karolina Helgadottir (3BA), Drawing: 1BA: Anniek Brugghe, Marthe Naessens/ 2BA: Amber Wynants, Laurens Rogiest/ 3BA: Justine Van Stichel, Isaac Barbe, Luna Dieleman, Noa Verkeyn Sculpture: 2BA Hannah Hoebeke/ 3BA Hanne Demey Media Art: 1BA: Quinten Vanagt/3BA Dominique De Groen Performance: 1BA Noor Nitzsche, Stien Van den Branden /2BA Maïthé Truyens, Eva Moons Painting: 2BA Eloïse Baele/ 3BA Céleste Mattot
14h30 - 14h-45	private meeting ET	
14h45 – 15h30	**ET meet MA Students Fine Art**	Nienke Baeckelandt, Koi Persyn, Rémie Vanderhaegen, Lotte De Bodt, Lukas De Ryck, Dries Boutsen, Anne Beumer, Lieselot Everaert, Fons Artois, Simona Mihaela Stoia
15h30 – 15h45	private meeting ET	
15h45 – 16h45	**ET meet coordinators & teaching staff BA & MA Fine Arts**	Hendrik Leper (bachelor coordinator Media art), Shila Hadji Heydari Anaraki (bachelor coordinator performance), Paul Casaer (bachelor coordinator Painting), Stefaan Dheedene (bachelor coordinator Installation art), Ruben Bellinkx (bachelor coordinator Drawing), Ludwig Vandevelde (bachelor coordinator Sculpture), Simon Delobel (master coordinator of Fine arts), Godart Bakkers (theory department), Helena Depreester (theory department), Hadassah Emmerich (guest professor Painting)
16h-45 - 17h00	private meeting ET	

17h-00 – 18h00	**ET meet representatives of the professions and employers Fine Art**	Marie Logie (Auguste Orts), Nele Keukelier (Gouvernement), Kristof De Clercq (gallery), Charlotte van Buylaere (curator). Wouter De Vleeschouwer/ Jeroen Staes (CONVENT Space for Contemporary Art), more people to be announced
18h00 – 18h30	private meeting ET	
19h30	private dinner ET	Domestica, Onderbergen 27, 9000 Gent http://www.domestica.be

Wednesday 5th of December : Design (Pauli: Tram Zwart- kleine studio en grote studio)		
09h00-09h15	ET Operational meeting – laptops, refreshments, organisation	Rachelle Dufour + Valérie Smet
09h15 – 10h00	**ET meet Quality Assurance coordinator & team**	Valérie Smet
10h00 – 10h15	private meeting ET	
10h15-11h45	**Tour Pauli-site and library**	By Suzy Castermans (library) & Edwin Carels (chair training programme commission): Performance> sculpture>fashion> textile Design> library, (in studios: Ludwig Vandevelde, Bram Jespers, Diane Steverlynck)
11h45 – 12h30	**ET meet BA-students Design**	Autonomous design: 1BA: Maria Stuut/ 2BA: Ine Van Horen/ 3BA: Miriam Matthys Fashion: 2BA: Sylvia Sarpong, Emma Van den Berghe, Sebastian Van Canneyt, Jaimy D'hont/ 3BA: Karmien Nys, Linde Vandecruys, Cas Dekeyser, Célénie Jauniaux, Armando Celis, Pascaline Van den Hooff, Céline De Backer Graphic design: 1BA: Hanne Lemmens, Cosima Lagae, Enid Stassyns/ 2BA: Lyra Oey (Printmaking), Laura Martens (Graphic design), Joram De Cocker (Graphic design), Thomas Boussu (illustration)/ 3BA: Charlotte Decoster (Graphic design), Stacy Suy (Graphic design) Textile design: 2BA: Leen Stoffels, Camille Willemart/ 3BA: Bente Dornez
12h30-13-30	working lunch (private meeting ET)	*Selection of small sandwiches*
13h30 – 14h15	**ET meet MA students Design**	Autonomous design: Maarten De Vrieze, Clémentine Vaultier, Anthony Leenders Fashion: Oumar Dicko, Ruth Vieren, Eva Eyskens, Bart Lapere, Timour Desdemoustier, Delphine De Smet, Floor Anne de With Graphic design: Laura Andriessen, Rosanne Claes, Finn Waters, Dylan Belgrado, Jantien Callewaert, Lucca Van Vliet Textile design: Renee Strikkeling, Emma Terweduwe, Marieke Van Trappen
14h15-14h30	private meeting ET	
14h30 – 15h30	**ET meet coordinators & teaching staff BA & MA Design**	Bram Jespers (bachelor and master coordinator Fashion), Diane Steverlynck (bachelor coordinator Textile design), Els Huyghelen (master coordinator Textile design), Ronny Duquenne (bachelor coordinator Graphic design), Thomas Desmet (master coordinator Graphic design), Gerard Herman (bachelor coordinator Printmaking), Elsje Dezwarte (bachelor coordinator Illustration), Hilde Bouchez (lecturer), Peter Westenberg (master coordinator Autonomous design), Dirk Deblauwe (lecturer graphic design), Dirk Van Gogh (research and lecturer), Sofie Van Damme (theory department, part of artistic entrance exam jury's and mentor of portfolio and thesis)
15h30-15h45	private meeting ET	
15h45-16h30	**ET meet representatives of the**	Autonomous design: Evelien Bracke (curator Design museum Ghent), Marieke De Munck (responsible city & transition @stadsatelier & think Vooruit), Carine Meulders (artistic director at WP Zimmer), Nele Keukelier (Gouvernement)

	Design professions and employers	Fashion: Nele Content (Atelier Content), Christoph Urbain (Rewind store), Raf Adriaensens (Ann Demeulemeester), Helena Verstraete Oni Onik Fashion creations), Sophie Pay Flanders DC for Fashion), Marjolein Vanslembrouck (Elle Magazine Belgium), Graphic design: Sofie Deederen (Frans Masereelcentre), Kris Latoir (publisher het Balanseer), more to be announced Textile design: Christoph Hefti (fashion/textile designer), Patrick Geysels Textirama), Karlien Deconinck (Fred&Ginger), Kim Pint(Bekaert-Deslee)
16h30-16h45	private meeting ET	
16h45-17h45	**ET meet alumni BA & MA Visual Arts**	**Photography**: Lore Horré, Sam Weerdmeester, Annelie Vandendael, Joachim Naudts, Chantal Van Rijt, Gert Verbelen, Aurelie Geurts, Pauline Niks, Frederic Buyckx, Bieke Depoorter, Zaza Bertrand, Thomas Nolf, Constance Proux **Fine Arts**: Media Art: Eva Giolo, Chloe Delanghe, Tessa Groenewoud, Painting: Pieter Van Troos, Jonas Vanderbeke, Cynthia Ballasina, Emma Mortier Installation art: Benjamin Verhoeven, Jonathan Paepens, Marijke De Roover Sculpture: Elizabeth Van Dam, Mathias Prenen Drawing: Ines Claus, Lana Schneider **Design**: Autonomous design: Elli Vassalou, Klaas De Roo, Anyuta Wiazemsky Fashion: Stijn Vandenbulck, Charlotte De Maesschalck , Klaas Rommelaere, Elisabeth Claes, Brian Naeyaert, Sarah Driesmans, Maxime van Middendorp , Julie Vanelderen , Gudrun Wylleman, Bart Hoste Graphic Design: Tim Bruggeman, Farilde Schiltz, Telma Lannoo; Linh Dong; Arne Wastyn; Hermine Cooreman Textile design: Leda Devoldere - Magalie Delbeke – more to be announced
17h45-18h30	private meeting ET	
19h30	private dinner ET	Café Théatre https://www.cafetheatre.com Schouwburgstraat 7, 9000 Gent

Thursday 6th of December (Masereel+Cirque)		
09h00 – 09h15	ET Operational meeting – laptops, refreshments, organization (Masereel)	Rachelle Dufour + Valérie Smet
09h15 – 09h30	**ET meet liaison person**	Valérie Smet
09h30-13h00	private meeting ET	Including *cold buffet from Kaskcafé (delivered)*
13h00 – 13h30	**Oral feedback to the Head of Institution and colleagues (Cirque)**	
14h00	Departure	*Drink for students and staff @Cirque*

1. Programme's goals and context

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

a) What is the institution's mission, vision and aims?

The School of Arts operates under the strategic plan 2017-2022 of the University College Ghent so does not have an autonomous mission statement but implements the strategic goals of the University College Ghent through a covenant. The strategic plan and its implementation was evaluated in the recent institutional review and by default was not considered as part of this critical friends review. The Review Team (RT) considered the Educational Plan and perceives it to be a valuable document with many intentions towards good practice and a coherent statement of aspirations. It has value as a statement of operational guidance for staff and a prospective context for students. The Educational Plan and SER articulate excellent ambitions that the Visual Arts programme has in providing a service for individual students and the attitudes that they will be presented with whilst studying.

During the site visit the RT was offered many verbal interpretations by individuals, staff, students, alumni and employers of what they perceived to be the specific qualities that the School of Arts possesses. The RT suggests that a forum could be held amongst all stakeholders to discuss the School of Arts' implementation of the University College Ghent Strategic plan to ensure it is familiar and embedded as an overriding strategy for the School of Arts alongside the Educational plan.

b) What is the rationale and aims for the programme and what are its distinctive/unique features?

Programme Goals

SER p8 -*The Visual Arts programme focus on the following goals:*

- *to create original visual works that contribute to the development of the arts, based on a personal, artistic outlook*
- *to be able to study, analyse, interpret and judge one's own visual work and that of others, and to be able to stake out a personal position in the professional field*
- *to be able to present and comment on one's own visual works*
- *to be able to organize and sustain an inspiring, functional professional situation for oneself*
- *to be able to use philosophical and scientific sources to form original, personal ideas*
- *to be able to formulate an original research question, deploying methodologies from the sciences and philosophy*
- *to be able to conduct research related to the visual work, and to report on that research in written form*
- *to possess the enthusiasm necessary to evolve in the professional artistic field, as a visual artist, designer, textile designer, fashion designer or photographer*

Distinctive/unique features

1. The SER p7 and the Educational Plan are built around the following aspects and the RT can report the coherence of support, adherence and the endeavour invested by those it met in these aspects in its meetings with teaching staff, students, employers and alumni.

2. ***The student's personal project***

   Practice is the key feature

   Cooperation and informal learning

   Specialist and interdisciplinary

   Interaction with the social and professional field

   Theory and critical thinking

   Research and investigation

The feature that made the strongest impression on the RT during the site visit and discussions and within the documentation was the development of multiple 'specialisms' into separate and discrete studios. This proliferation of free-standing disciplines encompassed by the programme structure, BA and MA, is perceived as a strength by the all staff. However, the RT are not completely convinced that this is creating either an efficient or healthy educational and organisational environment (see Section 2.1; Educational Processes).

The SER and the Educational Plan features informal learning and cross fertilisation, *Cooperation and Informal Learning* (SER p7) as it is referred to, of inter student discourse. This aspiration and its successful operation can be an example of good practice and has been a tradition of art school ethos for several years. The RT believes that in order for this aspect to be successful a minimum number of students in each study area or specialism is necessary (see also Section 3 of this report) and that few student year groups at present meet the critical mass required (Table 1: SER p4).

The RT concludes that the development of multiple 'specialisms' may not be constructively supporting this part of the Educational Plan. Perhaps also the programme might like to consider that the best discourse maybe the interaction of students with very varied interests and artistic concerns beyond those encapsulated within each individual specialism or unit.

The RT also concluded that the programme considers a review of how cognate disciplines might be clustered, and to avoid the proliferation of too many discrete areas of creative momentum - and thus ensuring parity of the student experience (see Section2.1; Educational Processes).

The other features listed above appear to the RT to be neither particularly unique nor distinctive to the School of Arts. They are descriptors or goals that could be said to be shared with the majority of art schools within Northern Europe and in some cases beyond. As such they are in-line with contemporary art school educational practice and aligned to the descriptors listed in the *'Tuning Document'*[2] for Fine Art and the Dublin Descriptors.

c) How does the institution ensure the programme aligns with its mission and/or in the regional, national and international context?

During its meetings with both staff and students the RT gained the impression that the School of Arts may be endeavouring to define itself based on its status as an 'academic' university, hence the

[2] www.eq-arts.org/wp-content/uploads

emphasis on 'research' and to an extent on 'theory'. This approach is also evident in documentation as well as in discussions. The RT deduced that these factors of research and theory are perceived by the School of Arts, probably quite correctly, as activities unique to a university programme as opposed to vocational and professional institutions that provide programmes in similar subjects. The increasing development of research is obviously a strong element of best practice within Higher Arts Education and the School of Arts is obviously well placed and committed in its approach. The RT would like to encourage the consideration of a broadening of the methods of research that could be developed in such a way as to provide opportunities and perhaps a more appropriate range of pathways within an art school context. This important issue is discussed further in Section 2.1 of this report.

- The RT gained the impression that the School of Arts could also consider other developments alongside research and theory, i.e. business studies, entrepreneurship avenues, particularly now that some of the more established research avenues seem to have the possibility for commercial application. The development of further options to distinguish itself from other institutions in the city/region could also help the School of Arts build partnerships with business and employers. As well as provide a stimulating opportunity for students that exposes them to the wider world beyond art school, this would stimulate their artistic and creative abilities beyond the traditional pathways. It may also be advantageous to work jointly with other educational institutions locally and perceive their existence as an opportunity, by further developing recently instigated collaborations with HOWEST, HISK, RITCS, Ghent University, LUCA

d) What is the quality management process to ensure the standards of the programme are maintained and developed?

The institution has many free standing specialised subject study areas, although they all operate under the same programme goals. The RT had concerns about the challenge of maintaining standards across such a number of disciplines within the Programme and further comments on enhancement are made in 7b in this report (below).

The Programme makes use of student surveys that are, by admission in the SER (p28), giving rise to 'survey fatigue' within the student body. The ET also noted a limited presence of students and alumni on committees.

The institution has not yet developed a method of moderating degree assessment results across specialisms but professes to rely on the 'professionalism' of the staff and assessors in each area. It does not compare and analyse degree assessment ratings on the 20 point scale so students and graduates have no vision of what 18/20 means as opposed to 13/20 in terms of attainment, other than one is 'higher' than the other and they, and some staff, do not have confidence that assessment criteria are consistently applied across specialisms. This leads to the perception frequently and forcefully articulated by students and staff that some students have to work much harder than others, invest in more expensive materials than others and achieve a 'higher' outcome to realise the same result on the 20 point scale (see also Section 2.3 of this report).

e) What elements and factors are involved in determining admission capacity and profile?

SER p20 (BA): *In order to enrol in the bachelor programme students must hold a Belgian secondary school diploma or an equivalent thereof, and pass an artistic admission exam in the presence of a jury. Separate exams are organized for each specialisms of the Visual Arts (see brochure for regulations and content of the different exams and jury composition). The written test is identical for all academic candidate students.*

The Admission process presently reflects the structure of the programme with each specialism operating its own entrance tests and orientation sessions and using its own criteria with regard to practice appraisal. It became apparent during the site visit that the entrance procedure for BA was under review and that some consolidation of effort and procedures in this area was being considered. This is a development that the RT would wholeheartedly encourage and support.

SER p20 (MA): *In order to enter the master, students need to hold a bachelor degree and take an Orientation Committee interview or audition (see brochure on orientation test and brochure on master application). In case students would like to take up a master programme but do not hold the appropriate preparatory bachelor's degree, they can enrol in a bridging programme. Candidates for bridging and preparatory programmes follow the same procedure as candidates for a master programme. Candidates who have previously, unsuccessfully, been enrolled in a higher education programme must additionally take the university college's specific progress measures into account.*

It became apparent to the RT during the site visit that the Orientation Committee is advisory only. The RT were informed during several of its discussions that, according to Flemish Government Policy, any student holding a BA from a school of art has the right to enter an MA in the same subject without being subjected to an entrance examination process, and that financing of art schools is based on final diploma Masters student numbers (not Bachelors). This is reported to account for the increase in MA students during recent years and potential continuing increase apparently beyond the control of institutions (SER p 4 Table 1: Number of students enrolled 2015-2018). This Government policy has obvious repercussions for institutions and removes control of student numbers from the School of Arts and makes the allocation of space and facilities a challenge. It also accounts for the RT hearing in meetings that the students do not experience a distinct change from BA to MA. Candidates not proceeding directly from Bachelors to Masters who do not hold BAs from a school of art would have to take a bridging programme.

Although the MA level has noticeable differences and emphasis to the BA (see Section 2) the RT views it as surprising that the opportunity to develop new MA pathways along-side the Educational MA being researched at present, has not so far, been taken.

f) What were the procedures for formal approval and legal recognition of the study programme taken into consideration in its development?

The process for the design, approval and re-approval of programmes by the NVAO is in place (SER p12) and was well articulated by all the teachers and managers we met.

g) What quantitative and qualitative statistical information is collected, and how is it used to support/enhance the study programme?

The SER and particularly the Quality Assurance Plan describe the policy and methods employed. These methods are supported by a very able and committed group of administrative staff who are presently developing an on-line information management programme. The Quality Assurance Plan presents a comprehensive list of stakeholders from whom information is collected and at what stage during the cycle of the programme (SER p27).

SER p28 (Strengths and challenges): *Some **professional field committees** should be organised on a more regular basis*

It appears to the RT that, during its discussions with Alumni, Employers, Students and Staff, whilst valuing 'the involvement of all key stakeholders' the honest perception as stated on SER p28 above with regard to more regular meetings of external stakeholders was more accurate. The Programme may also like to consider the provision of more regular formal meetings of staff and students as with other stakeholders.

The Quality Assurance Plan is based on good practice and meets the best standards of practice in art schools generally. The RT was convinced about the general commitment to quality assurance and quality enhancement but were more doubtful about the consistency of the operation of the Plan and the extent to which it was used as a method to enhance the quality of the programme (See Section 7; Internal Quality Culture)

h) *How are equal opportunities embedded in the institutional/programme mission/vision*?

SER p10*: Equal opportunities are embedded in our individual education and examination norms, exceptional standards, personalized learning tracks, through financial stimuli (grants, internationalisation sponsorships for groups with disabilities). See link and https://www.hogent.be/stuvo/zorg/ All vacancies specifically state candidates being selected regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, origin or (dis-)ability. Amongst the staff there is overall a good mix of gender, although in some specialisms the distribution could be better. Around 70% of the students are female, approximately 30% male. Currently the School of Arts is also working on achieving an improved gender balance for juries, professional field committees, selection boards, etc. See annex 2 and 6 for gender of students and staff. Apart from the regular scholarships from the Flemish government, the School of Arts also provides scholarships for non-EU students wanting to enrol in the Drama, Visual arts, Audiovisual arts and Music master, selecting six master students per year on the basis of their social-economic background as a key selection criterium.*

It was evident to the RT that the Visual Arts Programme, in terms of both staff and students, was not populated in a way that reflects present societal profiles. The School of Arts is far from unique in this aspect and is struggling to tackle problems in this area as are many European arts institutions. As the staff were aware, several significant minority groups present within the city were not being attracted to engage with the Programme on offer or even represented by individual participation. Staff expressed mixed opinions about how to address this issue and as yet an institutional or organisational lead has not been forthcoming.

It was apparent to the RT and to the staff and students of the Programme that some specialisms suffered from a gender and generational imbalance and that opinions were mixed about the best way to respond to this imbalance. It seems that practical solutions have not yet been formalised to address the imbalance.

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

a) What is the institutional process in place for the design, approval and re-approval of programmes?

The process for the design, approval and re-approval of the programme is in place through NVAO (SER p12) and was well articulated by all the coordinators, teachers and managers we met. The process for small changes is dealt with at programme level and enables flexible delivery and agility in preparing project briefs. Major changes are discussed with student focus groups and then documentation is prepared for and discussed at the Training Programme Committee. These major changes need to be finally agreed at School of Arts Board, one year prior to the implementation of the changes within the curriculum (meeting with TPC members). The RT heard that some external stakeholders were able to contribute to programme developments at the School of Arts through membership of the Resonance Committee which the RT commends (see Professional Field Committees in Annex 7). Other external professionals expressed that their opinions are highly valued by School of Arts teachers.

b) How does the curriculum reflect the institutional mission and address the aims of the programme?

The RT found that the curriculum, does, in the main reflect the Educational Plan and address the aims of the programme in so far as: practice is central, supported by theoretical and critical thinking, and research; each student's personal project is guided and supported by teachers - providing a 'tailored education' (Meeting with Dean and Head of TPC) - alongside a balance of specialist and interdisciplinary approaches; and interactions with the social and professional field are part of the learning environment.. The focus at discipline level does not always acknowledge the Educational Plan, i.e. it not readily referenced and embedded, rather it is the ambitions of teachers that are evident at a local level. An area for consideration by the School of Arts would be for all teachers to be more conversant with the Educational Plan, whilst maintaining their enthusiastic inputs into the curriculum at discipline level. One topic that was suggested as an area for more focus in the curriculum was 'sustainability' (meeting with TPC members), endorsed by the RT.

Regarding the structure of disciplines within which the curriculum is delivered, the RT recognise the value attached to having a breadth of disciplines available and acknowledge that this range within the departments is both a key attractor for applicants (strongly evidenced by the students we met), as well as reflecting the current scope of art and design practices within the professional field. This breadth also ensures a depth of engagement and 'ownership' by both teachers and students - for example the skills-based first year in painting - whilst enabling interdisciplinary approaches to be developed. In practice, the RT found that interdisciplinarity was more commonly discussed at Masters through choice of studio mentors, rather than through an embedded interdisciplinary ethos, i.e. specialist teaching predominates in the Bachelors. The RT suggest that now would be a good time to instigate a productive dialogue in the School of Arts to review how cognate disciplines might be clustered, and to avoid the proliferation of too many discrete areas of creative momentum - and ensuring parity of the student experience (see also Section 1; Programme's Goal and Context). This might also improve operational efficiency. Year one of graphic design could be used as a model for discipline clustering. Furthermore, the RT doubts the sustainability of the future proliferation of specialisms as a developmental mode, especially when not paralleled with a process for closing

and/or regenerating existing disciplines. For example, our impression was that Sculpture's prominence as a contemporary visual arts discipline has been diminished at the School of Arts by the development of Installation Art as a separate discipline, and that both could be taught under the discipline of Sculpture. However, for reasons that we understand, we were unable to meet teachers from Sculpture for the RT to pursue this question, so have included it only as an observation.

c) How are students engaged in the development of the curriculum and the learning and teaching strategy?

The RT understand that proposed major changes to the curriculum are discussed within student Focus Groups and then documentation is prepared for and discussed at the Training Programme Committee, where there is also student representation. Focus Groups are also convened by the Quality Assurance Coordinator in response to student matters, which may include matters of curriculum design and delivery (see also Section 6.2).

d) What are the learning outcomes of the programme and are they compatible with the Subject Dublin Descriptors´ learning outcomes (e.g. ELIA Dance, Film, Fine Art and Design subject descriptors)?

DLR Learning Outcomes are set out in the SER pp 11-12 for Bachelors and Masters. The RT found that the learning outcomes, which are ordained by the Belgium Ministry of Education, are compatible with the Dublin descriptors.

e) How does the programme enable students to develop individual study profiles?

The RT commend the way in which the School of Arts programme enables students to develop individual study profiles, and this was confirmed by students as well as being emphasised in Programme Goals (SER p7) and the Educational plan (2.2). We found that the emphasis from entry to beyond graduation (normally after 3 years of study at BA and 1 year at MA plus informal access to workshops for alumni which the RT heard about) is on the individual learner, and students reported that there is a high level of customisation of teaching to support their needs, especially at Masters level where students choose their own mentors and select theory seminars according to their practice development. However, there is a closeness in the relationship between teachers and students, often described as 'friendship' that may be thought of as *safe* yet overly comfortable. An alternative model might be one of a 'trust-based' relationship, that enables safety in risk taking for students as well as providing objective evaluation and critical distance by teachers.

f) Where appropriate, is there a connection/progression between the programme and other study programme/cycles?

The connection and progression between the Bachelor cycle and other study programme/cycles at the School of Arts is informed by an established government policy in Belgium whereby any student completing the BA can progress to the MA within the School of Arts, with no further entrance exam (see also Section 1 of this report). We heard in our meeting with the Dean and the Head of the TPC that this provides a challenge to the School of Arts in managing student numbers, exacerbated by the funding challenges. A bridging opportunity exists for applicants without the required entry levels for Masters, particularly International students (See Section 2.2; International Perspectives) and evidenced in MA student meeting.

g) What is the range of learning and teaching strategies used in the delivery of the curriculum?

There are a range of learning and teaching strategies used in the delivery of the curriculum through units, with emphasis placed on the individual learner's educational journey. These include: individual tutorials; group presentations; lectures; seminars; project briefs; industry led (or 'mock') projects; individually devised projects; specialist technical processes outlined in the SER (pp14-16); and internships - Arts in Practice units (SER p13). The internships within the Masters cycle were valued by external stakeholders and students alike, although one area for consideration would be to ensure the School of Arts provides consistent support for students in finding internships and maintaining contact during the period of the internship. An area of good practice the RT noted is the collaborative approach that Autonomous Design students are encouraged to be engaged in (SER p14) that prepares them well for the move into the social field, and the RT heard that other students want more *'collective practices'* beyond study trips (which they value) and year 1 group projects, to enhance the possibility of cross disciplinary experiences. Another area of good practice was the industry-led briefs in Textile Design. The RT commends the diversity of minor subjects available and how well these choices worked for the students to enhance their learning - noting this area of good practice does indeed '*incite each second and third bachelor student to explore other disciplines'* (SER p11). Attending 'minors' enabled students to interact with students from other disciplines, and the RT heard that this also occurs within the theory units in the Bachelors and was valued by students. There was evidence of substantial advances in integrating the theory teaching with the practice, and it was evident from alumni who had graduated a few years previously, that they were aware of the improvements. The RT were provided with a range of examples of written course work to review including dossiers. These improvements bode well for the future of the Visual Arts programme and we heard from students that the theoretical bias of the Visual Arts programme is a unique selling point (USP). However, one area for consideration would be to ensure all studio staff know what is being delivered in theory classes, as Fine Art Coordinators and teachers requested in our meeting with them.

h) How are students offered opportunities to present their creative practice internally and externally?

The RT found in our meeting with TPC members that the students are offered opportunities to present their creative practice internally with external curators often being involved, and through group presentations within disciplines. The Masters students have regular opportunities to present work in semi-public spaces within the campus and all BA and Masters graduating students are involved in final shows across the whole campus, which are considered 'more professional' than other institutions' degree shows. The students informed the RT in their meeting that they are also encouraged to find external venues to show and present work in the city of Ghent and beyond, as and where appropriate to their creative practice, but we also understood from the professional partners that opportunities to exhibit in 'commercial' contexts are not readily taken up by graduates.

i) How does the programme encourage critical reflection and self-reflection by the student?

The way in which the Visual Arts programme encourages critical reflection and self-reflection by the student is an area of good practice. The RT found that the ambition to develop the critical and reflective practitioner is embedded in the teaching provided and is at the centre of the student experience. This is achieved at a high level and recognised by the professional field as we were informed during meetings with external partners. MA students in particular valued the increased autonomy at Masters, and this was the main distinction they made between BA and MA. The RT suggest an opportunity exists to identify how other distinctions between BA and MA might be optimised.

j) How are students introduced to research and what role does it play within the programme

The RT noted that the BA and Masters students have a varied understanding of what constitutes research in the arts, which might be usefully described in the Higher Arts Education sector as 1) research about the arts; 2) research through the arts; 3) and art practice *as* research. It is clear that in the School of Arts research about the arts, particularly as a form of contextualisation for students' practice is thoroughly and successfully embedded in the programme and introduced in the 1st year *Introduction to Research in the Arts* unit. There is also evidence of exciting and innovative research projects taking place at the School of Arts that are developing new knowledge *through* the arts, and Masters students were aware of these projects and valued the opportunity to be involved, as well as valuing the teaching by PhD students. RT also commend the internal funding of research projects but were surprised that many teachers have not actively applied for funding. The RT suggest that an area for consideration is for the School of Arts to explore how artistic research might be better embedded as a *different* form of knowledge production, in and of itself, as a valuable development for the School of Arts' community of teachers, students and researchers (see also Section 1: Programme's Goals and Context). It appears that this latter form of research is taking place within the PhD cycle, and is represented in reference texts in the library (a comprehensive list was provided during the site visit) but needs to be better emphasised in the *Introduction to Research in the Arts* unit as students that the RT met were not able to articulate their understanding of this form of research.

k) How does research inform curriculum development and teaching?

In considering how research informs curriculum development and teaching we found some areas of good practice, e.g. in Fashion and Media Arts and we commend that across all the disciplines the students value the seminars given by PhD students. In the SER (p10) there is reference to a process of the 'filtering' of research from teachers in studios to students, but the RT heard that this does not happen consistently so an area for consideration would be to ensure that research expertise filters through to students by embedding this approach within a coherent learning and teaching strategy which is reflected in the curriculum.

l) How does research feed into students' assignments/activities/tasks?

To reiterate, the RT found that BA and Masters students only have a partial understanding of the term 'artistic research' hence it is unclear to what extent the *full* range of research undertaken feeds into students' assignments/activities/tasks. The RT suggest that the School of Arts may wish to consider revising the programme goals (SER p8) to include artistic research methodologies alongside deploying methodologies from the sciences and philosophy in order to secure the provenance of artistic research.

m) Are there formal arrangements for students to receive academic, career and personal guidance?

The RT met with the Learning Track Counsellor (STC), who gave a comprehensive account of the ways in which students can access academic and personal guidance and she outlined the additional support for increasing mental health issues that is available through the psychological team at HoGent. Students were very positive about the support of the STC and also reported feeling able to ask their teachers for advice, for example on study choices, and with being flexible around personal circumstances (we met a student who had recently become a parent). The RT found that it was less clear how specific careers advice is provided, beyond the discipline specific professional practice skills content, extant within the curriculum which prepares students effectively to continue to practice in their own discipline within the professional field. This was confirmed by the external partners who commented upon the openness, curiosity, independence and high quality of the

School of Arts students and graduates. External partners also raised, a question about the balance of technical vs artistic vs entrepreneurial attributes gained by the students. Alumni in particular suggested that more information about alternative career options would be beneficial (noted also p18 SER), and the Student Track Counsellor reported that students frequently request a careers advisor be appointed (see also 5.3a of this report).

2.2 International perspectives

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

a) How is the programme aligned with the international strategy of the institution

The RT endorses the ambition of the School of Arts *to offer its students an open window to a globalised world* (Educational Plan 2.7), and notes that the decision to invite an international critical review team very much aligns with that ambition (meeting with Dean and Head of TPC). However, in the SER (p19) the School of Arts acknowledges that the international agenda is not fully implemented as yet (the Plan on Internationalisation is being developed by the School of Arts and may yet cover the points raised by the RT in this report) and some clear objectives to improve the visibility of international opportunities and activities (SER pp12-18)) are mentioned. The RT heard positively about the 'international brand' at the School of Arts in Photography which is already known beyond Ghent and Belgium.

b) To what extent do the curriculum and the extra-curricular activities offer international perspectives?

The extra curricula activities listed in Annex 3 are valuable for students to widen perspectives, but the *focus on internationalisation in the curricula [which is] aimed at creating a learning environment that has the global citizen as its basis* (Educational Plan 2.7) was not much in evidence, though many international activities exist. The RT encourages the School of Arts managers to maintain the impetus and support for coordinators and teachers to develop alternative strategies for internationalisation, e.g. through new curriculum content and research collaborations. The RT concluded that in order to fulfil the Educational Plan's aspirations for internationalisation there is an opportunity to firstly pool, and then develop the many ideas that the RT heard about for internationalisation during the visit.

c) How is the international dimension integrated into the curriculum at all levels of study?

Visual Arts students can decide to do their Master's Thesis abroad, or to complete part of their studies or a traineeship abroad (SER p16). The RT commends the School of Arts on the English Masters, which as the RT were informed during its meetings with students, does attract incoming international students and the RT noted that good practice is evident in the bridging course which provides a useful entry mechanism for international students. However, the RT recognises the frustration of the School of Arts' teachers in not also being able to develop an English Bachelor programme.

d) Are there any intended learning outcomes explicitly formulated linked to internationalisation?

In the SER (p17) the RT noted that it states that '*Learning outcomes are currently not explicitly linked to internationalisation, this is part of our international strategy that we would like to implement from 2018-2019'.* The RT endorse this future implementation to strengthen the Internationalisation

strategy for the School of Arts and consider the process of revising Learning Ooutcomes should be a priority, though this was not ascertained during the visit.

e) How is the programme participating in international partnerships/exchanges/research?

In the Annex 3 of the SER Table 7 shows outgoing exchange students (as well as interactions with the professional field). Table 8 *shows % of foreign students (regular + external students) between 2015-18,* while Table 9 shows *Student stays of one month or more abroad.* Table 10 gives all the bilateral agreements for the Visual Arts, and below it are mentioned the study trips made. These tables show a healthy regard for international activities and experiences for students but 'trends' are difficult to analyse from the statistics, due to the variances between disciplines and across cohorts. The innovative activities are impressive when listed.

During the visit the RT heard about some International aspirations and activities from staff and students. For example, Flemish students told the RT that, while they wanted to progress to the MA *within* the School of Arts, nonetheless they aim to do a 'foreign internship', evidencing their interest in learning in a global context. The RT also heard in meetings about photography students undertaking socially engaged projects abroad and the collaborative Fashion project in the UK.

f) How are international students on the programme supported?

The RT received a printed copy of the guidance for International students and consider this document to represent good practice**.** Alumni noted the increase in fees for International students from 800 Euro to 3,600 Euro, which was of concern to them and may dissuade international applicants. There is an annual survey for exchange students to receive feedback to inform the Programme action plan.

g) Does the programme have international teachers delivering parts of the curriculum?

There is a confident statement in the SER (p16) as follows: *The artistic, theoretical and pedagogical practice of almost all theory and practice teaching staff is rooted in the international field of Visual Arts.* In the SER (Annex 3) are listed some Friday Lunch Talks (Painting) with invited artists from Germany, Korea, and Ireland are mentioned, and in the SER p16 we read that *232 guest speakers were invited in 2017, comprising a great diversity of backgrounds and nationalities.* However, it is not clear if these international guests delivered part of the curriculum.

h) How have teachers developed international expertise?

In SER (p16) it states that *Teachers-researchers often travel to participate in international conferences, lectures, exhibitions* and in Annex 3 are listed Visual Arts teachers' visits to International Schools. But during our visit it was not explicit how these visits contribute to developing 'International expertise'. It would be advantageous for the School of Arts to arrange for staff to share their experiences of international HE contexts and international research conferences i.e. to establish a structured process for sharing such experiences and resulting expertise.

i) Which activities does the programme organise under the umbrella 'internationalisation@home'?

We noted in the SER (p19) that **Internationalisation@home** is well established to support international cohorts. The RT highly commends the quality of the International Student *Welcome Brochure (2018-19)* for its comprehensive content and usefulness to students.

j) How does the programme organise QA on internationalisation?

Quality Assurance for the English Masters follows the same process as for the Flemish Masters. However, there is a reference to International Benchmarking in the Educational Plan (2.7), but this was not discussed during the Critical Friend visit.

2.3 Assessment

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

a) What are the methods for assessment and how do these methods show the achievement of learning outcomes?

The RT read in the SER (p19) about the assessment methods used in the Visual Arts Programme and this information was available on some (translated) unit descriptors. The methods used are common within the European HE Art and Design sector and enable achievement of learning outcomes. The RT noted the emphasis on process evaluation early in the BA, and then the shift to product evaluation in the latter stages of the Programme. The RT commend the joint evaluation of Masters students by theory and practice teachers.

b) How are they being reviewed to consider issues such as consistency and fairness?

The RT noted a lack of clarity in the Programme documentation about how the criteria of assessment (competences) are mapped to learning outcomes at both BA and MA levels though they are mapped to Programme Goals), but heard there was an appetite to address this, and therefore the RT recommends that a workshop on assessment/evaluation might be a productive staff development event to arrange in order to consider issues such as consistency and fairness and mapping of Learning Outcomes to competences, and to identify if there needs to be a grading matrix for competences in each department.

c) Are the assessment methods aligned with the teaching and learning methods/formats?

The majority of assessment methods align with teaching strategies, however, one area of challenge (SER p19) is the evaluation of group work in Autonomous Design, and the RT suggest that individual reflective learning journals - to support assessment within group work - might be introduced and rolled out to other disciplines where group work is part of the curriculum.

d) Are the assessment criteria and procedures easily accessible to and clearly defined for students and staff?

Through our meetings it became evident that an area for consideration is a common misunderstanding by students on assessment/evaluation processes, i.e. some were aware and others were not, that the competences against which they are assessed can be found on the intranet and are given at the start of each unit

e) What moderation processes are in place and does it include external input?

In terms of external input to moderation, the School of Arts has a well-established approach of including external professionals as jury members for final grading, which has helped to forge strong links to the professional field. The RT found that within this area of good practice there were nonetheless variations in the extent to which the external jury members were prepared by the School of Arts for the responsibility of participating in final grading. This is an area in which the School of Arts would benefit from the sharing of good practice across disciplines/departments and ensuring that all jury members are cognisant with the Jury Guide (SER link p19) as the external jury is responsible for the product evaluation, which is 2/3 of the result at Masters.

In meetings with teachers there were mixed views about how the consistency and parity of evaluations is ensured through internal moderation and how transparency of evaluation processes is ensured for all students. In the TPC meeting the RT heard that the *'competences can be interpreted differently from department to department'* but also a '*certain protocol'* is followed. This is an area for consideration for the School of Arts. NB: While this lack of clarity was confirmed by students in all meetings, and across disciplines, we also heard that assessment in Theory Courses was clear from a student perspective.

f) What kind of grading system is being used in examinations and assessments?

The grading system being used in examinations and assessments is based on 1-20 points with ECTS equivalence given. Some students voiced that in some disciplines it was rare to achieve a high mark, compared with other disciplines in the Visual Arts Programme (See Section 1; Programme's Goals and Context). The definitions of the 1-20 scale do not appear to be linked to the competences.

h) Are students provided with timely and constructive feedback on all forms of assessments?

The students reported that they valued formative feedback as a very productive way to enhance their on-going learning, but that summative written feedback was somewhat inconsistent.

Additionally, the RT were surprised to understand how many BA students decide to postpone exams in Theory until the following year, with implications for the duration of the degree registration. The SER (p19) notes that this is a particular challenge in Photography and this was confirmed in the RT's meeting with students that this is due to a high workload of practical assignments. The RT see an area for consideration is for the School of Arts to review parity of workload across disciplines and departments. The theory 'delay' was also discussed at the meeting with TPC members and we heard it is on the TPC agenda.

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 programme

a) Does the programme have clear and appropriate criteria for admissions?

A policy paper from November 2017, dealing with the admissions process, has been made available to the RT during our site visit *(Artistieke Toelatingsproeven en Orienteringscommissies*, Flemish only). It refers back to a policy paper from 2012, which planned to put a focus on language skills, a general theoretical part and initial competencies. The 2017 paper states that language skills are tested in a motivational interview now and that theoretical skills are demonstrated through a written test and screened through the presence of a member of the theory-teaching team in the admission juries. The project to refine a list of initial competencies has been put on hold due to funding and staffing issues. The policy paper 2017-2018 points out that the previously existing differences in approaching admissions across the School of Arts have been evened out and that focus now lies on further professionalisation of the process and the participating jury members. This includes enhanced communication with applicants before and after the admissions process (p5).

Bachelor
The current admissions process appears to follow national rules. The SER (p20) describes it for the BA as follows: *In order to enrol at the bachelor level students must hold a Belgian secondary school diploma or an equivalent thereof, and pass an artistic admission exam in the presence of a jury. Separate exams are organized for each specialism of the Visual Arts …. The written test is identical for all academic candidate students.*

Master
Next to the Masters, taught in Flemish, an English-speaking pathway has been established. Over the past three academic years an average of 28% of the total student population (687 in 2017 - 18) have been enrolled on the master route. Within the master route an average of 77% follow the Flemish pathway and 23% the English pathway. Although the application procedures for the Master level is separated from the bachelor, the information on the School of Arts' website (https://www.schoolofartsgent.be/en/education/courses) indicates, that the master is closely connected to the studios and disciplines, that means also to the bachelors. While Fine Art and Graphic Design devote an extra paragraph to the master route, other specialisms like Photography, Fashion and Textile Design only mention the master option *en passant*. This illustrates that the master routes have been developed in house in the studios and specialisms and still have not started to maintain and autonomous position in the School of Arts. The establishment of the English master therefore is an important development to give the master level an academic importance on their own.

For the Master in fine arts the school's website informs (https://www.schoolofartsgent.be/en/education/courses/fine-arts):

…Students choose the mentors who will support their development and act as a sounding board. …Frequent consultations and contact with the other master students guarantees an open and fresh view of one's own working process. In the master cycle, the testing and nourishing of the individual artistic practice is explicitly done in relation to the professional field…This entire process results in a completed graduation project that is evaluated by experts from the field: gallery owners, museum directors, critics and artists.

And for the English master (https://www.schoolofartsgent.be/en/education/courses/english-master) *The School of Arts offers English-language master cycle in the visual arts, audiovisual arts, drama and music. …The presence of students from different international backgrounds is an enrichment for our educational tradition …The programme is organised so as to facilitate encounters between Dutch-speaking and English-speaking students in informal contexts, in seminars and courses, and even in artistic projects they start up together. …*

We learned during our site visit that a shared studio for all master students has been made available, but found on site, that most students still work in the specialist studios, where they have started their bachelor studies. This could indicate, that master studies are still often seen as a prolongation of the bachelor studies, rather than preparing a new and different level of competencies.

The application guidelines 2018 - 2019 Master in Visual & Audiovisual Arts, Master in Drama were handed out to the RT in an English version. As the English master mirrors the Flemish master, it is assumed that the application process is the same. On the School of Arts' website admissions information is nested under the heading education and gives factual information about the process only. (https://www.schoolofartsgent.be/en/education/admission-tests/dates-and-information-orientation-tests-master-and-advanced-master-programm). Once entry qualification is given - Belgian bachelor diploma or an equivalent international diploma - the procedure divides into a master proposal, a portfolio and an interview with Orientation Committee (which is only advisory). The guidelines include detailed advice for the master proposal and for the portfolio.

The students we met showed great loyalty to the school. They acted Intelligently and spoke confidently in our meetings. In many cases we heard that the generous facilities of the School of Arts and the closeness between teachers and students was what attracted applicants in the first place. Alumni expressed their appreciation of the close follow up they received as students.

But also the content of the teaching in some of the specialisms and studios was mentioned as a reason for choosing the School of Arts. For example, Fashion Design was mentioned as more experimental than in other places. Even autonomous design, although hard to grasp as a discipline/specialism title, attracted students specifically because the relative vagueness of it its description allows students to be proactive in forming their own understanding of it. The master cohort appreciates the opportunity to choose mentors and the increased freedom. The recently enhanced and improved theory curriculum has been highlighted as a great improvement by students, alumni and external partners.

b) In what ways do the entrance requirements assess the abilities (artistic/technical/academic/ pedagogical) of the applicants to successfully complete the study programme?

Annex 2 of the SER provides statistical data for the BA. According to this 61% of the applicants have been admitted to the BA for the academic year 2017-18 (same as 2016-17). This is based on 514 registered applicants in total. From the 371 applicants present for the admission-juries 225 students have been accepted. The table in Annex 2 also provides the RT with a breakdown of admission numbers per specialism and studio. While some specialisms receive many applications (graphic design 100 applicants present with 52% passed, Photography 70 applicants present with 77% passed and painting 44 applicants present with 50% passed), others have very low numbers of applications and accordingly a very high pass rate (Media Art 12 applicants present with 100% passed and installation art with 9 applicants present and 78% passed). The picture is similar for the process of 2016 - 17: Media art 12 applicants present with 75% passed and Installation Art 7 applicants present with 100% passed. The pass rate is also fairly high with Textile Design: 88% in 2017 (out of 16) and 85% in 2016 (out of 13) and in Sculpture: 75% both in 2017 and in 2016 (out of 12 {2017} and out of 8{2016}). The low application rates could point to a high level of motivation and competent applicants. But it could also highlight that the differences which are meant to be evened out, as the policy paper from November 2017 states (p6, see also above) are still existing. This is probably a result of the strategy to run fairly autonomous specialised studios. We must ask the question if it is "easier to get in" with some studios than with others? Small application rates also lead to small student cohorts in some fields. This is not only fairly expensive, it also can lead to a serious undercut of what one would call a necessary critical mass. A minimum group size in a student cohort is necessary to maintain the qualitative rigour of learning and teaching at this higher education level (See also Section 1; Programme Goals and Context)

The RT learned that the BA application process in Fine art is currently under review. Principles and criteria are in place, but what is being discussed, is whether admittance to Fine Art should abandon entry to only one specialism. The RT applauds the Department team for having this discussion and observes that it might be time to give longstanding traditions a thorough review.

Most of the students of the Flemish MA that the RT met informed us that they have completed their BA at the School of Arts as well. Staff informed us that Belgian students have a right to a place on the MA in the discipline or field of their BA studies (see also Section 1 of this report). This can be seen as in conflict with the expectation that the master cycle of studies in Visual Arts introduces a significant step change in competencies and as such differs clearly from the BA cycle. Admission to the English Master is based on a clear master proposal and a portfolio. The entry process to the Flemish MA involves a proposal and portfolio but the Orientation Committee acts only in an advisory capacity.

c) Who is involved in the applicant selection procedure?

Admissions juries for BA artistic entrance exams include external members from the professional field (SER p10 and meetings with External stakeholders) as well as teachers representing the specialism.

3.2 Student progression, achievement and employability

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

a) How are student progression and achievement monitored within the programme?

Informal review and feedback is intense. This is a strong quality of the programme. The close follow up of students stands for a deep engagement with their individual progress. In some conversations the RT had during the site visit, it has been highlighted that the development of an "attitude" is more in the foreground than artistic accomplishment or artistic products. Students are closely monitored by their teachers, coaches and the study counsellor. All this ensures that it cannot be a surprise, if a student is losing her or his track. Learning in the arts does not function as a simple accumulative progress.

The SER (p20) also states, that *only 47% of the students manage a graduation in three years*. *About one third of the students take 4 years.* Only *25% of the* master *students manage graduation within the year, 69% take two years, 6% three years.* For the English master *21% take three years* (See Table 5 in Annex 2). This raises some concern for the RT. It could mean that the workload is too high, that students postpone the more difficult and challenging parts of the curriculum (i.e. theory) or that students feel so comfortable in the microclimate of their studios, that they are reluctant to leave and face the challenges of professional practice. A more formalised process of progress review as mentioned above could help to monitor motives for the extended study period and to develop measures to counteract.

b) What are the recognition mechanisms (prior learning, study abroad)?

It is widely acknowledged in Higher Arts Education that learning can meander and that doubts, ups and downs, even making mistakes are substantial ingredients. Such an entangled process however requires strict discipline and self-motivation from students at all levels. It also requires, formal checks of achievements and progression, which support the student. A clear and transparent description of how the individual learning achievements are perceived by teachers and others at specific moments in the course of studies (end of a semester or end of year) is necessary for the students to feel safe in their learning progress. Such a description must be comparable between specialisms, disciplines and studios, since all aim for the same general competencies.

For International students studying at the School of Arts there is Learning Deposit scheme (See Welcome Brochure p10). The RT did not hear how credits are given for study abroad by home students.

The SER informs that dropout rates are fairly low: 3% at bachelor level, 3% and master level and 5% at the English master level. The SER (p21) highlights that *Dropout figures (however) are always incomplete, as only the students who actively unregister, enter the statistics, whereas other students simply disappear from the radar.* Still we can assume that a high percentage of students complete studies to the degree end (See Tables 5 and 6 Annex 2)

c) Is there a policy for data collection on alumni and what information does the programme collect on the professional activities/employment of the students after they complete the programme, and how is this information used?

The SER (p21) quotes the quinquennial alumni survey stating that 74% of the former master students are active in the professional field.

d) Are graduates successful in finding work/building a career in today's highly competitive creative industries?

Annex 5 shows the diverse career destinations of Alumni and this is supported by including a number of elements across the Programme preparing for professional practice such as internships and Design projects with partners from the cultural industries. In the conversations with representatives from the professional field the RT learned that external partners cherish the qualities of the team of teachers. They see the on-going re-composition of the staff team as positive and welcome for example the revised theory curriculum content. Although they appreciate the competencies of students, when they meet them during internships, they hope that an even more realistic understanding of the professional art world would help students even more to establish a professional career. After all, future artists should have the skills and the confidence to influence and shape which course the professional art world might take (See also Section 2.1 of this report).

e) What range of creative practice arenas do graduates have jobs in immediately after graduation and later and f) How do graduates contribute to the enhancement of cultural life locally, nationally and internationally?

Annex 5 profiles the rich activities of graduates though website links and *Linkedin* pages and includes varied professional practices from: Wildlife Photography; to working for a footwear Foundation; to being a practicing graphic designer and performer; to being a published illustrator. These graduate destinations take place in international, national and regional contexts. The representatives of the Professional field were generally enthusiastic of the ways in which the graduates contribute to cultural life locally, and we heard that they enter the cultural life of Belgium to a fairly high degree.

4. Teaching staff

4.1 Staff qualifications and professional activity

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

a) How does the institution ensure that all members of the programme's teaching staff have appropriate qualifications as educators?

The RT finds the description in the SER to be an accurate description of the ways in which the institution ensures that all members of the Programme's teaching staff have appropriate qualifications as educators and considers that this standard is met by the School of Arts in a way that is in agreement with the specific legal requirements.

As stated in the SER (p22), *the School of Arts finds it essential to embed the professional field by recruiting active artists to pass on their expertise and experience through teaching. By recruiting amongst active artists, the school guarantees the development of artistic and professional knowledge in their teaching staff. Educational qualifications are part of the job application conditions, are analysed during selection and recruitment procedure, monitored through student surveys, self-evaluation procedures and evaluations by the head of the departments.*

Most of the teaching staff members at the School of Arts are active artists, art professionals and/or researchers. The School of Arts offers several opportunities for its teachers to pursue their own research, in various institutional formats: *PhD in the Arts (as institutional collaboration between the school and the Ghent university, within the frame of which the development of the teacher's own artistic practice is recognized as the main goal, while at the same time coming under active, critical, and theoretical reflection); postdoctoral research, based on individual oeuvre and leading to its positioning in the wider artistic field and to production of specific publications; specific research projects, either by member of teaching staff or by employed researchers* (SER p22).

b) Is there an institutional strategy that supports and enhances the teaching staff's artistic/pedagogical/ research activity?

Facilities such as *Biolab* and *Formlab* are also available to teachers, although the activities within these facilities are not necessarily governed by a structured research strategy that the teachers would be informed about, thus flexibility and individual initiative are prioritised over some structural, overarching coherence of teaching staff's research activities. While such flexibility is positive as far as it ensures the focus on individual, original artistic production and reflection upon and through art, the institution might benefit from shaping a clearer research policy, more structured and articulated, which would be susceptible of ensuring that the material and human resources are used more efficiently, thus providing the institution with more significant benefits of research activities, also in the ways in which staff's research could be usefully embedded in the pedagogical activities.

The practice of allotting teaching tasks to researchers is a significant feature of the pedagogy in the School of Arts, and is generally praised by students and alumni of the institution (see also Section 2.1). Each studio has at least one PhD working as a teacher. On the other hand, if a teacher is involved in research projects (funded by the School of Arts KASK or from other sources), his or her teaching tasks can be reduced, to allow the necessary time to properly conduct the research, or the research can be quantified as an increase in the individual's FTE. However, teachers conduct research based on their own willingness and interests, as there are no mandatory requirements in

this regard and no clearly structured guidance or incentive policy aimed at actively encouraging their involvement in research activities.

c) Is there a policy in place for continuing professional development of teaching staff?

The pedagogical activities of the teaching staff are supported by competent administrative staff, who tend to the specific needs of the departments on their request. Activities such as study trips with students are in various amounts funded by the institution, as a means of enhancing the teaching staff's array of pedagogical instruments and approaches. Training focusing on improving the pedagogical competences of the teachers is not directly offered or coherently funded by the institution, nor is there a clear policy in place aimed at supporting teaching staff to gain further teaching experience in other higher education institutions, although this practice is informally encouraged and praised, as it resulted from discussions that the RT had with teachers during the site visit.

As artists, most of the teachers at the School of Arts are active participants to the local, regional and international art scene. Their artistic practice and its development is not directly supported by the institution, however, the artistic practice of teachers is praised by it, the School of Arts' very commitment to employing active artists and professionals being testament to it.

The School of Arts highly values its teaching staff and makes efforts to ensure that their developmental needs are addressed. However, the ways in which this is undertaken by the institutions are shaped by an *"on-demand only"* (SER p23), general, informally constituted policy. Apart from this tailored approach, *the school is exploring the possibility to set up more formalized and clearly structured peer-to-peer learning processes, where teachers of different programme levels and disciplines meet each other and discuss relevant topics, resulting in written reports that can be consulted by other teachers, as well as the possibility of organizing workshops together with other higher education of the arts institutions* (SER p22). The RT believes that such strategies and similar others, pertaining to a more structured approach to professionalisation of teaching staff, might be something that the School of Arts could productively reflect upon, as was suggested for that matter also during the meetings the team had with members of the teaching staff during the site visit.

The School of Arts funds teachers in their individual professionalisation efforts and supports teachers' mobility. The School of Arts' support for endeavours that would contribute to the continuing professionalisation of the teaching staff manifests itself in the form of individual, tailored actions. Small research grants are available to teachers, based on individual applications and the school has broadly defined major research areas. Documentary or study trips are also funded by the school, on request by the departments or by members of the teaching staff, who take such opportunities when compelled by their professional, artistic or pedagogical interests and goals. Still, no active incentives or guidance for organising the individuals research are provided by the institution, this being an area in which a more structured approach to professionalisation might bring significant improvements.

d) How are teaching staff engaged in the different activities of the institutions (committees, concerts, organisation of events, etc.)?

Collaboration and discussions between teachers, especially within the departments, the exchange of opinions about professional life and educational approaches are seen by many of them as useful instruments to improving the quality of their teaching. Collaborations across departments though are not so intense and most of the times are depending on individual initiatives. Also, the particular results of such good professional practice are not broadly disseminated throughout the school.

Gathering experience in other educational institutions (which is planned to happen on more regular basis in the future) is another instrument for continuing professionalisation that appears to be currently used rather sporadically.

Overall, the teachers feel they have the support of the institution, when they express their intention to improve their professional abilities, and a sense of being part of a family came across during the mentioned meetings. Besides the general benefits of this feeling, it was difficult for them to actually pinpoint the strategies that the institution deploys in order for their professionalisation to be furthered. The feeling of ownership was often emphasised during the meetings with teaching staff as being particular to the School of Arts and being particularly valuable to them. As this atmosphere can definitely be empowering and beneficial, it nevertheless presents its risks, such as reducing the institution's capacity for accurately identifying what could be more general or more pressing needs of the teaching staff in terms of professionalisation and for addressing them systemically and coherently.

The feeling of ownership previously mentioned plays an instrumental role in the ways in which teachers in the School of Arts actively and often enthusiastically get involved in the activities of the institution. The teaching staff have an important voice in shaping the curriculum and the pedagogical practices within the departments, and their opinion is being voiced at several levels, from the departmental one to that of the Training Programme Commission. This committee assumes, according to its members, the task of ensuring checks and balances and of providing a wide forum for discussion with regard to the curriculum.

The Training Programme Commission meets when necessary, though it is not very clear as to exactly what are the circumstances that make the meeting necessary. Changes in the curriculum and other activities are openly discussed within the departments, with teachers feeling that they have a strong voice and that their initiatives, including those who involve change, are being supported by the institution. Small changes in the curriculum or in the format of the courses offered by teachers are operated quite efficiently; however, there is a sense among teachers that more important, structural changes sometimes take longer than it would be necessary and optimally to be effected, due to certain complicatedness of 'bureaucratic procedures'.

Teachers are mostly involved in the educational activities and artistic or cultural events organised by/within their departments, and the School of Arts comes across as a very active institution in this respect. Also, teachers are involved in some of the very successful and open to the public events and activities organised by the institution, such as *KASKcinema* or exhibitions on the institution's premises. However, activities of the one department are not well known by the teaching staff of other departments, no formal platforms for sharing them across departments exist. When events are organised in collaboration between staff and students across departments, individual initiative is the most important driver of such endeavours.

Sometimes teachers are involved in organising students' internships and they ensure the contact between the department and the partners in the art world and the creative industries, but the practice is not general, nor is it formalised. Some of the professionals and employers that the RT met during the site visit acknowledged the usefulness of the teachers' involvement in such activities and expressed their willingness to take into account teachers' recommendations when choosing to collaborate with the School of Arts' students or young graduates.

Critical thinking and critical reflection have been repeatedly mentioned, in the meetings that the RT had with members of staff and with students during the site visit, as essential components of the educational processes deployed at the School of Arts. The institution is significantly successful in

forging an environment of openness that is certainly a factor positively impacting this internal culture of reflectiveness and critical (self)awareness.

e) How are teaching staff encouraged to engage in on-going critical reflection and to develop this quality in their students?

Teachers engage in critical discussion with the students both about their work and the underlying thinking of their artistic production and about the social, political, and cultural dimension of the contemporary world. Students in several departments reported that these discussions are particularly useful in developing their ability for critical reflection, but also that the process conducted by the teachers is such that critical thinking has a community feel to it, that it has a lot more to do with encouragement towards personal development than with a negative critique of their work. Also, many students perceive the role assumed by the teachers as that of providing "tough love" and opportunities for dialogue and debate, both being conducive to developing flexibility of thinking, openness to the world and to change, as well as self-reflectiveness.

Graduates with whom the RT met during the site visit stated their belief that self-reflectiveness and critical thinking were important competences that are provided by the educational processes undertaken at the School of Arts, this being something that is actually specific to the institution's profile. The same capacity for critical reflection, and appreciation for how teachers at the School of Arts encourage and guide their students towards developing it, has been emphasised by professionals and employers with whom the RT met. Also, double mentorship has come up repeatedly, in the discussions taking place during the site visit, as a good practice, fostering students' critical reflection upon their work, supported by multiple perspectives, which can be provided by multiple teachers.

4.2 Size and composition of the teaching staff body

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

a) How does the programme ensure that the number and experience of teaching staff are adequate to cover the volume and range of disciplines?

The School of Arts has a dedicated teaching staff, composed of artists, researchers and art professionals with remarkable professional experience and reputation. The school combines teaching staff with guest teachers, and each year the staffing organisation is made to match the programme, its needs and means. *In the academic year 2017-2018 Visual Arts had 73 FTE (90 FTE including research), involving around 143 teachers and 33 researchers* (SER p22). The teaching staff carry on practical and theoretical pedagogical activities, which offer the students a mix of approaches and competences that is generally appreciated, as has been pointed out in discussions that the RT had with students, graduates and employers.

Vacancies are written out by the chairman of the department, are published and communicated in and outside the institution. On each occasion a specific selection committee with relevant actors is composed (usually someone from the programme, the chairman of the department, HR, and the dean) taking into account the gender balance (SER p22). The composition of the committees is conducive of an adequate and fair evaluation of applicants and it provides the departments with significant autonomy in staffing according to their specific needs.

As can be noticed from these numbers, the institution favours a policy of employing teachers with small contracts (smaller than 1 FTE). This policy fosters diversity of contributions and approaches, as more professionals are involved in the educational processes. However, it is the same approach that leads to the questions about whether such small contracts (especially those bellow 0.5 FTE) are actually enabling the desired commitment from the part of the teachers and whether the staff employed on such contracts actually spent enough time in the institution in order for them to form meaningful collaborative connections with their peers and students, questions upon which the institution could productively reflect.

Some departments come across as being better staffed than others, as in some situations teachers who retired were not fully replaced. Retirement is a vulnerability to be taken into consideration especially when one looks at a department where several members of the staff are about the same age and consequently retire about the same time, which may lead to (temporary, yet unwanted) gaps in diversity and complexity of teaching.

b) How does the programme ensure that the number and experience of teaching staff are adequate to cover the volume and range of disciplines?

The School of Arts is focused on responding adequately to the changes and developments taking place in the professional world and in the artistic environment, by including teaching staff with specialisms in fields that are currently becoming more prominent or relevant in the local or regional artistic, cultural life and in the area of creative industries. Bringing in specialists to cover such fields, albeit for smaller contracts or as guest lecturers (who would provide very specific knowledge, obtained by hands-on, individual professional experience), is a way for the institution to remain flexible and up to date. Thus, it is indeed the case that *the staffing organisation is flexible throughout the year and allows for short recruitments and guest lecturers for workshops* (SER p23)

As attested by students, as well as employers and professionals, the teaching staff of the institution are characterised by openness and flexibility. This is actually perceived as one of the School of Arts' main features as an institution, making it stand out in the field of higher artistic education in Belgium. Teachers here are generally open, available to discuss students' interests and ideas, willing to foster change and to think outside the box. Some of the members of the teaching staff had previous, positive professional contacts with the school from the perspective of membership in graduation juries or curators of students' exhibitions and express experiences which have provided them both with knowledge about and appreciation of the quality of the School of Arts.

The flexibility of employment policy and the institution's willingness to bring in experienced and respected professionals with specific and valuable knowledge are aspects of its recruitment policy that contribute to fostering new developments within its programme. One cannot help but notice that a large number of the members of the teaching staff have been recruited from the pool of the School of Arts' graduates, sometimes at a relatively short time after graduation.

c) How does the recruitment policy foster new developments within the programme?

In the meetings that the RT had with members of the teaching staff, these teachers came across as positive and enthusiastic about the opportunity they have to contribute to the bettering of the institution and about the chance they have to work with a dynamic and stimulating body of students. This recruitment policy is definitely susceptible of fostering the sense of ownership among the teaching staff and of developing that family feeling that was already mentioned, which definitely has its positive side, but might also come with some problems.

From this perspective, the institution might find it useful to reflect upon whether employing graduates of its own on a regular basis is an appropriate instrument for fostering new developments within the programme. Younger graduates rapidly becoming members of the teaching staff may not be able to bring along the professional prestige and valuable professional experience that come out of being tested in the “real” professional and artistic world. Also, some of them might find difficulty, in terms of both knowledge and authority, to challenge, when this may seem appropriate, the existing teaching formats and educational framework, as they are lacking comprehensive knowledge of different ones, the implementation of which might bring beneficial change and a renewed dynamic to the institution.

Most teaching positions at the School of Arts start as temporary, but the norm is that they become permanent positions after a few years. This is susceptible both to increase the sense of ownership amongst staff and to give rise to some difficulties when it comes to employing new staff members. As the old teachers retain their position, new ones, needed to cover specific areas of interest and competence may be more difficult to employ, without the departments being financially burdened to some extent.

5. Facilities, resources and support

5.1 Facilities

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

a) Are the building facilities (teaching and practice studios, lecture and seminar rooms, workshops, exhibition venues, IT and library facilities, etc.) appropriate to the needs of the professional world?

Overall, the School of Arts' infrastructure is impressive and adequate for supporting and facilitating the good quality of the teaching and research activities within the institution. Investments in the infrastructure lead to its significant improvement, as pointed out in the SER (p26): *last ten years considerable investments in infrastructure throughout the school were made. This resulted in two herculeslabs (specifically equipped for research projects), new buildings, restauration of buildings and the establishment of a professional exposition infrastructure (Zwarte Zaal, KASKcinema, Galerie, MAP, etc.). The latter also plays an important role in the programme's aim to expose both students and the general public to contemporary developments in the arts*. This improvement also came across during the discussion the RT had with students and graduates. In the case of several BA specialisms, the students stated that one of the important features of the School of Arts that attracted them to the school was its complex infrastructure and its availability to students.

Generally, the studio spaces in the School of Arts are generous and fit for purpose, the total area of the studios in relation to the total number of students is quite impressive and the technical facilities are up to date and fit for supporting the artistic production of the students and the research activities carried on within the institution.

The organisation of the studio spaces would probably benefit though from further reflection and some re-organising and perhaps reallocations. While some studios are exceptionally generous and well equipped, a few others seem to actually lack enough space, in order to ensure the good quality of the teaching and learning processes, among which are the Sculpture studio and the Fashion Design studio. In recent years, the school has initiated more and more specialisms, without reorganising the structure of the already existing ones, which might have led to this kind of structural and organisational difficulties in terms of studio space and facilities.

The architecture of the School of Arts' buildings mostly encourages interaction between various members of the academic community. The *KASK Café* is appreciated by the students as a good place for social interaction and it also offers the opportunity for part time jobs for some of the students. Several departments have a common space, which is open to both teachers and students. These spaces are considered by staff and students to play a significant and beneficial role in facilitating the interaction between them, in providing a good context for discussions on a day-to-day basis and for strengthening their collaborative relationships.

Although the MA in Fine Arts has a unified title, students are actually pursuing their artistic goals and research (when it is the case) in the studios of the departments in the framework of which the Bachelors are functioning. The possibilities for collaborations between MA students are limited by the lack of studio/studios designated and equipped for the specific purpose of encouraging MA students to work together, which is, as both management and teaching staff claim, an important aim and thus should probably be an important feature of the unified MA.

The exhibition spaces developed in the School of Arts are adequate for hosting a variety of artistic and cultural events and for fostering a dynamic, collaborative, and critically oriented atmosphere. *KASKcinema* is also fit for attracting a wider range of public audiences, both from inside and outside the institution.

b) Are the equipment/tools/machinery etc. appropriate and up to current standards to meet the demands of the professional world and c) are the computing and other technological facilities appropriate and current?

Students and teaching staff have access to the technical equipment they need and there are technical staff employed to attend to their needs, who are both qualified and dedicated. On the whole, computing and technological facilities are appropriate and current. Some minor challenges may appear in situations in which there is a single person managing the whole array of a studio's technical capacities.

Research activity in the School of Arts is facilitated by the existing infrastructure. Most notably, the *Formlab* and the *Biolab* are spaces specifically designated to be used by researchers. Although the spaces allocated to them are really small, much of the technology they are endowed with is capable of fostering investigative artistic approaches to various media and to support research projects of the School of Arts' teachers and students. Currently, there is no clear policy in place regarding the research activities at the School of Arts and particularly regarding the use of the mentioned research facilities, who supports the members of the teaching staff and researchers in a tailored manner, based on the expressed individual needs and requirements.

d) Are the library resources (IT, VLE, book-stock, journals) and services appropriate?

The School of Arts KASK library resources are adequate for supporting the quality of the teaching, learning and documentation activities and the RT saw a list of publications on artistic research. Recent publications and journals in the field of contemporary art are available, and several collections, like the SMAK collection are also hosted by the library and available to students, teachers and researchers. According to students who met with the RT during the site visit, the library is also open to purchase new books, if particular requests are being put forward. For students whose studios are located outside the *Bijloke* campus, the library is slightly out of reach, but no significant effort is required in order to access it. It might be of even better use for the students and teachers if some rearrangements of the on-site study spaces would be taken into account, along with equipping them with adequate IT facilities.

e) Does the programme utilise a VLE (e.g. Moodle) to support the students learning?

In the SER (p14) it states that: *Ghent University College provides a* ***virtual learning environment****. Students can find information and documentation, contribute assessments, discuss with teachers and co-students via Chamilo.hogent.be.* In the SER (p9) the RT read that in addition to *Chamilo* being a platform for learning *the school spreads calls for external contests, vacancies and other opportunities on the electronic learning environment Chamilo*. The RT did not hear that students use *Chamilo* extensively, but prefer the interface with staff in the studios.

5.2 Financial resources

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

a) How does the institution ensure sustainable funding to run its programme(s)?

It is clear from the SER, that the School of Arts is overwhelmingly relying on public funding for running its operations and this funding appears to be in principle sufficient for meeting the financial needs of the institution. *More than 90% of the school's income is provided by the Flemish government, with as little as 2% of the resources being drawn out of autonomously obtained funds, by means of monetization of services provided by the institution* (SER p26). Nevertheless, while the governmental commitment to supporting the higher education institutions is definitely welcomed, it involves some risks also, particularly when the funding system runs into administrative or procedural errors.

This has already happened, as in recent years the School of Arts has been negatively affected by a six years long miscalculation of the allotted budget by the government, which caused a loss of around six million euros, the reimbursement of the sum being currently negotiated by the School of Arts, but with no certainty of a positive outcome. Under these circumstances, although the general situation of the School of Arts is solid in terms of finances, strategies to prevent or cope with undesirable situations that might be independent of the institution's will or capacities for action would most likely be useful to be designed.

Also, other situations may affect the stability of the school's budget, as it is the following, described in the SER: *The budget for 2019 is essentially in balance, yet this structural balance is very fragile as the allocated finances do not match completely with the wage indexing. Several budgets remain too low to meet all internal and external expectations, leaving little space to focus on such strategic plans as innovation, experiment, professionalization and sustainability* (SER p26).

b) How are decisions taken to allocate resources for study programme(s)?

The institution's budget is divided into three main categories of expanses, namely staff, infrastructure and investments (SER p25). Departments are funded individually, which allows for certain autonomy, along with fostering responsibility. The ways in which the budget is being managed allows for flexibility, the management of the school being open to adjusting expenses according to some specific needs of the departments, when they are analysed and considered to be of high priority. Like in other areas of the school's general management, tailored solutions appear to be the favoured ways of action in case of budgeting, too, as this has been described by members of management and financial staff as being an on-going process of adjustment in terms of needs, changes and manageability.

While this approach has its clear advantages in terms of flexibility, it may also lead to a (perceived) lack of clarity in budget decision-making. The processes of decision making also appear to sometime take too long (from proposal to decision to implementation). The institution might find it beneficial to set in place a clearer guiding policy for budgeting, based on some concrete parameters such as the number of students and the number of FTEs in the departments, as well as the departments' specific technological needs, when particularly relevant.

c) What are the key features for long-term financial planning and d) Does the programme have sufficient resources for its effective delivery?

Proliferation of specialisms might lead to financial challenges, if it is unchecked and not paralleled or complemented by a coherent strategic policy of restructuring. Having a certain number of students in each studio and in each discipline seems to be understood at various levels of the institution as a default requirement. Under these circumstances, the natural result of opening new areas of study is that the number of students increases with time, and may exceed the total number for which the institutional budget can ensure a high-quality learning experience.

Currently, as the RT has learned from meetings with the management and financial representatives of the School of Arts, that it is funded from public resources for 24000 ECTS/academic year (roughly corresponding to around 450 students), while already the School runs up to 27000 ECTS/academic year (roughly corresponding to around 600 students, which are currently enrolled by the School of Arts KASK). If the increase in number of students follows the current trend (without the governmental funding being increased, if the current legislation would allow it), the School of Arts might reach some unwanted financial pressures, given also the particular situation of the Masters, in the case of which the institution doesn't really have instruments to place limits on the number of admitted students, given the current legislative requirements and government finance models.

It is of course commendable that the School of Arts is a dynamic institution, willing and able to initiate new disciplines or specialisms in response to evolutions in the professional world, the industry and the cultural and artistic environment. However, a more coherent policy in this respect might be very beneficial to the School of Arts in terms of its financial stability and efficiency, one that would involve the rethinking of the programme's structure in more complex and versatile ways than the simple addition to new specialisms and disciplines to the existing structure.

5.3 Support staff

Standard: the programme has sufficient qualified support staff

a) Are there sufficient qualified support staff (technical, administrative, non-teaching staff, etc.) to support the teaching, learning and artistic activities of the programme?

The support staff at the School of Arts are qualified and dedicated, being in close contact with the departments, collaborating and offering technical advice in order to improve the quality of the learning and teaching processes.

Aside from the technical staff that are part of the Deanery (SER p25: *The deanery comprises the following numbers: administrative 27,6 FTE, infrastructure (cleaning, technical support, reception): 24,5 FTE, and library staff: 5,4 FTE. Administrative and technical staff comprise 17% of the total staff of the School of Arts*), the departments have the option of employing additional support staff, in order to cover specific technical needs involved by the activities in which they engage. This kind of employment would have to be made in the limits of the existing departmental budget.

More technical staff would be welcomed, according to the technical staff that were interviewed during the site visit by the RT, however the current functioning of the School of Arts appears to be well served by the existing personnel.

Although the School of Arts has employed a students' track counsellor and the person holding the position is active, qualified and enthusiastic, the area of career counselling is not covered by this post. A supplementation of the support staff in this area might prove to be beneficial, especially aiming at helping students with career counselling (See also Section 2.1 of this report). This would be

especially useful, given that MA students and graduates repeatedly expressed their wish to have/have had more support from the School of Arts in understanding the “real world”, in addition to that provided in course units. They also requested more psychological counselling.

b) Are policies in place for continuing professional development of support staff?

Individual initiatives towards professional development of the support staff are being supported by the institution, but there is currently no structured policy in place to regulate or to encourage this kind of initiatives.

6. Communication, organisation and decision-making

6.1 Internal communication process

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

a) How does the programme communicate with its students and staff?

The RT found that there are a number of means by which the Visual Arts programme communicates with its students, from the formal context of student representation on the Training Programme Committee, to Focus Groups which the RT heard, through various meetings, are used (as necessary) to: create a space for student consultation in response to specific matters that may arise though student complaints; address teachers' concerns; consider students' suggestions; and monitor action plans. They are also arranged to discuss major changes to the programme (see also this report 2.1 above). Following the meeting with the QA Coordinator the RT suggest an area for consideration is to introduce a clear process for letting students know the outcomes of the Focus Groups, even if there is a delay in the feedback being available.

Once students have their HOGENT account they can access e-mail, *Chamilo*, *iBamaflex* and the available apps (SER p26) and receive regular newsletters. An intranet is in development for internal communications, there is a public *Facebook* page to share events, and the website is going to be renewed.

Staff receive regular newsletters (SER p26), as well as communication of the Board of the School of Arts and the Executive Board. An annual report is also made. The RT found during its meeting with co-ordinators and teachers that the frequency of informal and formal meetings held in Fine Art represents good practice. In the SER (p19) there is an acknowledgement that communications in the Programme can be improved regarding *'the 'horizontal' organisation of responsibilities'* to ensure that both students and staff know who to contact about which matters.

b) How do students and staff communicate?

The RT heard that the students favour face-to-face communications with their teachers rather than using the digital platforms for raising matters and students reported being able to raise any concerns informally with their teachers. They confirmed to the RT that student matters are readily resolved through this process, which is an area of good practice. However, the RT concluded that this method of addressing student concerns may depend overly upon the close relationships forged by the teachers with students and might be complimented by a regular staff /student forum, as a way of improving parity of communication (see also Section 7 of this report). The RT also noted during its meeting with both the students and Quality Assurance Coordinator that whilst online surveys are employed and are used in the metrics, they are not considered as insightful as face to face methods and students suffer from *Survey Fatigue* (SER p28).

c) How does the programme communicate with part- time and hourly-paid teaching and non-teaching staff and with external collaborators (guest teachers, examiners, etc.)?

The Resonance Committee provides a productive formal communication structure with external partners, although the SER notes (p28) that some professional field committees should be organised on a more regular basis. The RT heard from coordinators and teachers, as well as from external partners that there exist strong professional links and communications are regular and close although not formalised.

d) How does the programme ensure the continued effectiveness of its communication systems?

The RT heard in the meeting with Technical and Administrative staff that there has been a recent focus on external communications in order to promote the School of Arts to new students, find cinema and concert audiences and to generally raise the visibility of what the school has to offer, but now the focus is on the effectiveness of internal communications systems. In relation to both internal and external communications the RT commends that '*The school devotes a lot of attention to internal and external communication of students' artistic projects, through printed (flyers, poster, yearly Graduation-books, Onrust-magazine) and digital communication (website, newsletter, Facebook, Instagram, Vimeo)* (SER p26).

e) How do the programmes share best practice?

The interaction between teachers in the departments happens formally and informally but there does not appear to be an agreed process to share good practice, which is a missed opportunity as the RT found good practice in many areas of the Programme's work. Given that *Educational qualifications are part of the job application conditions* for staff, there could be a vibrant set of pedagogically-focussed activities implemented alongside the professionalisation agenda which is currently focussed on research opportunities and personal artistic activities. This could be productively advanced by the School of Arts, within the horizontal structure (see also Section 7 of this report).

6.2 Organisational structure and decision-making processes

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

a) What is the organisational structure of this programme and how is it linked with that of the institution?

In the SER (p27) the RT read that '*the School of Arts' organisation can be typified as rather horizontal, with limited hierarchies.* In the organigram it was clear that there are committees that are advisory such as the Training Programme Commission/Committee and Department Councils, and just one that is decision making - the School of Art Board, which sits under the decision-making Executive Board and the Board of Directors in HOGENT. The RT noted that in the SER (p26) another advisory committee - The Educational Council - is mentioned but does not appear in the organigram, nor does the Exams Commission, which confers awards. Within the Deanery are the support areas of Quality Enhancement, Student Affairs and Educational Development, Infrastructure, Finances, Artistic Activities & Communication and Research & Internationalisation.

The Visual Arts Programme is managed by the TPC and Departmental Councils within the School of Arts (SER p6) and the tasks of each of these (terms of reference) is set out at: *https://www.schoolofartsgent.be/en/about-us/policy*, though the RT found the documented membership of the TPC did not describe the constituency, just names, and was slightly out of date. This could be quickly addressed. Given the importance of the TPC for the School, an area for consideration would be for the School of Arts to publish the full regulations process for TPC membership on the intranet.

b) What are the decision-making processes within the programme?

Following meetings with teachers, coordinators, and department heads the RT recognised that the spirit of limited hierarchies is shared as an ideal across the School of Arts and noted that a bottom-up process is most evident in terms of how programme development operates, with proposals starting '*with the analysis of student and staff feedback*' (SER p12) followed through into Focus Groups, with small changes being actioned at discipline/department level while major decisions are discussed at the TPC before proceeding to the School of Arts Board for decision making. The students were not so familiar with the horizontal structure.

It was clear to the RT Team that there are some decisions that sit outside the remit of the Programme that nonetheless impact on delivery, such as the timetabling of Theory units. This is a common issue in Higher Arts Education if theory is delivered outside of the disciplines with large student groups, and the School of Arts teachers were more concerned about this than the students. We also heard from finance that decision-making processes could be improved and simplified and the RT encourages the School of Arts to take the opportunity of the Critical Friend visit to review such processes.

c) Are staff responsibilities in the programme clearly defined?

The responsibilities of senior staff are briefly outlined in the SER (p26), and the RT heard about the roles of staff comprising the Deanery. We did not see outlines of role descriptors.

d) Is there sufficient and appropriate representation (e.g. students, staff, external representatives, etc.) within the programme's organisational structure and decision-making processes?

The RT found that representation is good at the School of Arts, and that for example external stakeholders are included in the Resonance Committee. Alumni we met did voice that they would like a more formal means to contribute to the Programme. It was clear to the RT that representation on the TPC is at the very heart of the *fairly horizontal structure*. However, the RT noted during its meeting with TPC members that the way that student and staff reps were appointed for the Training Programme Commission was not made clear, nor is it available in full on the intranet (https://www.schoolofartsgent.be/en/about-us/policy). However, the procedure is outlined in the TPC regulations (version June 2018). The RT found that students did not know who their representatives on TPC are.

In meetings with Technical and Administrative staff the RT were able to understand how these support staff interact with the various committees - in mainly advisory roles, although Student Affairs have representation on TPC.

e) What evidence exists to demonstrate that the organisational structure and the decision-making processes are effective?

The School of Arts are cognisant of the need to review processes and structures and there is a healthy level of conversations taking place i.e. the School has a good level of critical self-awareness at all levels. This will ensure that efficacy of decision-making and that organisational structures are regularly evaluated. There was evidence of new curriculum developments, such as the new discipline of Performance being introduced in Fine Art that evidences that changes are introduced.

7. Internal Quality Culture

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

a) What quality assurance and enhancement procedures are in place within the programme? How often and by whom is the programme being reviewed?

In the SER (p27) it states that *The School of Arts is part of University College Ghent and bound by the procedures of the institution and the Flemish higher education legislation (see introduction to this SER).*

The internal quality assurance strategy is in line with the School of Arts' View on Education (Educational Plan) and with standard practice in European art schools. The School of Arts aims to avoid a top-down culture and allows students and teachers to be the owners of the quality process in shared responsibility. The key pivotal management element in the assurance and enhancement process is the Training Programme Commission. It provides a forum with regard to the development of new specialisms and is the main liaison group between the levels, specialisms and disciplines and their staff and students, the Dean and via the Dean, the School of Arts Board. The RT perceived a large degree of enthusiasm and a general commitment to the TPC, its role and its actions.

b) How and by whom are the quality assurance and enhancement procedures monitored and reviewed?

SER p28: The results of student surveys are discussed with chairman of the department, the programme committee, teachers involved, dean, coordinators involved (student affairs, infrastructure, internationalisation, etc.) and generate input for the action plan of the programme. The results of online surveys are also monitored and compared over the years and when needed specific focus groups are set up to clarify certain issues from the online survey feedback.

As far as the RT could ascertain the School of Arts adopts a problem-solving attitude towards enhancement that is responsive to issues as and when they arise and relies on the response and flexibility of the administrative, ancillary and teaching staff, specialisms and department heads to resolve them. This is laudable and represents a common-sense approach to programme enhancement. However, the RT suggests that the development, be considered, of a more formal procedure that would balance the assurance and enhancement process and strengthen the quality and provision of the programme. It was not clear to the RT how the peer review and monitoring processes are communicated to the TPC.

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

During the site visit the RT experienced many examples of good practice within each of the departments and specialisms that it visited and were informed about many examples during its meetings and discussions with staff and students. The SER lists many of these good examples but frequently attributes them to either one specialism or another. The RT also found that arising from the questions that it asked of staff and students there was an obvious goodwill and willingness to solve problems or discuss proposals for improvement based on the experience of good practice in either one specialism or another. Therefore, based on the dialogue it witnessed the RT concludes that some method of sharing good practice from one specialism to others would be appreciated and perhaps greeted with some enthusiasm (see Section 4.1 Teaching Staff)

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

SER p28*: The institution does not set metric benchmarks, but every six years programmes undergo a global evaluation through an **external review** (e.g. this critical friend programme review), for which the programmes make a self-evaluation.*

If the School of Arts was to develop and have available a reviewing and monitoring process where selected peer groups can act as internal reviewers of new and existing disciplines and specialisms, perhaps reporting to the TPC, then it would be necessary for the function of the monitoring process for benchmarks to be established. These benchmarks could inform the Action Plan and also provide a set of basic departmental/specialism goals.

e) What happens to the programme if they do not achieve these measures?

Within the context of the number and growth of discrete specialisms the RT inquired about the existence or development of a method of reviewing and assessing specialisms against standards or benchmarks and a method of closing unsuccessful or out-dated areas. It appears that no such method exists and that there are no plans for the development of such a process.
Employers and the RT discussed the continued viability of the multiple and growing specialisms process that the School of Arts encourages with mixed and inconclusive results. The employers also discussed the viability of the staffing issues this approach created, where employing many specialised teachers who could only be retained on small fractional salaries may not be viable for them personally and difficult for the Programme and its disciplines and specialisms. This factor also creates organisational and management issues for the elements of the programme and employment issues for the staff involved.

f) 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 programme?

SER p28: *Each specialism of the Visual Arts has a professional field commission, a group of relevant professional experts that are consulted*

It seemed to the RT that the key phrase in this statement is *the organisation thereof lies in the hands of the specialisms.* Without some regulated frequency the arrangements of some specialisms for links with the professional field the RT perceived to be informal and haphazard in frequency and process. The RT were informed by representatives from the professional fields that they met of the informal process they experienced and that whilst the representatives appreciated it, they also believed that a more organised process would be a constructive improvement and that they would appreciate a process where their contributions would have more significance.

Students also reported that they did not know of and doubted that they had available a method of suggesting changes and possible improvements to their programme other than an informal individual approach to their Head of Department or studio who they said were receptive and approachable. Whilst this method is a satisfactory way of handling individual issues, this would not appear to meet standards of satisfactory practice of student involvement in programme enhancement (See also Section 6.1 of this report). A similar informal process was apparent within the staff where very small groups of staff work within often very small, specialised units. Whilst this provides an environment where a sense of ownership is engendered an individual staff member's success is obviously dependent on personal relations, which often make dissent and the avoidance of dissent and the avoidance of possible conflict a necessity.

g) How are these procedures used to inform decision-making?

SER p28: *changes in the curriculum can only take place in the next academic year and after approval by the programme committee and the Board of the School of Arts, changes in infrastructure depend on many factors, not all of them controlled by the School of Arts.*

The RT questioned several groups of staff and students about the process and ease of changing or improving the curriculum. Mixed reactions can be reported, but it appears true to say that the syllabus content can be developed by staff whereas larger changes to curriculum need approval either by in-house processes at Department level or Training Programme Commission. It was also not clear who had the responsibility for deciding what matters needed to be referred to the Board of the School of Art and what matters could be handled in-house. The RT note that the procedure for curriculum changes does exist, but perhaps needs to be understood more widely.

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

SER p28: *Rarely is there a straight correlation between a single decision and a single form of feed-back, it therefore is not always possible to inform students and staff of how their specific input on one consultation generated changes. Interventions can require a longer time. For instance: changes in the curriculum can only take place in the next academic year and after approval by the programme committee and the Board of the School of Arts, changes in infrastructure depend on many factors, not all of them controlled by the School of Arts.*

The RT see a need to consider further a method of communicating the correlation between input from students and staff and the resulting enhancements made, despite the limitations mentioned above. The perception that consultation and suggestions are recognised as important and acted upon may be vital to encouraging the future participation and goodwill of stakeholders (see also Section 6 of this report).

i) 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)?

The overall quality culture within the programme could be characterised as being the ***individual vs. collective.*** The impression made on the RT was one of a community of staff operating in some ways perhaps as a 'commune' with a great deal of mutual respect and goodwill coming to conclusions with patient time consuming discussion and negotiation.

SER p5: *In permanent dialogue with each other, the training programme commission and the departments thus together manage the Visual Arts, but on different levels and at different speeds. The School of Arts' organisation can be typified as a fairly horizontal one, with limited hierarchies. This applies to the deanery as well as in the interaction between administration, students and teachers.*

The statement above from the SER (p5) accurately characterises the situation within the School of Arts as experienced by the RT. However, it also seems possible that a central role is that of the Chair of the Training Programme Commission (TPC) and that there are in situ positions designated as Heads of Departments (HoDs), although the Head of the Department of Design is currently vacant.

8. Public interaction

8.1 Cultural, artistic and educational contexts

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

a) Does the programme engage with the public discourse on cultural/artistic/educational policies and/or other relevant issues, and if so, how?

The main buildings of the School of Arts are located together on one site. The Bijoke Campus gives the impression of a culturally highly active Campus with a net of culturally interesting neighbours. Although we could not witness a larger public activity in person, we understand, that the public makes intensive use of the campus during activities such as the jazz festival and the annual graduation festival.

Central to the all-year activities are the exhibitions at the *KIOSK* and *Zwarte Zaal* and the showings at *KASKcinema*. The SER (p29) states that: *The school invests quite intensively in the artistic projects. Some of the artistic projects of the School of Arts (KIOSK, KASKcinema) are also partly subsidized by governmental institutions.* The programme of exhibitions and screenings has great potential to interact with the wider public.

b) What are the contributions of the programme to cultural/artistic/educational communities at the local, national and international level and c) Does the programme prepare its students to advance society through the use of their knowledge and skills, and if so, how?

Several art and culture libraries have joined forces with. the School of Arts to make their collection of books available to the public at one central location on the Bijoke Campus (i.e. the library of SMAK, stedelijk museum poor acrtuelle kunst). Also this strategy has the potential to open the campus even more for the wider public. The RT saw that the School of Arts is consciously playing a role in the public cultural life of Ghent. This gives the public an interesting insight into the life of an art school and fosters the students' understanding of their future role in public life.

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

It was not fully clear to the RT how the studios placed somewhat apart from Bijoke in the "Kunsttoren" can benefit fully of this well-designed public interaction. It also remains a challenge - for every art school - to reach beyond the public already interested in art and culture, specifically those citizens of Ghent and Belgium, who have non-Belgian roots. Since diversity has been mentioned as an important theme for the school and the arts in several conversations we had, it might be an idea to investigate, if the exhibition and film programme has the potential to be attractive also to such groups.

8.2 Interaction with the artistic professions

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

a) How does the programme engage with various sectors of the creative industries and artistic professions?

Contractually most teachers spread their attention between teaching activities at the School of Arts and their own professional practice. This gives students a clear and open window to the artistic profession. Internships and collaborations with partners from industry strengthen this interaction further. So do the courses, which *prepare the student for the professional field: 'Initiation in the professional field' and 'Arts in Practice'.* (SER p29) *The programme also stays in touch with the interests and demands of the professional field by inviting diverse kinds of experts as guest lecturers, as jury members and as members of the professional committees* (SER p29). The feedback the RT received from the representatives of the Art and Design profession underlines that the School of Arts actively seeks to establish and maintain a close link with the profession.

b) What are the long-term plans for the (continued) development of the links with the creative industries and artistic professions?

The RT also sees that the School of Arts is aware of the challenges which collaborations with external partners bring, when the SER states under strength and challenges *Cooperating with external partners can be delicate, balancing the needs of the external partner (working with people who are still in training) and the needs of the student (relevant experiences for the student and interactions that are not merely based on the premise cheap labour)* (SER p30).

c) How does the programme assess and monitor the on-going needs of the professions?

Annex 7 of the SER evidences the range of members of the Professional field (Resonance) committees with whom teachers have regular formal and informal connections. The RT heard that it is through these connections that conversations are held that inform the School of Arts of the needs of the professions, rather than through a specific analytical model. At the meetings with External professionals there were mixed views about how effective these processes currently are for ensuring the needs of the professions - from very positive, to wanting more input - as so much is dependent on informality.

d) How does the programme engage in and promote Lifelong Learning opportunities?

The RT heard at the meeting with teachers that the School has run a successful project through Textile Design with residents of Ghent coming from Turkey and Bulgaria, who have a lot of expertise in textile design, however this we understand was not attached to credits. The majority of students on the Visual Arts Programme are young, though we met some mature students who have returned to education who were making the most of this opportunity for Higher Arts Education.

e) How does the programme support students and staff to engage in external projects?

The RT found that Annex 3 evidences a wide range of interactions by students with arts organisations at international level and regionally. This is an active aspect of the School of Arts' work and is to be commended.

8.3 Information provided to the public

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

a) What resources and delivery systems are used to convey information to the public and b) How does the programme ensure that information given to the public (students, audiences, parents, arts education institutions at other levels, etc.) is consistent with the content of the programme?

The RT found that the school organises open days as source of information for potential applicants and the interested public. Information to the public follows international standards and uses *websites, brochures, newsletters, posters, a magazine, Graduation books, Instagram, Facebook and a national cultural communication network* (SER p29). This wide range of information channels is of high value and necessary. Quite a few art schools have made efforts to ensure that such information follows specific house-styles, to make clear without doubt, where the information comes from. Looking at the School of Arts' website gives rise to the impression that such a house-style needs a design overhaul and that easy navigation improves access to information on the website – a project that the RT understands is underway

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

The RT read in the SER (p29) that the School of Arts publishes a guide on all the programme content and practicalities see: https://issuu.com/schoolofartsgent/docs/1718_studiewijzer_binnen_issuu. The School of Arts updates all public facing information annually.

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

See below at 8.3e

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

See above at 8.3b

e) Which results of QA does the programme publish?

The RT read in the SER (p29) that *bearing in mind privacy issues, the school has opted not to publish student surveys online, hence data on quality assurance are not made public.*

Comments and Suggestions and Recommendations

Commendations

1. Aims of the Programme
   The Review Team recognise the student-centred focus of the Programme aims and applaud the evident idealism that the programme aims embody in trying to create a strong focus on the individual needs of each student over the duration of the programme. For example, in the diversity of minor subjects available and how well these choices work for the students to enhance their learning. This student-centred focus is well aligned to current best practice in the European Higher Education Area.

2. Working Culture
   The Review Team found that there was a general sense of a very amicable working atmosphere amongst staff and students. Staff and students met by the Review Team appeared highly committed to the programme and both concerned and conscientious in their attitude towards the development and maintenance of the standard of the programme and its educational and pastoral provision.

3. Loyalty and Commitment
   The Review Team perceived a strong sense of commitment and loyalty by staff to the institution and a strong sense of ownership of disciplines and specialisms; students generally expressed an appreciation of the close working relationship possible with individual staff and a strong commitment and loyalty to the specialisms they were studying.

4. MA Study
   The Review Team commends the initiation and development of the English Masters and commends highly the quality of the International Student *Welcome Brochure (2018-19)*. The Review Team commend the joint evaluation process of Master students by both theory and practice teachers as being not only good practice but as an excellent initiative in integrating the learning, teaching and assessment of both areas.

5. Support Staff
   The Review Team were impressed by the quality and contribution of the School of Arts' support staff who are well qualified and dedicated and appeared to be open to direct and flexible collaboration with the disciplines and specialisations in meeting the specific needs of the pedagogical process - particularly the energy, enthusiasm, commitment and hard work of the Quality Assurance officer. All of the support and administrative members of staff that the Review Team met had a positive attitude, and obviously had the best interests of the School of Arts and its members, staff and students at heart. The support staff can also be enhanced by the teaching departments, who can employ supplementary technical staff, in accordance with their budget and technical requirements.

6. Initiative and Transparency
   It is commendable that the Visual Art Programme at the School of Arts is dynamic and responsive, willing and able to initiate new disciplines or specialisms in response to evolutions in the professional world, the industry and the cultural and artistic environment. This dynamic, open attitude is well reflected in the quality and honesty of the content of the Self Evaluation Report. Particularly the inclusion in the SER of a balanced approach that outlined strengths and challenges that had been perceived by the programme itself, arising from the internal review process.

7. Facilities
   Generally, studio spaces at the School of Arts are generous and fit for purpose, staffed with qualified and dedicated technical personnel. The exhibition spaces are adequate for hosting a variety of artistic and cultural events and for fostering a dynamic, collaborative, and critically oriented atmosphere. The Review Team took positive notice of the existence of spaces and infrastructure specifically dedicated to research particularly library resources. The new library is a valuable resource for supporting the quality of the teaching, learning, research and documentation activities. The Review Team also commends the wide range of interactions by students with arts organisations at international level and regionally

Suggestions

1. Vision and Mission

   The Review Team recognises the student-centred focus of the programme goals and applaud the idealism in trying to create a strong focus on the individual needs of each student while studying. However, the RT suggests that the School of Arts holds a forum amongst all stakeholders to discuss the School of Arts' implementation of the University College Ghent Strategic plan to ensure it is familiar and embedded as an overriding strategy for the School of Arts alongside the Educational Plan.

2. Studio Space
   The Review Team believes that a strategic reflection upon the allocation of studio spaces would be very useful, as it may lead to some re-organising, so that all specialisms within the programme are provided with optimal working conditions

3. BA Admissions
   The Review Team suggests that the School of Arts investigates a central admissions process for BA, independent from individual specialisms and disciplines. Instigating an admissions process that better aligns entry standards and ensures comparability and rigour in the learning and teaching processes across disciplines and specialisations.

4. MA Admissions
   The Review Team suggests that the admissions procedure for the Flemish Masters and English Masters be clearly aligned - if possible within the existing legal framework. The Review Team suggests that the School of Arts may wish to consider if shared studios for

master students, detached from the specialisms and studios, establishes a stronger master climate, focussing on the advanced level of studies in competition and discourse with all other master students. The Review Team considers that studios dedicated specifically for common artistic and research activities of the students from the unified MA would facilitate a more dynamic collaborative atmosphere and foster trans-disciplinary approaches, in accordance with the specified aims of the programme

5. Research
   Research activities would benefit from a clearly structured research strategy, which would include a more goal structured use of the research spaces and infrastructure. The School of Arts may also wish to consider revising the programme goals to include artistic research methodologies alongside deploying methodologies from the sciences and philosophy in order to secure the provenance of artistic research. Based on this revision a consideration for the School of Arts would be to explore how artistic research might be better embedded as a *different* form of knowledge production, in and of itself, as a valuable development for the School of Arts community of teachers, students and researchers. Consideration could also be given to ways that ensure that research expertise filters through to BA & MA students by embedding this approach within a coherent learning and teaching strategy which is reflected in the curriculum. The Review Team believes that a clearly structured policy for the development of research activities of the teaching staff would be beneficial for the further professionalisation of teachers and the facilitation and embedding of research activities within the programme.

6. Communication & Public Interaction
   The Review Team suggests that the School of Arts investigates how the exhibitions and screenings can be further improved to attract a diverse public, specifically citizens with non-Belgian roots. Diversity and general communication could also be enhanced by having another close look at the design and navigation construction of the website which is under review. An area for consideration would be to ensure the School of Arts provides consistent support for students in finding internships and maintaining contact during the period of the internship.

7. Teaching Staff Policy
   The Review Team believes in the usefulness of having an internal discussion and shaping a coherent, motivated policy with regards to employment of teaching staff, particularly the recruitment of School of Arts graduates for teaching positions relatively soon following graduation. The institution would also benefit from an internal discussion that would purposefully clarify the benefits and perhaps downsides of the practice of rendering most teaching appointments permanent. The School of Arts would also benefit from a strategic reflection upon the most efficient balance between part-time (small FTEs) and full-time (larger or full FTEs), taking into account both necessity for flexibility and the benefits of commitment

Recommendations

1. Student Progression
   The Review Team recommends that a formalised process of monitoring progression at fixed points of the learning process is installed, based on a collective review which is comparable and transparent across studios. To facilitate this process, the Review Team recommends that general learning outcomes should be drawn from the national competencies, specific for the visual arts but equal for all specialisms and disciplines, as the grid of criteria for the assessment of student progress from year to year. This would require that the project of developing visual arts specific learning outcomes and competencies is picked up again. (*startcompetenties*, see beleidspunt 3 from 2012 in artistieke toelatingsproeven en Orienteringscommissies from November 2017)

2. Programme Development
   The Review Team believes that a serious reflection upon and reshaping of the strategy for developing disciplines and specialisms would be very useful. Enrolling an increasing number of students within more and more specialisms might lead to financial difficulties, the proliferation of too many discrete areas of creative momentum may conflict with ensuring parity of the student experience and may give rise to difficulties in the comparability and in the assurance of standards. The School of Art should consider establishing internally a more formal, transparent and frequent process of assessing the success and viability of each existing and possible future specialisms. This process could include peers from within the School of Arts, and representatives of alumni and professionals. It appeared to the Review Team that the current process may not be fit for purpose or transparent. Given the financial and infrastructural implications and the personal implications for individual staff and students, future and present; together with the outcome of the hiving off of new specialisms from the area that generated them has the potential for negative effect on all concerned. It seems sensible that if specialisms are to be newly established the School of Arts also requires a transparent process for the closure or reorganisation and rebranding of specialisms that are no longer fit for purpose and a process for assuring itself of the success or otherwise of existing specialisms. This process could lead to a more coherent policy that would involve the rethinking of the programme's structure in more complex and versatile ways than the simple addition of new specialisms and disciplines to the existing structure.

3. Staff Development
   The Review Team considers that the dissemination of good practice with regard to teaching and learning practices between departments could be improved. The School of Arts should consider the establishment of a process to share good practice from one specialism to others avoiding the possible isolation of disciplines, the sharing of problem solving and enhance the development of the School of Arts as a whole. Another area for consideration by the School of Arts would be the formulation of a specific policy for staff continuing professional development, which would address learning, teaching and assessment systemically and coherently, formulating guidance and incentives. The Review Team

believes that further developing collaborations and common actions with other higher arts education institutions, as well as incentivising teachers to gather experience by undertaking teaching activities (lectures, workshops etc.) in such institutions, would be of benefit for the enhancement of the quality of teaching.

4. Internal Quality Processes

   The Review Team recommend that the Visual Art Programme should consider reviewing the process of selecting and appointing all stakeholders, students, staff, alumni, employers and professionals and their representation on boards and committees to provide an equitable and transparent inclusion process. Extending the scope of student representation in particular. The School of Arts could also consider providing training for student reps and establishing an efficient feedback process for them to communicate with their peers. An area for consideration would be for the School of Arts to publish the full regulations for Training Programme Commission membership on the intranet. The School of Arts could consider the inclusion of all types of stakeholders, internal and external at group programme management and decision-making meetings and providing maximum transparency by the publishing of minutes and notes on the topics and decisions made while respecting the confidentiality of individuals.

5. Evaluation & Feedback

   The Review Team recommend that all teachers should be conversant with the Educational Plan and that consideration be given to develop a method of ensuring that all studio staff know what is being delivered in theory classes. The Review Team recommend the instigation of staff development workshops as follows:

   - to facilitate the mapping of Learning Outcomes to Competences, and to consider if there needs to be a grading matrix for competences in each discipline and specialisation
   - to develop processes for the parity of assessment/evaluation across disciplines
   - to develop a procedure that ensures constructive written feedback linked to competences for the benefit of students

9. Summary of the programme(s)' compliance with EQ-Arts Standards

EQ-Arts Standards	Compliance: Fully – F Substantially - S Partially - P Not - N	**Remarks**
Standard 1 The programme goals are clearly stated and reflect the institutional mission.	S	The programme goals are clearly stated but the institutional mission (University College Ghent Strategic Plan) was not considered
Standard 2.1 The goals of the programme are achieved through the content and structure of the curriculum and its methods of delivery.	F	
Standard 2.2 The programme offers a range of opportunities for students to gain an international perspective.	F	
Standard 2.3 Assessment methods are clearly defined and demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes	P	Assessment methods are not clearly and consistently defined. Learning outcomes and assessment criteria are not always clearly defined
Standard 3.1 There are clear criteria for student admission, based on an assessment of their artistic/academic suitability for the programme.	P	The process to assess suitability needs to be refined. A unified process to admit students to all Fine Art / Design disciplines and specialisms before dividing into specialisms and studios will improve comparability and transparency
Standard 3.2 The programme has mechanisms to formally monitor and review the progression, achievement and subsequent employability of its students.	P	A formalised process of monitoring progression at fixed points of the learning process should be installed, which is comparable and transparent across

		studios (collective review)
Standard 4.1 Members of the teaching staff are qualified for their role and are active as artists/pedagogues/researchers.	F	
Standard 4.2 There are sufficient qualified teaching staff to effectively deliver the programmes.	F	
Standard 5.1 The institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and delivery of the programme.	F	
Standard 5.2 The institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the study programmes.	S	450 Students funded but 600+ enrolled
Standard 5.3 The programme has sufficient qualified support staff.	F	
Standard 6.1 Effective mechanisms are in place for internal communication within the programme.	F	
Standard 6.2 The programme is supported by an appropriate organisational structure and clear decision-making processes.	S	
Standard 7 The programme has in place effective quality assurance and enhancement procedures.	S	The QAE policy is operated with variations of consistency by some departments and specialisms. Stakeholder representation and the selection processes of some representatives lack a formalised methodology. The communication of information and outcomes requires enhancement.
Standard 8.1 The programme engages within wider cultural, artistic and educational contexts.	F	The exhibitions and screenings can be further improved to attract a diverse public, specifically citizens with non-Belgian roots.
Standard 8.2 The programme actively promotes links with various sectors of the artistic professions.	F	
Standard 8.3 Information provided to the public about the programme is clear, consistent and accurate.	P	Design, navigation and construction of the website should be improved

Conclusion

The School of Arts is a dynamic institution, willing and able to initiate new specialised realisations of its programme in response to evolutions in the professional world, the industry and the cultural and artistic environment. It has excellent facilities both in quality and quantity and an atmosphere of commitment and hard work resulting in first class artistic outputs from the students.

The feature that made the strongest impression on the Review Team during the site visit and discussions and within the documentation was the development of multiple ‘specialisms’ into separate and discrete studios. The Review Team recognise the value attached to having a breadth of disciplines available and acknowledge that this range within the departments is both a key attractor for applicants (strongly evidenced by the students we met), as well as reflecting the current scope of art and design practices within the professional field. This breadth also ensures a depth of engagement and 'ownership' by both teachers and students.

A more coherent policy in this respect might be very beneficial to the School of Arts in terms of its financial stability and efficiency, one that would involve the rethinking of the programme structure in more complex and versatile forms other than the simple addition of new specialisms to the existing structure. This feature of the development of disciplines seems to impinge on nearly every aspect of the School of Arts and became a continuing discussion amongst the Review Team during the site visit and a sub-theme of this report is about the future viability of this approach without the development of a more efficient and appropriate ’management’ structure to support it.

The Review Team suggest that now would be a good time to instigate a productive dialogue in the School of Arts to review how cognate disciplines might be clustered, and to avoid the proliferation of too many discrete areas of creative momentum - and ensuring parity of the student experience. This might also improve operational efficiency. Year one of graphic design could be used as a model for discipline clustering. Furthermore, the Review Team doubts the sustainability of the future proliferation of specialisms as a developmental mode, especially when not paralleled with a process for closing and/or regenerating existing disciplines.

The impression made on the Review Team was one of a community of staff operating in some ways perhaps as a ‘commune’ with a great deal of mutual respect and goodwill coming to conclusions with patient time consuming discussion and negotiation. As attested by students, as well as employers and professionals, the teaching staff of the institution are characterised by openness and flexibility. This is actually perceived as one the School of Arts’ main features as an institution, making it stand out in the field of higher artistic education in Belgium. Teachers here are generally open, available to discuss students’ interests and ideas, willing to foster change and to think outside the box. Graduates with whom the Review Team met during the site visit stated their belief that self-reflectiveness and critical thinking were important competences that are provided by the educational processes undertaken at the School of Arts, this being perceived as something that is actually specific to the institution’s profile nationally. The capacity for critical reflection, and an appreciation of how teachers at the School of Arts encourage and guide their students towards developing it, has been emphasised by professionals and employers with whom the Review Team met. Also, double mentorship has come up repeatedly, in the discussions taking place during the site visit, as a good practice, fostering students’ critical reflection upon their work, supported by multiple perspectives, which can be provided by multiple teachers.

The Review Team found that the emphasis from entry to beyond graduation (normally after 3 years of study at BA and 1 year at MA) is on the individual learner, and students reported that there is a high level of customisation of teaching to support their needs, especially at Masters level where students choose their own mentors and select theory seminars according to their practice development. However, there is a closeness in the relationship between teachers and students, often described as 'friendship' that may be thought of as *safe* yet overly comfortable. An alternative model might be one of a 'trust-based' relationship that enables safety in risk taking for students as well as providing objective evaluation and critical distance by teachers.

The Visual Arts Programme at the School of Arts has reached a satisfactory level of quality and success that displays the potential for future development. Well-founded future developments could place the School of Arts even higher within the top tier of European art schools. Arising from its review of the Visual Arts programme at the School of Arts the EQ-Arts Review Team believes in the realisation of this greater potential being possible but in order for this to occur the Review Team foresees a need for change in the organisational structure of the multitude of specialisms. A need for an increase in the capacity of the School of Arts exists for the management of disciplines, specialisms and their development, based on a better overview and the coordination of the enhancement of existing specialisms to ensure that progress is achieved and that potential is realised.