Executive summary

Accreditation of Bachelor *(licence)* and Master *(maîtrise et DEA)* programmes in Music and Musicology

Faculty of Music and Musicology, Antonine University

Beirut, Lebanon

Site-visit: 13-16 October 2019

Introduction

The Faculty of Music and Musicology (FMM) of the Antonine University (UA) mandated MusiQuE to organize a quality enhancement review and accreditation procedure for two training programmes: Bachelor and Master in Music and Musicology.

This evaluation aims at encouraging the FMM to further reflect on the quality of its educational offer and, where appropriate, put forward suggestions for improvement. The objectives of the mission also include introducing new ideas and opening up greater opportunities for development in order to improve the quality of the higher music education offer at UA.

The accreditation process was structured in four phases:

1. Self-evaluation report
   The FMM has produced a self-evaluation report (SER) in compliance with the MusiQuE standards for academic programme assessments. The 113-page document contains 60 annexes[1].

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[1] Cf. Annex 2. List of documents sent to the Review Team

2. Preparation of the on-site visit

   Before the on-site visit, each member of the Review Team analyzed the SER, identifying strengths and areas for improvement in both study programmes and drafting questions to be asked during the on-site visit interviews.

3. On-site visit

   The Review Team was in Beirut to carry out an on-site visit at FMM (October 13-16, 2019). During their stay, the reviewers conducted many interviews with all stakeholders concerned[2] and had the pleasure of attending two musical events organized by FMM: an evening of early Eastern and Western music (Oct. 14) and one of the concerts dedicated to the complete Beethoven Piano Sonata Cycle - a Lebanese premiere (Oct. 15)[3].

4. Assessment report

   Based on the analysis of all the qualitative and quantitative data collected during the on-site visit, of the SER and its annexes, the Review Team produced a report highlighting best practices and making recommendations concerning the future development of FMM.

The previous external quality assurance procedure undertaken at UA (wichh included FMM) was carried out in 2017, by the Swiss Accreditation and Quality Assurance Agency (AAQ). It led to the certification of UA's overall quality assurance system (from which the FMM fully benefits). In consequence, the methodology used for producing the self-evaluation report as well as the documents provided for drafting the present assessment report are based on proven quality assurance mechanisms. The issue at stake here lies beyond the very efficient quality assurance system already implemented and the mission entrusted to the Review Team is to be conducted in the spirit of critical friendship in order to help FMM get through the next stages of development.

Conclusion

A dynamic institution, driven by ambition and committed to academic integrity, the FMM has significant potential, playing a pioneer role in many fields and operating as a positive community, respectful and supportive of every student's chosen individual learning pathway.

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[2] Cf. Overview of the interviews
[3] Cf. Annex 1. On-site Visit Programme

Cutting-edge academic research and musical bilingualism – rediscovering regional cultural roots without neglecting Western music traditions - entitle FMM to take a rather unique position in the Arab world, which constitutes genuine added value. Fully supported by the Rector's Council as the standard-bearer for UA's core values, the FMM is able to pursue its efforts to develop innovative teaching methods, as well as manage and deploy its educational and cultural offer across Lebanese society with a view to reaching far beyond.

To further strengthen its position, FMM should develop a digital strategy, promote its international visibility and profile, reassess its evaluation mehods and ensure effective succession planning.

To achieve its ambitiious objective of becoming one of the best universities in the whole country, FMM has no choice but to make use of all available resources. In that respect, it seems crucial to take the opportunity to form an inter-institutional alliance so as to enter into dialogue with political authorities on specific issues such as creating postgraduate courses or training artists not only for the job market but educating citizen-artists, initiating projects outside of existing structures, for example by increasing transdisciplinarity and strengthening artistic standards.

The Review Team considers that together with the suggested improvements, consciousness of its own strengths should help the two FMM training programmes – now accredited by an external accrediting body - strengthen and clarify the institution's national and international position. Its artistic influence and educational reach would then ensure a coherent synergetic bond to shape the future more serenely. A formidable think-tank, receptive to innovations, the FMM can face the world with kindness and boldness.

The Review Team was impressed by the FMM's remarkable achievements, especially in the sensitive context of Lebanese Higher Education, and by the generous, intelligent individuals who keep the institution alive. The Team sincerely hopes that this accreditation will enable FMM to continue its commitment to music, to Lebanese people and the Mediterranean region, and make an effective contribution to positive social change through Art by successfully addressing today's numerous challenges.

Summary of the compliance with the Standards

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1. Objectives and context of the programmes	
Standard 1. Programme objectives are clearly stated and reflect the mission of the institution.	**Fully compliant**

Summary of key points:	Summary of suggestions for improvement:
- Programmes are compatible with the vision and mission of both UA and FMM. - The Rector's Council fully supports FMM as the standard bearer of its values. - Both programmes display a genuine development strategy to increase the number and improve the quality of students. - The objectives take into consideration the subtleties of the national context and are convincingly communicated. - Musical bilingualism is an important and fascinating specificity.	- Pursuing doctoral studies at UA would ensure better coherence between musicology studies and employment prospects. - Raise awareness about and promote entrepreneurship in the curriculum in order to encourage students to create their own jobs.

2. Education process	
Standard 2.1 Curriculum content, structure and teaching methods ensure that the programme goals are achieved.	**Substantially compliant**

Summary of key points:	Summary of suggestions for improvement:
- The central role of research encourages freedom of thought, critical reflection and the capacity to problematize issues. - Musical bilingualism engages Classical Arabic Music and Western Art Music in convincing dialogue. - Structure and content of the study programmes are perfectly clear. - Cross-curricular opportunities at UA.	- Specify the language for each course taught/course material with a view to attracting more international students. - Pursue studies and research into the implementation of specific pedagogical innovations in Arabic music education. - Put more emphasis on practical skills in both programmes. - Increase efforts to prepare LMM students for research, for example by creating a specific introductory

	course.
Standard 2.2 The programme offers students many opportunities to gain an international perspective.	**Fully compliant**
Summary of key points: - Existing profitable international parnerships. - Most teachers have significant international experience. - The international reach of the Center for Research in Music Traditions (CRTM) can play a major role in internationalising FMM.	Summary of suggestions for improvement: - Encourage greater student mobility, especially through collaborations with other institutions in the Mediterranean region.
Standard 2.3 Assessment methods are clearly set out and demonstrate achieved learning outcomes.	**Fully compliant**
Summary of key points: - The achivements of learning outcomes, the assessment criteria and procedures, and the rating system are all clear and fair.	Summary of suggestions for improvement: - Think about implementing new assessment methods taking the specificity of artistic evaluation into account (developing students' ability to give constructive feedback, peer-reviews etc.).

3. Student profiles

Standard 3.1 Student admission criteria are clear and based on appraisal of the suitability of the applicants' artistic/academic skills for their chosen study programme.	**Substantially compliant**
Summary of key points: - In the current context, the admission system is balanced, although there is no selection process as yet.	Summary of suggestions for improvement: - Student selection criteria will be refined as FMM's national and international influence increases.
Standard 3.2 The programme has processes to formally supervise and evaluate the students' progress, success and future employability.	**Fully compliant**
Summary of key points: - The implemented mechanisms meet the supervision and evaluation requirements regarding student progress and success.	Summary of suggestions for improvement: - Adjusting the internship ratio (e.g. in music therapy) to the sector's student population and the needs of society. - Systematize the collection of data on the alumni's employability.

4. Faculty	
Standard 4.1 Faculty members are qualified for their duties and are professionally active as artists/pedagogues/researchers.	**Fully compliant**

Summary of key points:	Summary of suggestions for improvement:
- Various complementary competences are represented among faculty members.	- Develop a human resources strategy addressing long-term issues (such as gender and age balance), in particular the crucial issue of succession planning.

| **Standard 4.2** Qualified teachers are in sufficient numbers to ensure the effective delivery of the study programme. | **Fully compliant** |

Summary of key points:	Summary of suggestions for improvement:
- The size and composition of the teaching staff enable the efficient delivery of both study programmes.	- Open up the recruitment process to outside personalities.

5. Infrastructure, financial resources and administrative staff	
Standard 5.1 The institution has appropriate resources to support student learning and programme delivery.	**Partly compliant**

Summary of key points:	Summary of suggestions for improvement:
- All implemented IT and educational tools are appropriate. - The construction of a new building gives excellent development potential.	- Focus investments on the construction of the new building in order to solve classroom shortage and storage space issues for instuments that are sometimes in poor condition. - Develop a digital strategy integrating distance education and a digital learning environment in order to remedy to infrastructural shortcomings. - Systematic archiving of FMM concert programmes and documenting the UA rich musical heritage.

| **Standard 5.2** The institution's financial resources enable successful delivery of the programme. | **Fully compliant** |

Summary of key points:	Summary of suggestions for improvement:
- A stable financial situation in spite of relatively low school fees.	- Further diversifying the FMM sources of funding in order to ensure the continuation of the

- Excellent inter-faculty solidarity mechanism that sustains FMM financially as the flag-bearer of UA's core values and principles.	current framework conditions.

Standard 5.3 There is a sufficient number of suitably qualified administrative staff.	**Fully compliant**

Summary of key points:	Summary of suggestions for improvement:
- All UA stakeholders have access to a great number of services.	- Further develop the innovative and very interesting concept of Integral Human Development.

6. Communication, organization and decision-making

Standard 6.1 Implementation of effective internal communication mechanisms throughout the programme.	**Fully compliant**

Summary of key points:	Summary of suggestions for improvement:
- The FMM friendly and open atmosphere encourages communication. - Excellent accessibility to internal communication channels for students with disabilities.	- Increase the formalisation of internal communication in line with the UA quality assurance policy.

Standard 6.2 The programme is based on appropriate organisational structure and decision-making processes.	**Substantially compliant**

Summary of key points:	Summary of suggestions for improvement:
- Smooth functioning facilitated by clear organisational structures.	- The Advisory Council could play a more important role in the future if it included outside representatives. - Strengthen the student's voice within decision-making bodies as much as possible without being GPA-based.

7. Quality-oriented internal culture

Standard 7. The programme has implemented a quality assurance system and improvement procedures.	**Fully compliant**

Summary of key points:	Summary of suggestions for improvement:
- The FMM's clear and efficient quality assurance system enables the educational development of the programmes reviewed.	- Appointing a panel of external experts for entrance/internal exams and clarifying the role of the teacher in evaluation processes.

- The pioneer character of the FMM quality assurance approach and a clear commitment to accreditation.	- Numerous procedures are being implemented and will evolve positively over time if they are followed as carefully as they are now.

8. Public Interaction

Standard 8.1 The programme is part of a broader cultural, artistic and educational context.	**Fully compliant**

Summary of key points:	Summary of suggestions for improvement:
- Existing synergies between various UA departments. - Exemplary effors for cohesion between the various religious denominations at FMM.	- Further promote interfaculty collaborations within UA considering the high resource pooling potential. - Use MTP expertise to integrate health awareness and promotion courses into the curricula. - Foster artistic excellence to produce citizen-artists.

Standard 8.2 The programme actively promotes relationships with various sectors of the music and other artistic professions.	**Substantially compliant**

Summary of key points:	Summary of suggestions for improvement:
- The plurality of concentrations within programmes covers a wide sector of the music field.	- Promote interdisciplinary interactions and projects in relation with performing arts and digital technology. - Adapt recruiment strategy to find teachers with interdisciplinary profiles and specialised in new technologies. - Promote cultural management by developing a specific programme or a competence centre to create cultural and musical projects.

Standard 8.3 Information provided to the public about the programme is clear, consistent and accurate.	**Fully compliant**

Summary of key points:	Summary of suggestions for improvement:
- Commitment to provide ample information to the general public on FMM programme content.	- Pursue the current communication policy and reach out to new communities.

After careful examination of the documentation provided and further on-site investigations, the Review Team found clear evidence that both the Bachelor of Music

and Musicology and the Master (*maîtrise & DEA*) of Music and Musicology degree programmes delivered at the Antonine University Faculty of Music and Musicology comply with MusiQuE quality standards.