

AEC Institutional and Programme Review Scheme



AEC Institutional Review Visit to the Academy of Music in Łódź

28 – 30 March 2010



Evaluation Committee:

**Dame Janet Ritterman, Former Director of the Royal College of Music London
(chair)**

**Robert Fitzpatrick, Former Dean of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia
Valentina Sandu-Dediu, National University of Music in Bucharest**

Secretary:

Ester Tomasi-Fumics, University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna

ERASMUS NETWORK FOR MUSIC

polifonia

Introduction

The visit to The Grażyna and Kiejstut Bacewicz Academy of Music in Łódź (AMUZ) was undertaken in the framework of the AEC Institutional and Programme Review Scheme, a service offered by the AEC to its member institutions in order to assist them in their quality improvement activities. This scheme is financed by the ERASMUS programme through the Polifonia Network.

The international group of experts used the AEC Framework Document *Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Music Education: Characteristics, Criteria and Procedures*, a set of common European standards and procedures for the external review of institutions and programmes in higher music education. Based on the visit and the materials sent to the team beforehand, the present report was produced.

Łódź is the third largest city in Poland situated in the centre of the country, 120 km from the country's capital Warsaw. It is an industrial city with an emphasis on the textile industry.

At present, after about sixty years of activity, the Academy of Music in Łódź has nearly 700 students (about 450 in full-time studies and 230 in extramural and postgraduate programmes) and 297 teachers (full and part time).

During the visit, the AMUZ was represented by the Rector, Prof. Antoni Wierzbinski, the Vice Rector Prof. Irena Wiselka-Cieslar, the Vice Rector, Prof. Boguslaw Pikala and the International Relations Coordinator, Dorota Rossowska. The members of the Committee were chair Dame Janet Ritterman, former Director of the Royal College of Music London, Robert Fitzpatrick, former Dean of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and Valentina Sandu-Dediu, National University of Music in Bucharest. The Secretary was Ester Tomasi-Fumics, University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna.

The Committee would like to express its gratitude to the AMUZ for the excellent organisation of the visit, for welcoming the Committee in such a friendly and hospitable way, for being at its disposal during the entire visit and for the atmosphere of sincere and fruitful cooperation in which many issues – current situation, problems, strengths and weaknesses – were discussed. The Committee would especially like to thank the teachers who allowed the members of the Committee to visit their lessons.

The Committee would also like to express its appreciation for the work done by the Academy in the production of its self evaluation report. This extended analysis of the institution helped the Committee to get a comprehensive overview of the Academy and has been of great help in the reflections and discussions before, during and after the visit.

Programme of the visit

Sunday 28th March 2010

Time	Sessions	Participants	Place /Room
During the day	Arrival at the Hotel	Review Committee	Hotel Grand Lodz *** Piotrkowska 72 90-102 Lodz http://www.zlotehotele.pl/
17:30-18:30	Introduction meeting with the management of the institution with refreshments	Review Committee Management Team: Prof. Antoni WIERZBINSKI - Rector Prof. Irena WISELKA-CIESLAR - Vice Rector Prof. Boguslaw PIKALA - Vice Rector Dorota Rossowska	Akademia Muzyczna im. Grazyny i Kiejstuta Bacewiczow ul. Gdanska 32 90-716 Łódź www.amuz.lodz.pl <i>The experts will always stay in the Senate Room (No 11)</i>
19:00-21:30	Concert of the Academy's orchestra and choir at the Lodz Philharmonic Hall	Review Committee Management Team: Prof. Antoni WIERZBINSKI - Rector Prof. Irena WISELKA-CIESLAR - Vice Rector Prof. Boguslaw PIKALA - Vice Rector	20 Narutowicza St
21:45-22:45	Preparatory meeting	Review Committee	Grand Hotel Lodz (72 Piotrkowska St.) Conference room No 212 booked from 21:00

Monday 29th March 2010 - 3 Interpreters Polish - English available

Time	Sessions	Participants	Place /Room
09:00-10:00	Meeting with the management of the institution	Review Committee Management team: Prof. Antoni WIERZBINSKI - Rector <u>Faculty I:</u> Prof. Ewa KOWALSKA-ZAJAC - Dean Prof. Elzbieta ALEKSANDROWICZ - Vice Dean Prof. Krystyna JUSZYNSKA - Vice Dean <u>Faculty II:</u> Prof. Cezary SANECKI - Dean <u>Faculty III:</u> Prof. Agata JARECKA - Dean Prof. Krzysztof KAMINSKI - Vice Dean <u>Faculty IV:</u> Prof. Beata ZAWADZKA-KLOS - Dean	<i>Senate Room (No 11)</i>
10:15-11:30	Meeting with support staff members	Review Committee Head of finances - Ms Malgorzata MYSLINSKA Head of administration	<i>Senate Room (No 11)</i>

		<p>– Ms Agnieszka GROCHULSKA Head of library</p> <p>– Ms Malgorzata KOSINSKA Responsible for Quality assurance</p> <p>– Prof. Irena WISELKA-CIESLAR Head of international office</p> <p>– Ms Dorota ROSSOWSKA</p>	
11:30-12:00	Break	Review Committee	
12:00-13:00	Meeting with students	<p>Review Committee</p> <p>Mr Pawel ZAPART – Faculty I -theory of music and composition (1st yr - 2nd cycle)</p> <p>Mr Piotr JAKUBOWSKI – Faculty III - violin (1st yr – 1st cycle)</p> <p>Ms Joanna WOLANSKA – Faculty I – choreography (1st yr – 1st cycle)</p> <p>Ms Malgorzata LYCZAKOWSKA – Faculty II - organ (2nd yr – 1st cycle)</p> <p>Mr Rafal MACIEJEWSKI – Faculty IV - voice - (1st yr - 2nd cycle)-- (Student's Union)</p>	<i>Senate Room (No 11)</i>
13:00-14:00	Lunch	Review Committee	At the Academy
14:00-15:30	Meeting with academic staff members	<p>Review Committee</p> <p>5 professors: Prof. Urszula KRYGER (voice)</p> <p>Prof. Stanislaw FIRLEJ (cello)</p> <p>Prof. Marta SZOKA (theory of music)</p> <p>Prof. Beata CYWINSKA (piano)</p> <p>Prof. Janusz KOPCZYNSKI (oboe)</p>	<i>Senate Room (No 11)</i>
15:45-16:45	Meeting with former students	<p>Review Committee</p> <p>Ms Aleksandra GAJECKA-ANTOSIEWICZ – harpsichord and piano(Faculty II)</p> <p>Mr Stanislaw KIERNER - voice (Faculty IV) and piano (Faculty II)</p> <p>Ms Joanna DZIDOWSKA - theory of music (Faculty I) and cello (Faculty III)</p> <p>Mr Pawel WIECKOWSKI - violin (Faculty III)</p> <p>Ms Bai Jie – piano (Faculty II)</p>	<i>Senate Room (No 11)</i>
16:45 – 17:15	Break	Review Committee	
17:15-18:45	Visit of classes	<p>Review Committee</p> <p><u>Visit of classes (to choose from):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cello classes – Prof. Stanislaw FIRLEJ – room No 15 (32, Gdanska St.) • Wind orchestra /or Big Band – room No 28 (32, Gdanska St.) • Organ improvisation – Asst. Krzysztof URBANIAK - room No 2 (32, Gdanska 	In order to visit all the suggested classes two members of the committee will stay at Gdanska St and visit classes here, and one expert will

		<p>St.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocal classes – Prof. Urszula KRYGER – room No 43 (32, Gdanska St.) • Piano classes – Prof. Anna WESOLOWSKA-FIRLEJ – room No 33 (32, Gdanska St.) • Acting classes – sen.lect. Wojciech WALASIK – room No 83 (32, Gdanska St.) • Chamber music – Dr Witold HOLTZ – room No 17 (32, Gdanska St.) • Conducting classes – Dr Marcin WOLNIEWSKI and Asst. Kamil KLIMEK – room No 106 (79, Kilinskiego St.) • Eurhythmics – Prof. Elzbieta ALEKSANDROWICZ – room 303 (79, Kilinskiego St.) • Jazz improvisation (<i>individual classes</i>) – sen.lect. Tomasz WALCZAK – room 307 (79, Kilinskiego St.) 	<p>be driven to Kilinskiego St. to visit classes there. After the classes, the two experts who stayed at Gdanska St. will join the other one at Kilinskiego St. to continue the visit according to the plan (review of facilities).</p>
18:45-19:30	Guided tour - Review of the facilities (studios, concert venues, practice facilities, libraries etc.)	<p>Review Committee Management team :</p> <p>Prof. Antoni WIERZBINSKI - Rector</p> <p>Prof. Irena WISELKA-CIESLAR – Vice Rector</p> <p>Prof. Boguslaw PIKALA – Vice Rector</p> <p>Prof. IZABELA CEGLINSKA – Coordinator of Accreditation in European Professional Music Training</p>	
19:30-20:00	Wrap up meeting of the review Committee	Review Committee	<i>Senate Room (No 11)</i>
From 20:15	Dinner	<p>Review Committee Leadership of the institution:</p> <p>Prof. Antoni WIERZBINSKI - Rector</p> <p>Prof. Irena WISELKA-CIESLAR – Vice Rector</p> <p>Prof. Boguslaw PIKALA – Vice Rector</p> <p>Prof. IZABELA CEGLINSKA – Coordinator of Accreditation in European Professional Music Training</p>	At the Academy

Tuesday 30th March 2010

Time	Sessions	Participants	Place /Room
09:00-10:00	Meeting with the Leadership of the institution	<p>Review Committee Leadership of the institution:</p> <p>Prof. Antoni WIERZBINSKI - Rector</p> <p>Prof. Irena WISELKA-CIESLAR – Vice Rector</p> <p>Prof. Boguslaw PIKALA – Vice Rector</p>	<i>Senate Room (No 11)</i>

		Prof. IZABELA CEGLINSKA – Coordinator of Accreditation in European Professional Music Training	
10:30- 12:00	Committee meeting - Preparation of the feedback meeting and of the report	Review Committee	<i>Senate Room (No 11)</i>
12:00- 13:00	Feedback to the institution	Review Committee Leadership of the institution Prof. Antoni WIERZBINSKI - Rector Prof. Irena WISELKA-CIESLAR – Vice Rector Prof. Boguslaw PIKALA – Vice Rector Prof. IZABELA CEGLINSKA – Coordinator of Accreditation in European Professional Music Training	<i>Senate Room (No 11)</i>
13:00- 14:00	Lunch	Review Committee	At the Academy

CONFIDENTIAL

1. Mission and vision

1-a. What is the institution's mission, aim or goal?

According to the self-evaluation report, the AMUZ constitutes an integral part of the national education system and contributes to research, promotion and development of music art as a part of national heritage which at the same time expands European culture [self-evaluation report p2]. The Academy's mission is defined through its activity described in the Statute. The basic assumptions of the Academy's strategy include the □education of students; the □upbringing of students who feel responsible for their nation, democracy and human rights; □conducting artistic activity and scholarly research; □rendering services in the scope of artistic activity in Poland and abroad; the □formation and promotion of scholarly staff; the □popularization and enrichment of national culture and education through gathering and providing library, archive and information resources; □education aimed at acquisition and implementation of knowledge; □ensuring conditions for physical development of students and □actions in aid of local and regional communities [The Statute of the AMUZ p2]. Within all this, the priorities for the Academy are to ensure quality in teaching, to enable graduates to get the best available jobs after graduation while at the same time catering for the needs of the region, to enrich the educational offer and to create a good infrastructure within the institution [Meeting with the management of the institution].

1-b. What are the goals of its educational programmes?

There are no general goals of the educational programmes of the AMUZ. The Academy is divided into four faculties which offer full time and part time studies in all three cycles. The goals of the educational programmes vary according to the particular cycle of studies, field of studies and specialization. Educational programmes comprise of educational standards defined by the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education and individual teaching programmes, defined by the institution with the help of the AEC learning outcomes and the Polifonia Dublin Descriptors (PDD). [Regulation of Minister of Science and Higher Education on Teaching Standards, issued on 12th July 2007]. Areas of studies offered at 1st and 2nd cycle level (3+2) full-time are composition and theory of music, eurhythmics, art education in music arts, instrumental studies (piano, harpsichord, organ, violin, viola, cello, double bass, guitar, harp, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, saxophone, horn, trumpet, trombone, tuba, percussion and accordion), vocal and acting performance. Choreography and dance techniques and music therapy are covered only by part-time studies at 1st cycle level [self-evaluation report p2].

1-c. What is the correspondence between the institution's mission and its educational programmes?

The educational programmes are closely connected to the mission of the institution. The education is aimed at providing students with basic skills and knowledge in 1st cycle studies, preparing them for a 2nd cycle with more freedom of choice on the advanced level [self-evaluation report p2, 3].

By offering modules and areas of specialisation the educational programmes are geared towards an ever changing profession. However, students' freedom of choice is restricted to some extent by the specific standards binding all fields of studies in the Academy that have been designed according to the national standards.

1-d. Does the institution have a long-term strategic vision?

According to the self-evaluation report the Academy has a long-term vision which focuses mainly on developing contacts with foreign institutions; increasing the number of foreign students; implementing innovative programmes and new fields of studies which raise the attractiveness of the Academy (Choreography and Dance techniques, Music therapy, Post-Diploma studies in the field of Film music, Computer music and Audiovisual Work); obtaining new sources of finance (in addition to national funds); creating projects which raise the level of studies through the development of existing buildings, and improving standards of premises through adaptation of the neighbouring building and construction of the concert hall [self-evaluation report p3].

The Committee was convinced that the staff and the management team have a long-term vision for the institution. However, there is no document as such which sets out these longer term views. It might be helpful to have such a document, which could be used for various purposes.

CONFIDENTIAL

2. Educational processes

2.1 Curriculum

2.1-a. How does the curriculum address the institutional mission and the goals of its educational programmes?

The undergraduate curricula of the Academy in Łódź comprise a high proportion of obligatory courses, mostly in the initial two years which are geared towards preparation for the profession. There are optional courses as well which offer the students the possibility to develop additional skills and knowledge, for instance in the area of pedagogy. The Academy of Music in Łódź also addresses its mission and goals through targeted cooperation. The Academy cooperates with The University of Łódź and The Strzemiński Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Łódź. Students of the Academy are allowed to attend lectures organized by the above mentioned institutions. This arrangement enriches the Academy's offer of optional classes, enhances students' cross-disciplinary awareness and gives room for individual specialisation [self-evaluation report p4 and 5].

Within the framework of the law limiting the institution in its didactical choices, the Academy has done good work to implement new curricula oriented towards the latest developments in the European Higher Education Area and the needs of the national and international music profession. The Committee noted the efforts the Academy has made to become more international and attractive with its study programmes. There is one matter of concern the Committee would like to underline: the number of contact hours for students seems relatively high in comparison to student contact hours for such studies in similar institutions in other countries. While contact hours remain high, there is little real opportunity for students to exercise choice and to develop personal initiative. The Committee is aware that this situation is governed by national regulations on teaching hours. The Committee would nevertheless like to encourage the management of the Academy to keep this matter in mind.

2.1-b. Is the curriculum based on the 3-cycle structure promoted by the Bologna process?

In the academic year 2006/2007 the Academy reorganized its curricula and introduced bachelor and master studies. 3rd cycle studies – PhD studies – were introduced in the academic year 2007/08. The first graduates received their bachelor degrees in 2009. On 1st October 2009 students began their education at the 2nd cycle level [self-evaluation report p4].

The Committee found in the material which was provided, evidence of the 3-cycle structure of the curriculum, as well as elements indicating progression between the three cycles. The experience with the new structure is still very fresh. Especially in the 3rd cycle the institution needs to build up experience and therefore may want to cooperate with other institutions in this area by inviting external tutors or supervisors and by facilitating staff exchange with more experienced institutions. The Committee would like to commend the positive attitude towards the new structure and the proactive approach the management of the Academy has adopted in this process. It was especially positive to see that as a result this attitude was widely shared by staff and students.

2.1-c. Is there a connection/progression between the various cycles?

There is a clear progression and connection between 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycle. In the initial phase of each cycle students are expected to be present at the institution much more than in the final phase of the respective study cycle. The freedom of choice – in terms of the students' use of their study time - thus increases with the progression through the study cycle. The aims of the 1st cycle

include the successful preparation of students to be able to undertake 2nd cycle studies. Similarly, outstanding graduates of the 2nd cycle studies may continue education and further development in part-time 3rd cycle studies at the Academy or elsewhere [syllabi and self-evaluation report p2]. Courses offered during consecutive levels of education (mainly the 2nd cycle studies) are based on earlier achievements (e.g. on knowledge and skills acquired during the 1st cycle studies). This clearly cumulative approach encourages students to undertake further independent work on artistic development. Similarly, abilities developed during the 2nd cycle studies may be enhanced in 3rd cycle studies (PhD). The latter were introduced at the Academy only recently and as part-time studies [self-evaluation report p4].

The Committee would like to commend the clear view of the course designers on the relationships between cycles. The Committee encourages the leaders of this process in the institution to continue to develop awareness of these relationships more widely among their colleagues.

2.1-d. Does the curriculum take into account the various aspects of the 'Polifonia/Dublin Descriptors' (PDDs) and/or the AEC learning outcomes?

The various aspects of the PDDs and the AEC outcomes are closely followed and used in the formulation of goals for each of the programmes. The courses for each programme are described in detail, addressing teaching methods and prerequisites, objectives and learning outcomes, content and evaluation criteria [course syllabi].

The Committee was impressed by the well-formulated course objectives. While there is a clear awareness of the necessity to develop generic skills, specialist elements (for example, improvisation and copyright issues) are given due attention in the course curricula. As a further step in development the Committee would like to encourage the Academy to make sure that the outcomes-oriented approach which has been adopted is understood throughout the institution, by students and staff.

2.2 Delivery

2.2-a. How is the institution utilizing different forms of teaching in the delivery of the curriculum?

While the Committee did not have the opportunity to discuss this matter in detail with the Academy, it was clear from the syllabi and from observation that a variety of teaching methods - such as one-to-one lessons, group lessons, lectures and seminars - supports the delivery of the curriculum. However, the Committee would encourage the institution to explore other teaching approaches such as project work and supervised small group learning. The AMUZ may wish to consider inviting guest professors who are using different teaching methods in order to demonstrate examples of alternative good practice in terms of teaching methods and encourage its teachers to consider expanding their range of approaches to teaching...

2.2-b. Are the teaching and learning processes based on the competence-based approach promoted by the PDDs?

Learning processes are based on the competence-based approach promoted by the PDDs [syllabi and self-evaluation report p6].

The Committee found that the management team in particular has a clear view on the outcomes-based approach. However, not all teachers and students seemed aware of this approach, and the institution is encouraged to improve the communication about the descriptors and the competence-based approach to its teachers and students. Work also needs to be done in

strengthening the connections between the outcomes-based approach in the course descriptions and the assessment methods. The AMUZ may wish to consider developing a list of all competences showing in which modules/courses they are being addressed. This overview could be very useful in improving the course information given to students and could help to enhance the transparency of the assessment process.

2.2-c. Are the students offered opportunities to present their creative work?

Several festivals (e.g. “Musica Moderna”), competitions and internal events, some also with outside partners such as the Philharmonic Hall and other music institutions, are organised. These offer students possibilities to perform in public [self-evaluation report p22 and 23]. The institution assists the students with the presentation of their own creative work as well. The Promotion Office offers help in promoting individually organised events. Students can ask for preparatory performing possibilities when they are planning to participate in a competition [meeting with students]. Moreover, the Academy runs two academic choirs, bringing together all students of the instrumental, vocal and art education faculties who do not participate in an orchestral ensemble [self-evaluation report page 6].

From the self-evaluation report and the discussion with teachers and students it was evident that students are offered a range of opportunities to present their creative work. All in all, there is a good awareness of the scope offered by the various spaces within the Academy for performance possibilities of various sizes and kinds. The Committee had the opportunity to see and hear examples of the ways in which performing locations of differing sizes and acoustic properties were being used by students and staff.

2.2-d. Are there formal arrangements for students to receive regular counselling?

Every full-time teacher of the Academy has two office hours a week where she or he is available for students to consult. Part-time tutors have one office hour a week. Regular counselling for students is part of the duties of tutors conducting major courses (for a given field of studies). These tutors provide substantive, didactic and pedagogical supervision for students [self-evaluation report p7]. The students have the opportunity to talk with the vice-rector and the dean if there are any issues that they wish to raise. The students themselves feel that there is good contact with the authorities in the Academy and that getting their needs and wishes heard is easy and the outcome, generally productive [meeting with the students].

It was evident to the Committee that the care and support of students shown by members of staff of the Academy extends well beyond their formally-defined duties. Both present- and former students paid tribute to the individual counselling that they and their colleagues received. Relations between the Academy and its Student Council are also a force for good. The Committee would like to mention that the atmosphere in the institution was very welcoming and warm and exemplified the attention the Academy’s teaching staff and the administrative staff give to students. If the Academy wishes to make an even stronger commitment in the area of student support, the possibility of offering more formalised psychological counselling for stress, stage fright or other issues could be investigated.

2.2-e. Does research have a role within each cycle?

The responsibility for research lies within the 1st faculty (composition, theory of music, eurhythmics and art education) of the AMUZ. The head of the faculty, the chair of theory of music, is in charge of research. The development of research is very important for the Academy. It is one of the main aims of its activity besides the artistic activity [meeting with the management].

The Committee supports the Academy's view that research is relevant to all cycles and noted with interest the wide-ranging examples of published research by Academy staff which were made available in the meeting room. There was much to suggest a strong research orientation within the institution, and the self-evaluation report emphasises that research should play an important role within every cycle of studies [self-evaluation report, p.7]. However from the documentation alone it was difficult to discern the precise role which research plays in certain curricula (for instance, the first cycle for orchestral instruments) and the Committee did not have the opportunity to explore with members of staff precisely how this is achieved within individual programmes. Perhaps because of language issues, the Committee also did not see evidence of the preparation of students for the thesis during the 1st cycle. The institution may want to give further consideration to clarifying these relationships in their documentation.

2.3 International perspectives

2.3-a. Does the institution have an international strategy?

The Academy feels that the issue of internationalisation is crucial for the future of the institution. Erasmus partnerships have been in place for three years now, and are being expanded constantly. ECTS is used and monitored. Efforts are being made to introduce courses in English. Mobility, incoming and outgoing, is being actively promoted. Study information is available in Polish and English [self-evaluation report p 7]. Staff exchanges are also encouraged. One of the beneficial side effects of several competitions that the Academy is organising is to bring international students temporarily to the institution.

The Committee recognises that the AMUZ is working hard to open up to internationalism. The institution is encouraged to work further on the visibility of the whole institution through the planned development of its website and its promotional material. In addition, the AMUZ is encouraged to continue to expand the number of courses available in English, not only for instrumental teaching, but also for other subjects. This should not only help to motivate more international students to consider applying to study in Łódź but will also assist home students in gaining a wider perspective on their studies. The Committee would like to encourage the Academy to take a holistic view of its internationalisation strategy.

2.3-b. Is the institution participating in partnerships that provide international perspectives?

As mentioned above, the institution has recently started to develop contacts with other institutions in Europe within the framework of ERASMUS. The very professionally-managed office for international relations has already established partnerships with 29 institutions from 13 European countries. The Academy is a member of the AEC and cooperates with the Tianjin Conservatory of Music (China), the Sichuan Conservatory of Music, Chengdu (China) and the Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Valparaiso (Chile). Furthermore, an individual cooperation with the German Landesakademie Ochsenhausen from Baden-Württemberg allows for annual participation of students of the AMUZ in free orchestra and choir workshops [self-evaluation report pp7 and 8].

The Committee commends the efforts which the AMUZ is making in broadening its range of institutional contacts and partnerships. International student recruitment, however, presents particular challenges. It was clear that the Academy is not yet equipped to deal systematically with language barriers and other cultural differences presented by international students. The Committee felt that the institution should therefore be alert to the risks in focussing on Asian institutions as major international recruiting partners, and suggests that, for this and other reasons, the Academy would be wise to aim for a diverse international student mix.

2.3-c. *To what extent do the curriculum and the educational processes offer international perspectives?*

The Academy approaches outgoing mobility as a matter of mainly 2nd cycle studies, meaning that students have a 1st cycle degree and leave Poland to undertake for a Masters course abroad. Outgoing students of the Academy often participate in short term mobility projects by participating in a master class or an international workshop abroad, by giving concerts, lectures or conducting research. This is partially funded by the Academy, as students are often not able to afford such mobility on their own [self-evaluation report pp8 and 9].

The Committee recognises that at the moment Eastern European countries might not be as attractive to young people as some Western European countries and the USA and that it can therefore be difficult to build up incoming mobility. Nevertheless, as the Academy has already done, it is possible to enhance internationalism by inviting teachers from abroad into the institution. By confronting the students with different styles of teaching and with different cultural backgrounds at an early stage of their studies their outlooks and experience can be significantly broadened.

2.4 Learning assessment

2.4-a. *What are the main methods for assessment and how do these methods support teaching and learning?*

The assessment methods are described in the syllabi and the schedules of courses available to the Committee.

The details of the assessment procedures were difficult for the Committee to evaluate because of the lack of written information in English on composition of juries, external examiners or rules on reassessment. The institution may wish to consider developing assessment criteria more clearly based on the learning outcomes. This would ensure a fair, consistent and documented assessment of all students. The Committee would like to highlight the importance of setting up formal processes to ensure the regular improvement of assessment methods. As the Committee was not able to attend an examination, it is not in a position to comment on the way in which examinations are actually conducted.

2.4-b. *What kind of grading system is being used in examinations and assessments?*

The Academy uses a uniform system of points to evaluate students on a scale of 1-25 points equal to grades of A to F:

24 – 25 points = A+ (very good +)

21 – 23 points = A (very good)

19 – 20 points = B (good +)

16 – 18 points = C (good)

14 – 15 points = D (sufficient +)

11 – 13 points = E (sufficient)

1 – 10 points = F (fail)

The final grade for the Bachelor examination is an average of the final Bachelor examination grade and an average grade of all courses in the cycle of studies. The final grade of Master examination is an average of the average of grades from the final Master examinations and an average grade for all courses in the cycle of studies. Grades in the final award are given without the number of points. The literal scale (from A+ to E) is used, with each grade described in words i.e. A+ (very good +), A (very good), B (good +), C (good), D (sufficient +) and E (sufficient). Outstanding graduates receive their award with distinction [self-evaluation report p9].

The Committee did not find evidence of any statistics on the grade distribution in general or across departments. In order to achieve consistency in grading across the institution, it may be advisable to look into this matter.

CONFIDENTIAL

3. Student qualifications

3.1 Entrance qualifications

3.1-a. In what ways do the entrance requirements assess the artistic, technical, academic and mental capacities of the applicants to accomplish the various aspects of the study programme within the expected timeframes?

Candidates applying for admission to the AMUZ need to produce a high school graduation diploma as a prerequisite of admission and to pass an entrance examination. The entrance examinations are defined in the “*Regulation of Recruitment*” passed by the Senate. Applicants’ artistic or theoretical skills and knowledge are tested in front of a jury. Candidates who demonstrate sufficiently high level of skills are qualified for further basic examinations comprising various subjects (according to the intended field of study), which are announced in the information brochure in advance [self-evaluation report p10]. Further information on entrance requirements was not available to the Committee in English.

The Academy has good connections to the music schools of the region. From the perspective of the AMUZ, the pre-college system works satisfactorily: there are usually more applicants to the Academy than can be admitted. More than 90% of the instrumentalists come from music schools from the region [meeting with management].

3.2 Employability

3.2-a. Are graduates successful in finding work in today’s highly competitive music life?

There was no statistical evidence presented to the Committee to show the extent to which the Academy's graduates succeed in securing work which is satisfactory to them. However, conversations with the management team and with former students indicated that students do not encounter major problems in finding work. A large number of graduates appears to teach in regional music schools while the best performing musicians tend to seek work abroad [meeting with graduates]. Some of the top graduates are also offered positions as assistants, lecturers or instructors at the Academy [self-evaluation report p10].

3.2-b. How do graduates contribute to the enhancement of cultural life locally, nationally and internationally?

Many of the graduates are active locally, mostly as music teachers. Graduates are also active in the region as orchestral players, soloists and music researchers [self-evaluation report p10], but no overall specific data was provided on the destination of the institution’s graduates. A first step in evaluating what professional work graduates undertake after graduation was taken with a questionnaire for graduates between 2007 and 2009. For this, 29 responses were received. Although this response rate cannot produce reliable statistics, the creation of the questionnaire shows that the institution is trying to amass reliable information about its graduates. The available data show that a majority of graduates who completed the questionnaire are freelance musicians and teachers. Only a minority of those who responded are not working as musicians [results of the graduates’ questionnaire].

The Academy seems to have a good picture of the contribution of its graduates to cultural life in the region. This derives from contact with certain employers in the region (mostly music schools and the local Philharmonic Orchestra), amplified by the informal knowledge of management and the regular contact of graduates with their former teachers. However, the AMUZ might wish to

consider setting up a more formal alumni organisation. Such a system could provide the institution with clear data on the situation of all former students, would create a network of contacts for current students and would enable the Academy to benefit from graduates as ambassadors and recruiters. The AEC publication *Today's Student: Tomorrow's Alumnus – Cultivating Good Alumni Relationships in Conservatoires*¹ could be helpful in this process.

3.2-c. How diverse is the spectrum of music-related arenas in which graduates find themselves immediately after graduation and later?

As mentioned above, graduates seem to have a spectrum of music-related arenas in which they are engaged, mainly teaching, performing in orchestras and as free-lance musicians. Because of the variety of fields of study and the specialisations offered at the Academy, graduates have a wide range of possibilities: their studies should equip them to work in the fields of classical, jazz, early music, theory, as instrumentalists (soloists, chamber and orchestra musicians), vocalists (stage and theatre soloists, members of choirs), and composers. Recent additions to this list would include work as choreographers, experts on dance techniques, music therapists, and creators of film music, computer music and audio-visual techniques [self-evaluation report p11].

The Committee did not have sufficient information to assess to what extent students are obtaining work in the range of areas for which they are educated. The Committee would therefore like to encourage the Academy to further foster good relationships with its graduates as mentioned above, and to try to get more former students engaged in providing regular feedback on a formal basis to the institution.

¹ This publication can be found at <http://www.polifonia-tn.org/alumni>.

4. Teaching staff

4.1 Artistic and scholarly qualifications

4.1-a. Are members of teaching staff productive as artists and/or scholars at a high level?

Members of the teaching staff at the AMUZ are obliged to submit annual reports concerning their artistic and scholarly activity to the Heads of Chairs. For progression in the institution, evidence of high level of skills and intensive activity may lead to further scholarly degrees or employment in other scholarly-didactic posts. Evidence of activity recognised within this progression scheme includes publications, CD recordings with descriptions, doctoral and habilitation dissertations [self-evaluation report p7 and 11]. The information available to the Committee in English showed results of artistic and scholarly activity of the teaching staff [list of publications of the AMUZ after 2000], as did material provided for perusal in the meeting room. Besides those activities mentioned above, members of the teaching staff participate in international exchange; conduct master-classes, seminars, demonstration classes, lectures in the context of scholarly-artistic seminars and conferences; write articles, and serve as jury members in national and international competitions [self-evaluation report pp11 and 12].

Based on the above mentioned material and the information available, the Committee observed that teaching staff members are active and productive as artists and/or scholars, some at a very high level.

4.1-b. Is there an institutional policy and practice to support and enhance the teaching staff's artistic and scholarly production?

In part, the enhancement of the teaching staff's artistic and scholarly production happens via the incentives which "The Higher Education Act" creates by regulating the progression for teaching staff according to qualifications achieved. Accordingly, scholarly-didactic workers, who begin their career, conduct research in order to acquire further scholarly degrees as a PhD - doctor of art or habilitated doctor and Professor of Art [self-evaluation report p7]. Faculties and chairs are aware of this and do take care of the development of their scholarly staff. Furthermore, the Academy grants leave to members of staff when research activities or further education require a period away from the Academy [meeting with academic staff members].

The Committee found ample evidence of the institution's systematic efforts to enhance the teaching staff's artistic and scholarly production and of the support which is provided to make this happen.

4.2 Qualifications as educators

4.2-a. How does the institution ensure that all members of the teaching staff have appropriate qualifications as educators?

Every person striving to be employed at the AMUZ must submit a certificate of pedagogical qualifications in accordance with the regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport (No 2110 issued on 7th September 2004) [self-evaluation report p 12]. The actual appointment of teachers is effected via a competition. Announcement concerning a competition for a particular position is published on the Academy's internet website and sent to all institutions of music education in Poland [self-evaluation report p12]. The Academy has also the possibility of employing people on a short term appointment for one year's teaching, as a trial. This happens especially with the best recent graduates of the AM. After the trial year if they wish to continue to

teach at the Academy, these young teachers have to compete for an ordinary teaching position (which can be an assistant teacher job) [meeting with management].

4.2-c. Are policies and strategies in place for continuing professional development of teaching staff?

As mentioned before, while the Committee was not able to identify a documented strategy for continuing professional development besides the progression scheme provided by national regulations, there appears to be some financial support available in the institution for continuing professional development organised through the personal initiative of individual staff members [meeting with management and academic staff]. The institution is also encouraging international staff exchange via Erasmus, which is certainly of benefit to the participating teachers and provides them with examples of other teaching approaches and processes.

4.3 Size and composition of the teaching staff body

4.3-a. Is the number of teaching staff adequate to cover the teaching volume within a frame of acceptable quality?

The number of teaching staff covers the needs of the Academy in a satisfactory way. Currently 176 full-time teachers are employed, 46 part-time teachers and 75 teachers are employed on the basis of a mandate contract [self-evaluation report p 12]. With 755 students the overall student/teacher ratio is favourable. Former and current students indicated as well that their experience of the teaching provided by the Academy was positive: there were sufficient teachers available and the teaching provided was of good quality. [meetings with graduates and students].

Thus, the Committee had the impression that the number of teaching staff is adequate to cover the teaching volume. For an enrolment of 755 students, the student/teacher ratio appears appropriate.

4.3-b. Does the teaching staff cover all areas and disciplines included in the study programme?

The teaching staff covers all areas and disciplines included in the study programmes and the Academy is able to fulfil its mission and goals. Every year in March, the Teaching Staff Development Committee has its meeting. Deans, Vice Deans and Heads of Chairs submit their plans and present demands for development [self-evaluation report p13].

The Committee had the impression that all areas and disciplines included in the study programme are covered by the teaching staff. An area for development is likely to be the 3rd cycle of studies.

4.3-c. Does the composition of the teaching staff allow flexible adaptation to new professional requirements?

According to the Academy's self evaluation the composition of the teaching staff allows for flexible adaptation to new professional requirements and challenges, since the teaching staff is subject to a continuous process of evolution of skills in the context of acquiring further professional qualifications and scholarly degrees. If necessary, at the time of implementation of a new field of study or specialisation, the Academy can open a competition for a particular position [self-evaluation report p13]. The institution is also given a certain flexibility regarding the adaptation to new professional requirements, with the possible use of part-time teachers. Teachers who are over 65 years of age and academic teachers who are over 70 years of age have the option of changing from full-time employment to a mandate contract or of retirement. The vacant positions

are offered to outstanding graduates of the Academy who constitute potential for further development of the teaching staff [self-evaluation report p11].

Although the Committee did not go into details about the length of the staff contracts, its members shared the impression that the composition of the teaching staff with a proportion of part-time teachers ensures flexibility in the Conservatoire's educational offerings. Part-time teachers who are also working professionally are generally able to keep their students up-to-date with new professional requirements. The Committee encourages the AMUZ, while maintaining its policy of employing the ablest recent graduates, to ensure that some of the new teachers which it employs come from backgrounds different from those of the current professors, in order to expand and refresh the institution's artistic perspectives.

CONFIDENTIAL

5. Facilities, resources and support

5.1 Facilities

5.1-a. Are the building facilities (teaching and practice studios, classrooms, concert venues, etc.) adequate to support curriculum requirements?

The Academy is situated in historic buildings at 32 Gdańska St. and 6 1st-Maja St. and in a building at 79 Kilińskiego St. Due to the character of the main building (rooms with rich architectural decorations – walls and ceilings decorated with stucco works and oak panels) the possibility of meeting particular demands of contemporary acoustical standards is limited. In order to enhance the quality of classrooms in terms of acoustics, suppressive curtains have been used. Additionally, construction work is being undertaken to remedy the situation where possible. The Academy will soon acquire a completely new building containing a new concert hall.

Students and staff have access to the buildings every day of the week: classrooms and equipment are available from Monday to Saturday from 7.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m. and on Sunday from 9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. [self-evaluation report p13].

The Committee noted that members of staff are keenly aware of the distinctive quality of individual spaces in the Academy and that careful thought is given to matching the work that goes on in those places to the particular environment. The Committee gathered that the Academy does not yet have a booking system for the practice rooms [meeting with students]. The Committee therefore recommends that the Academy look into the computer programs used in similar institutions to organise room bookings. This will also be useful for the new facilities which are currently under construction.

5.1-b. Are the instruments (pianos, organs, percussion, etc.) of a number and standard adequate to support curriculum requirements?

The Academy is committed to the regular acquisition of new instruments. This policy, which makes it possible to renew the stock of instruments regularly, is an indication of the forward-looking attitude of the management. Between 2005 and 2009 the Academy purchased 2 pedal kettle drums, 4 xylophones, a percussion set, a bongo drum, a marimba, 2 clarinets, 5 oboes, 3 French horns, 2 bassoons, 2 piccolo trumpets, 3 piccolos, an organ with mechanic tracker action, 12 pianos, a positive organ, a double bass, a harpsichord, a Yamaha Clavinova and a portable recorder of piano music 'Kawai' [self-evaluation report p13]. The Academy also owns a stock of instruments for students who do not have their own instruments or who need experience of using instruments of better quality.

The Committee was not provided with detailed information on the extent of the instrument collection but the instruments available seem adequate to support curriculum requirements. No dissatisfaction was expressed concerning the number and/or the quality of the instruments, or the policy in force at the AMUZ.

5.1-c. Are the computing and other technological facilities adequate to support curriculum requirements?

A computer workroom with twelve computers, five of which possess *Nuendo* and *Finale* programmes, synth-action keys, expansion sound cards and high quality earphones, is available for classes. This room is used for small group teaching. Students have six computers at their disposal and can access the wireless network, recently installed at the Academy, with their

personal laptops. The Academy is committed to the constant development of its technological facilities. Currently, the equipment in the recording studio is being upgraded and supplemented to meet the needs of the newly implemented post-diploma studies in the fields of film music, computer music and audiovisual work. Additional spaces for computing will become available when the enlargement of the facilities that is currently underway (the new building) is completed [self-evaluation report p14].

The computing and technological facilities appeared to be adequate and will be enhanced when the new building becomes available.

5.1-d. Are the library, associated equipment (listening facilities, etc.) and the services adequate to support curriculum requirements?

The library of the Academy, which is located at Kilińskiego St., contains 35.775 scores, 2.000 CDs and around 4.000 to 5.000 LPs, 10.010 paper books, 3409 Bachelor and Master dissertations, 36 titles of Polish magazines and 22 titles of foreign magazines [self-evaluation report p14].

Although the librarian and her team are very dedicated and clearly look after the library extremely well, the Committee was convinced that what it currently provides is not adequate to support curriculum requirements especially in the second and third cycles. There is insufficient material, and what is available is, in general, not up to date. For the type of curricula which the Academy purports to offer, it is unlikely that there are sufficient recordings for the number of students. There are at present no DVDs at all. Given what the Academy is aiming to do, there is a mismatch here. The Committee would like to emphasise the importance of extending the library's holdings in terms of books, CDs and DVDs as well as periodical subscriptions. The Committee recognises the efforts the institution is making to preserve the LP collection of classical music by converting it to a digitalised format [self-evaluation report p14].

5.2 Financial resources

5.2-a. How is the educational programme tailored, so that it can provide high quality requirements within the financial resources available?

The institution receives a grant from the national budget via the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, which covers approximately 90% of all costs [self-evaluation report p15]. A natural balance between the educational programme and the available resources arises from the fact that the number of students entering the AMUZ is restricted. The number of student places available is calculated as a function of the number of instruments and of the financial resources available for each. These resources are distributed so that each student can receive a high quality education. To supplement this annual funding, the Academy makes strenuous efforts to win the support of sponsors: these help in funding national and international music events such as competitions organised in the institution [self-evaluation report p15]. Students and staff are also encouraged to seek external funding for their own projects: both tutors and students regularly submit applications for grants for particular projects (research works, diploma dissertations) to funding sources such as the President of Łódź City.

The Committee commends the Academy for the efforts it has made to supplement its recurrent funding and encourages the institution to explore further the availability of other sources of income as a way of supporting specific events or projects undertaken by the institution outside of its regular activities.

5.2-b. Is there a long-term financial plan?

The Academy prepares an annual 'financial and material plan', taking into consideration all anticipated sources of funding, including its recurrent income. The plan for the following year is presented to the Senate for approval before 30th June each year. No long-term financial plans are formally prepared, apart from the plans for specific projects (such as those with a 3-year span), which deal with projected costs of employment of the teaching, technical and administrative staff, costs of maintenance of buildings and investment expenses.

The Committee recognises that the financial resources available to the Academy, allied with the national requirements under which it operates, could restrict its ability to take action in certain areas, and commends the institution for the efforts it is making to improve the financial situation by seeking funding in addition to the funding that it receives from the Government.

5.3 Support staff

5.3-a. Is the technical and administrative staff adequate to support the teaching, learning and artistic activities?

In its self-evaluation report the institution expresses its satisfaction with the technical and administrative staff and its appropriateness for the requirements related to the artistic and scholarly activity of the Academy [self-evaluation report p16].

Conversations during the visit, and the support provided for various activities taking place at this time, helped to confirm for the Committee the adequacy of the current levels and experience of the technical and administrative staff in supporting the Academy's teaching, learning and artistic activities.

5.3-b. Are policies and strategies in place for continuing professional development of technical and administrative staff?

The Academy's staff development policy, which is based on a long-term strategy, includes continuing professional development for administrative and technical staff. Because Poland became a member of the European Union and because of constant changes in legislation, employees in certain functions (e.g. finance) regularly participate in courses and attend training sessions [self-evaluation report pp16, 17]. The approach in these departments is very proactive. Most of the training takes place in the region, some of it in cooperation with the other art academies or the libraries in Łódź. In addition, the Academy makes it possible for members of staff to work on a part time basis while undertaking a period of further study [meeting with support staff members].

Overall, the Committee gained the impression that continuing professional development of technical and administrative staff receives considerable attention and is adequately handled by the AMUZ. The Academy is encouraged to give thought to the possibility of supportive staff exchanges via Erasmus for those members of staff who are interested in getting insight into the operation of similar institutions elsewhere in Europe.

5.4 Organisation and decision-making processes

5.4-a. *To what extent do the following support the curriculum, and the teaching and learning processes:*

- *the organisational structure of the institution*
- *the organisational structure of the study programmes*
- *decision-making processes on institutional management*
- *decision-making on curricular affairs?*

The organisational structures of the Academy are consistent with the national Law on Higher Education. Because these are designed to provide clear locations for decision-making and clear reporting lines and channels of communication, these are effective in supporting the creation and development of the curriculum and the formation of associated teaching and learning processes [self-evaluation report p.17 and chart of the organisational structure of the AMUZ].

The highest authority at the Academy is the Rector. There are two Vice Rectors who report to the Rector. Together with the Rector, they constitute the Rector's Board which controls the Academy's activity and provides the main location for decision-making on matters of institutional management. The administrative part of the institution's activity is controlled by the Chancellor, who is also subordinate to the Rector. Decisions related to programme matters are made either by Chairs, by Faculty Boards or by the Senate, according to the nature of the issue [self-evaluation report p.18]. The highest collective body of the Academy is the Senate, with the Rector as its Chair. The Senate, which acts as the main decision-making body on curricular and related matters affecting the institution as a whole, comprises Vice Rectors, Deans and representatives of all groups of employees in proportions defined in the Academy's Statute. Information flows to and from these bodies via the faculties. Each of the four faculties is headed by a Dean; the two larger faculties also have one or two Vice Deans depending on the size of the faculty. The collective decision-making body for the faculty is the Faculty Board, chaired by the Dean. The content-related part of the Academy's educational activities is also controlled by Chairs, which are directed by Heads of Chairs. There are twelve Chairs at the AMUZ. Regular meetings of all formally-constituted bodies ensure timely decision-making processes at the appropriate level regarding all aspects of the Academy's activities and good communication between them.

The Committee found that, as an educational institution, the Academy is effectively organised and that the individual organisational units cooperate well and appear to satisfy the needs of those concerned. Discussions and observations during the visit helped to confirm the view that the Academy's decision-making and consultative bodies provide effective and timely support for the curriculum and the teaching and learning processes.

5.4-b. *Is there a long-term strategy for the improvement of the organisational decision-making structures?*

As mentioned above, in the Academy there is a overall sense that the current structures are working effectively and are satisfying the needs of all stakeholders, including the students [self-evaluation report p18]. Therefore, at present no need is felt to change the organisational structure.

5.5 Internal quality assurance system

5.5-a. To what extent are effective quality assurance and enhancement systems in place for the continuous improvement of the curriculum and the learning environment?

The Academy has been using a system of teaching staff evaluation for a long time. The evaluation takes place every four years, according to national law. According to a resolution of the Senate, every two years an anonymous student questionnaire is conducted to evaluate classes. The results have been taken into consideration when evaluating the teaching staff. Together with the proposals of students and of the Student Council, results also have a direct impact on curricula. At least once a year, a meeting of each faculty board is dedicated to the evaluation of the teaching process and the conclusions from this. Meetings between the Academy's senior staff and students constitute another important element of the institution's approach to quality assurance. These meetings are organized at the beginning of every academic year, in accordance with students' needs. During the current academic year, an anonymous questionnaire for graduates was published on the Academy's website. Its results will influence discussions relating to the evaluations conducted by Chairs, Faculty Boards and the Academy's Authorities [self-evaluation report p19]. The Academy also pays careful attention to the continuous improvement of the student recruitment process; therefore, during the entrance exams in June 2009 two anonymous surveys were conducted among applicants. In the light of responses to these surveys, changes will be made in the way that certain parts of the entrance examinations are organised [self-evaluation report p10]. Additionally, employers have been asked to offer opinions about graduates of the Academy.

All this shows that there is a clear awareness within the Academy of the importance of quality assurance. To embed the system more fully, a more formalised approach towards quality management could be adopted. Thus, the institution might wish to consider developing a plan defining the institutional (and programme) goals in terms of quality assurance, explaining how results are measured and how they are related to the goals expressed. In this process of refining an internal quality assurance system, the AEC Handbook *Internal Quality Assurance in Higher Music Education*² could be very helpful to the institution. This handbook gives some practical assistance by presenting a simple procedure which might be used in developing a system for internal quality assurance, and by presenting concrete materials used by various conservatoires elsewhere in Europe.

5.5-b. How are staff, students and former students involved in the quality assurance process?

Staff, students and former students are involved in the quality assurance process. Besides the questionnaires mentioned above, discussions with the Students Council play a vital role in this process. From the meeting with the students it became also evident that the Academy allows for direct feedback between students and authorities about quality enhancement measurements [meeting with students, meeting with management and meeting with support staff members].

The Committee welcomes the strong involvement of staff and students in the quality assurance process and could observe their awareness of the process and its functioning. In parallel with the formal procedures, informal discussions take place between students and management, and between teachers and students. This contributes to a general feeling of 'being involved' and 'being heard'. However, as indicated in section 3.2 above, the Committee would like to highlight the value of involving former students in the process and to encourage the Academy to explore all possible ways of collecting their feedback. This would provide the institution with useful

² This handbook can be found at www.bologna-and-music.org/internalqa.

information on the relevance of its programmes for recent graduates and enable the institution to react quickly where appropriate and feasible to suggestions for increasing this relevance.

5.5-c. *To what extent:*

- *are such reviews used to improve the educational programme?*
- *is this process continuously analysed and reviewed?*

According to the self-evaluation report of the Academy the introduction of quality assurance measures has had significant influence on the improvement of its educational provision for students. As the process is sustained by all members of the Academy, continual revision of educational programmes is ensured [self-evaluation report p19 and 20, meeting with the students, meeting with the teachers and meeting with the management].

It seemed to the Committee that the quality assurance process is being effectively used by the Academy for quality enhancement purposes. There was evidence to show that improvements to the institution's educational programmes are implemented as soon as possible after they have been identified and agreed. The continuous improvement of the procedure itself was not specifically discussed during the review visit, although the examples cited showed that this was taking place.

CONFIDENTIAL

6. Public interaction

6.1 Influence on development

6.1-a. *Is the institution involved in the public discourse on cultural and musical policies or other relevant issues?*

The Academy's authorities participate in the Conference of Rectors of Public Academic Institutions, in the Conference of Rectors of Academic Institutions of Art (KRUA) and in the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (KRASP). Positions taken in these conferences influence the cultural and music policy in Poland. Additionally the Academy's authorities participate in sessions of the Higher Education Council convened by the President of the City of Łódź. Furthermore, members of staff of the Academy of Music in Łódź contribute to the public discourse about cultural and musical issues by publishing books, and by participating in and organising lectures [self-evaluation report p20].

The involvement of the Academy in the public discourse on cultural and musical policies was well demonstrated in the Self Evaluation document and in the range of published material provided in the meeting room for members of the Review Panel to examine. This issue was not discussed during the formal meetings of the review visit.

6.1-b. *To what extent does the institution initiate and involve itself in projects challenging existing musical policies and practices?*

The Academy sees itself as part of a long musical tradition. It recognises, however that the accession of Poland to the European Union on 1st May 2004 has both opened new possibilities and challenged certain existing practices. Currently the Academy is engaged in several projects which demonstrate its commitment to expanding the scope of existing music practices and policies. Projects include the realisation of G. F. Händel's *Julius Caesar*, the participation in the project *Academy of Music in Łódź vs A. Rubinstein Philharmonic in Łódź* (an educational programme which aims to engage at the youth of the region), and the organisation of a concert cycle called *Music Encounters* for residents of a nearby town (Zgierz). The Academy is also involved in several EU projects financing infrastructural changes in the region connected to culture and music [self-evaluation report pp. 20 and 21].

While there was no evidence presented to the Committee to indicate that the projects in which the Academy is currently engaged are, by international standards, particularly innovative, members of the Committee gained the impression that members of the institution are open to the possibility of undertaking projects which explicitly challenge existing policies and practices. It was clear that some of the changes which the Academy has introduced in recent years have already challenged existing thinking about the role and contribution of a music academy in contemporary Polish society and the responsibility which it shares for the expansion of musical understanding in society as a whole. The Academy is encouraged to continue to position itself so that it is able, through its students and staff, to exert a significant influence on the reshaping of musical policies and practices in the region in which it is located.

6.2 Interaction with the profession

6.2-a. How does the institution communicate and interact with various sectors of the music profession in order to keep in touch with their needs?

In its self-evaluation report the Academy mentions co-operation with several institutions in the region which enables the Academy to gather information on future needs of the profession. The institutions mentioned in the report are:

- Department of Culture in the Municipal Authority Office,
- Department of Culture in The City of Łódź Office,
- Department of Culture in The City of Zgierz Office,
- The Arthur Rubinstein Philharmonic in Łódź,
- The Grand Theatre,
- The Music Theatre,
- The Museum of History of the City of Łódź,
- The Herbst Palace,
- Scientific Society of Łódź,
- Polish Academy of Sciences – branch in Łódź,
- The University of Łódź,
- The Technical University of Łódź,
- The Medical University,
- The Polish National Film, Television and Theatre School,
- The Strzemiński Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Łódź [self-evaluation report p21 and 22].

Furthermore, as mentioned in section 3.2 above, the institution selected a number of employers in the region and asked them to provide feedback on the qualification of graduates in relation to the demands of their current employment [summary of opinions of employers in the region].

The Committee did not have the opportunity to discuss this point but gained the strong impression from various conversations that the Academy is well embedded in the local cultural life and has good contacts with various sectors of the music profession. However the Committee received no information to demonstrate that structured feedback of this kind was retrieved on a regular basis or was seen as an integral element of the institution's approach to quality enhancement. The Committee encourages the Academy to expand its efforts in this area and specifically, to consult a wider range of sectors of the music profession in order to obtain their views on the skills, knowledge and understanding which new graduates need in order to succeed in the relevant sphere of professional activity.

6.2-b. How does the institution participate in the exploration of new professional possibilities for musicians?

The Academy has recently introduced new educational offerings that respond to current needs of the profession like Choreography and Dance techniques, Music therapy, Post-Diploma studies in the field of Film music, Computer music and Audiovisual Work [syllabi].

The Committee did not gain the impression that the Academy sees it as one of its priorities to explore new fields which may offer professional possibilities for musicians. However it was clear from conversations with students, staff and former students that the institution does all that it can to enable students to develop the knowledge and skill that will assist them in establishing successful professional careers for themselves.

6.2-c. Is there a long-term strategy for the improvement of the links with the profession?

The Academy is content with the existing links to the profession. Further action will be agreed upon by the Academy with its individual partners in the profession if necessary [self-evaluation report p 23].

The Committee recognises that interaction with some sectors of the profession is certainly in place, and there are some regular and well-established contacts at the moment. The Committee would like to underscore the importance of further improvement to the range of contacts and to the process by which information is obtained and evaluated. Structured feedback of this kind should form an integral part of a comprehensive quality enhancement system.

CONFIDENTIAL

6.3 Information to potential students

6.3-a. Is the actual course programme consistent with the information given to the public on what the institution offers in terms of educational programmes?

Every year the Academy organises Open Days for candidates. Sessions on these Open Days are specific to particular areas of study: classes are arranged to demonstrate audition and examination requirements and the distinctive features of the institution [self-evaluation report p23 and 24]. The current course programme can be found in the Academy's information brochure which is updated yearly. Information related to recruitment and rules of proceedings are available on the Academy's website (<http://www.amuz.lodz.pl/>). In the section dedicated to student recruitment, one can find □ general information related to the recruitment process, □ general terms of admission, schedule of entrance examinations, dates of entrance examinations, dates for submitting applications, information on required documentation, fees for entrance examinations, rules and procedures of conducting entrance examinations, accommodation, and □ regulations governing the recruitment process.

The Committee would like to commend the Academy on the development of its website. The Academy's welcoming attitude to students is mirrored in the website as it stands to date and in ideas for its further development which were shared with the Committee. The Academy's information brochure is very valuable as well. The information given is concise and up to date.

7. Summary

This summary contains two sections; firstly a list of items which stand out as being very strong relative to the AEC criteria, secondly an outline of some of the areas in which there seems to be potential for further development on the part of the Academy.

Strong points

- **Care and thoroughness of preparation of the visit:** The self evaluation document was very well prepared. The fact that it was written in very good English suggests that the original Polish version must be very clear and thorough in its account of the institution and its activities. The supporting material was well organised and there were clear and frequent cross-references to the supporting material contained in the annexes. The supplementary material and the way in which it was presented significantly helped the Committee to gain an understanding of the Academy and its ethos. The efforts that were made to translate most of the material into English made the preparation of the documentation a really huge job. These efforts were greatly appreciated by the Committee.
- **The atmosphere in the Academy:** There is real warmth and a real feeling of people working together in the institution. There is a very good spirit in the place; the Academy in Łódź gives the impression of being a place where creative work is being done. The management team works together very well. These are strengths that are worth preserving..
- **Openness to new ideas and ambition:** The management team convincingly conveyed their openness towards new ideas and developments. There is receptiveness and ambition. There is a clear view of the direction in which the institution is heading.
- **Outward-looking approach:** The institution is constantly looking for new areas and opportunities, and demonstrated a real sense of how the music profession is evolving. This was evident in the introduction of new subject areas such as music marketing or music therapy, in the attention to creativity and in the way the Academy is looking to develop the second and third cycles.
- **Concern and care for students:** Students do matter in this Academy. Students are aware of it as well and value and appreciate this attitude. There is a very positive approach towards working together. This makes it possible to really engage the students in internal quality assurance. The student questionnaire is just one example of this: there were many others which the Committee noted during the course of the visit.
- **Constant desire to enhance the working and teaching environment for students and staff:** The management team is constantly making efforts to improve the buildings and facilities. It was evident that the Academy has pride in its heritage, and a strong vision for the future development of the working environment. The continuing efforts that have been made to expand and improve the facilities which the institution offers are highly commendable.
- **Stewardship towards the Academy building:** The main part of the Academy is located in a historical residential palace of a nineteenth century Łódź industrialist. The Academy is caring for the building as if it owned it. It is treated with care and love and respect but not as a museum. This balance between a living space and historical preservation - hard to achieve - is being well handled. The way in which the Academy is using the building demonstrates its

consciousness of the quality of particular spaces and their appropriateness for certain activities. The designation of specific rooms for certain types of music-making (for example, the baroque class and the organ class) enhances the quality of the work of teachers and students. It makes studying and working here an inspiring and a pleasant experience.

- **Engagement in implementing the Bologna Structure:** The management team of the Academy has found a very positive way to realise and implement the new Bologna structure in the curricula and made the best out of the necessary changes. This demonstrates strong and effective leadership within the institution. The Rector and his team created a situation where members of staff and students are able to see the benefits of the reform.
- **Mobility:** Because of the way in which the new structure has been implemented, the Academy is now positioned to make effective use of the increased mobility possibilities.
- **Website development:** The Academy's welcoming attitude to students is mirrored in the website as it stands to date and in the ideas for its further development. The management of the Academy has recognised the website as an important part of the international strategy of the institution.
- **Commitment to local community:** The Academy shows strong commitment towards the local community but is at the same time looking wider than this in its recruitment of some of its staff and students. While there is still a distance to travel in this regard, it is clear that the institution's recruitment strategies are pointing in the right direction. The management demonstrated a clear understanding of the need to balance these two issues.
- **Cooperation with local and regional organisations:** The approach to cooperation with local and regional educational and artistic organisations is very successful. Cooperations are chosen in ways that benefit students and staff.

Suggestions for the future

- **Strategic plan:** Although in the overall information prepared for the review visit most of the relevant information can be found, the Academy does not currently have a strategic plan in the form of a single document. Strategic plans are becoming more important for institutions, both for internal and external purposes. Foundations, potential sponsors, and other potential institutional partners may be interested in such a document. The Committee therefore suggests that it may be helpful to use the material prepared for the review visit in order to create such a document in a version from which the Academy itself would also benefit.
- **Selection of musical material for review visit:** The Academy was very open and generous with the musical material forwarded to the review Committee. However, a smaller, more selective compilation of CDs and DVDs, annotated with reference to the wide range of student accomplishment at the Academy, might have been more helpful to the visitors.

Although the detailed review of overall performance standards as such does not form a central part of the task of the Committee, each member of the team listened to the material in terms of his or her experience in other comparable institutions. While there was general agreement that the best performances presented were of a very high standard, the range of grades awarded suggested that the differentiation between the best and the weaker performances was less wide than would be likely elsewhere. In view of the Academy's wish to become more international, this may be an area worth benchmarking against other institutions.

The Committee was delighted to have the opportunity of attending a performance by the Academy at the Philharmonic Hall and recognised the effort that has been put into its preparation but questioned some aspects of the professional involvement, in terms of the models these provided for students. Internationally, expectations in terms of the standard of ensemble performance and direction have risen significantly in the past twenty years. As there is a desire to attract high quality students from all over the world the selection of the performances shown to the public should be made very carefully, including any audio material that is added to the Academy's website.

- **Approach towards alumni:** The Academy's alumni include some very interesting young people. The Committee would suggest that there could be benefits from more regular contact with this group of people. They can function as good ambassadors and recruiters for the institution.
- **Recruitment:** The translations provided by the Academy's international office are excellent. But it may be important to ensure that the terminology adopted is part of 'international currency'. Example of terms which may not be widely understood are 'stationary' and 'non-stationary' (to refer to full time and part-time studies), 'pre-paid' studies (for studies without tuition fee). The Academy could also consider whether its friendly and personal approach is adequately reflected in its recruitment material. Recruitment in a time of demographic change is becoming ever more professionalised and 'customer-oriented'. It may be of help in attracting new people if the Academy's recruitment material considers ways of communicating to those who are not already familiar with the city and the institution what it would feel like to study or to teach at the Academy of Music in Łódź.
- **Recruitment:** The Committee recognises that the Academy is looking to maintain its student numbers. But the Committee suggested that the Academy should give careful thought to the focus on China in its current recruitment policy. Almost every developed country and every major conservatoire in the world is partnering with China, and in some cases has been doing so for over twenty years - if not in China, then in other parts of Asia. Institutions need to be conscious of their own environment and character, and tailor their recruitment strategy accordingly. A focus on student recruitment in Asia could easily change some aspects of the school and the way in which it functions. International students also bring with them additional requirements, which the Academy would need to ensure that it was willing and able to meet adequately and systematically. Recruitment from Asian countries should also not be seen as a long-term solution. In due course, Asian institutions may be looking to be importers, rather than exporters of students. The Academy is strongly recommended not to focus solely on Asia as a student market.
- **Internationalisation strategy:** The Committee encourages the Academy to take a holistic view of its internationalisation strategy. This is an issue for many conservatoires. An internationalisation strategy needs to embrace more than student and staff recruitment: thinking about linking the individual elements together (including that of curriculum) is important. It is vital to offer real access to international contributions in the key areas of institutional life. The question of language also has to be considered in all its aspects.
- **Library:** There was a concern about the Academy's library. The Committee recognised that it is extremely well looked after by a very dedicated librarian. But for the standards one would expect from a higher education institution of university level it looks surprisingly thin. The material is not really up to date and insufficient in quantity. Periodical material is lacking.

Recordings are probably not sufficient for the number of students. There are no DVDs available. Given what the Academy is aiming to do, there is a mismatch here.

- **Description of the courses:** The Committee recommends that the Academy to gives further attention to the wording of the aims of the individual courses. In the self evaluation report the learning outcomes for the end of both cycles of studies are very well described. The connection between those final outcomes and the aims of the individual course units was not so clear, either on paper or in the discussion with the teachers. In these discussions it became evident that there was not yet a widespread awareness of the need to be able to identify and map these relationships. This is a very natural stage of development. In the view of the Committee the Academy would find it helpful, as part of its continuing implementation of the Bologna structure, to make these connections more explicit.
- **Practice facilities:** There was only one point that the students and former students mentioned to the Committee as an area of potential improvement. This was the organisation of practice facilities. Pianists in particular felt that the existing practice facilities could be managed in a better way in terms of time available. The Committee gathered that the Academy does not currently have a booking system for practice rooms. There are some quite good computer programs available to deal with this issue. The Committee advises the Academy, not least with regard to the aim of wider student recruitment, to highlight even small improvements in this area. Working conditions are a decisive factor for potential students who can choose between a variety of national and international institutions. Even if the planned new building will offer much more practice space it will help to have a good and fair booking system to get the most use out of the available rooms.
- **Looking ahead:** The Committee was aware that major areas of the Academy's activity are currently determined by government regulation. Nevertheless the Committee would like to recommend the Academy to continue to take advantage of greater flexibility when the opportunity arises to create a distinctive institutional profile. The Academy is encouraged to remain alert to international comparisons in areas such as student contact hours and workload, and the allocation of the institution's budget. Not all of these areas can be influenced by the institution itself at present but among these are some issues that may need attention in the future.

Conclusion

The Committee found its visit to the The Grażyna and Kiejstut Bacewicz Academy of Music in Łódź an interesting and an enjoyable experience – an experience which was enhanced by the atmosphere in the Academy and the positive attitudes of those whom they met. While there is clearly work to be done in developing the curriculum, the buildings and certain aspects of student services to make the Academy better positioned to compete on a European and an international level, there were clear signs of the type of forward-thinking approach and ambition that promises well for its future development. With appropriate support, this is an institution which has the capacity to grow in stature and significance.