



Annual Report 2016

MusiQuE - Music Quality Enhancement

The Foundation for Quality Enhancement and Accreditation in Higher Music Education

Brussels, October 2017

Contents

Contents	2
List of abbreviations.....	3
Preface by the MusiQuE Board	4
Introduction.....	5
Mission and Vision Statement MusiQuE.....	6
Organisation	7
Application to the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR).....	9
Finances.....	10
Review Framework.....	12
Review procedures completed	13
Peer-Reviewers Register.....	15
Communication.....	16
Internal Quality Assurance.....	18
External relations.....	19
List of relevant documents and articles produced.....	20

List of abbreviations

AEC	Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen
EASPA	European Alliance for Subject-Specific and Professional Accreditation and Quality Assurance
EMU	European Music Schools Union
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance
ESG	European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EQAR	European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education
EURASHE	European Association of Institutions in Higher Education
Pearle*	Performing Arts Employers Associations League Europe

Preface by the MusiQuE Board

It is with great pleasure that the members of the MusiQuE Board present the annual report on the activities of MusiQuE - Music Quality Enhancement in 2016. This report strives to give to the reader a taste of an intense year of operation and to present the current state of affairs. The report contains information about the review and accreditation procedures carried out by MusiQuE during 2016. Furthermore, it presents the latest changes made to MusiQuE's review framework and gives account of various improvements made to MusiQuE's procedures throughout the year.

The year 2016 featured a major achievement for MusiQuE. On 6 June 2016, MusiQuE's inclusion on EQAR, the European Quality Assurance Register, was formally endorsed. Through its inclusion on EQAR, MusiQuE has increased its potential as a trustworthy and sustainable quality assurance agency, and consequently enhanced its prestige and visibility at European level. The formal European registration of MusiQuE is not only the acknowledgement of more than ten years of work by many in various European projects and working groups, but also the formal recognition of the pro-active position of music in higher education at European level. It confirms that quality enhancement is something higher music education can take full responsibility for as a sector.

The MusiQuE Board would like to express its sincere gratitude to the founding organisations AEC, EMU and Pearle* for their continuous support to the development of MusiQuE during the past years. The Board would also like to thank the excellent MusiQuE team in Brussels as well as all those institutional representatives, working group members, peer reviewers, students and experts who have actively contributed to making this significant achievement a reality.

Helena Maffli

Géza Kovacs

Gordon James Munro

Bernd Clausen

Martin Prchal

Introduction

MusiQuE is an external evaluation body dedicated to the continuous improvement of the quality of higher music education across Europe and beyond, and to provide assistance to higher music education institutions in their own enhancement of quality. MusiQuE's work is subject-specific and is characterized by flexibility, diversity, transparency and accountability. Its operations are underpinned by independent, skilled and authoritative international peers.

MusiQuE was formally established as an independent organisation in October 2014. The review system MusiQuE operates, however, builds upon foundations that have been laid down over more than a decade by AEC, the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen. After intensive work and consultation, the AEC developed a framework for the review of programmes and institutions under the title 'AEC Quality Enhancement Process'. In 2014, MusiQuE took over all the review activities previously coordinated by AEC. The AEC, however, remains involved in the further development of MusiQuE as a partner organisation, mandating individuals as members to the MusiQuE Board. In addition to the AEC, two European associations representing employers in the field of music contribute to MusiQuE's functioning by mandating members to its Board: EMU, the European Music Schools Union, and Pearle*, the Performing Arts Employers Associations League Europe. As such, it is guaranteed that actions of MusiQuE will always be checked for relevance with the professional demands of today's world of music.

MusiQuE offers a range of review and accreditation processes tailored to the needs of Higher Music Education institutions, including:

- Quality enhancement reviews for institutions, programmes and joint programmes
- Accreditation procedures for institutions, programmes and joint programmes
- Joint procedures with national quality assurance and accreditation agencies

More information about MusiQuE's services is available at <http://www.musique-qe.eu/reviews>.

Mission and Vision Statement MusiQuE

The following vision and mission statements encapsulate the essential nature of MusiQuE:

Vision statement

MusiQuE seeks to be the recognised European independent accreditation and external evaluation body for music, contributing to the continuous improvement of the quality of higher music education across Europe and beyond. Its operations are underpinned by independent, skilled and authoritative international peers. MusiQuE operates according to the ESG and is registered on EQAR. As such, it seeks to be a leading player in higher education quality assurance in general, working with the institutions in which its procedures are applied to construct a broadly-supported quality culture with respect to the specific contexts and individual characteristics of higher music education and its institutions. Through such work, MusiQuE aims to heighten the trust of society in the quality of music study programmes.

Mission statement

MusiQuE's work is discipline-specific and aims to be characterized by flexibility, diversity, transparency and accountability in its treatment of quality enhancement in music. Through its accreditation, quality enhancement and advisory services, MusiQuE assists higher music education institutions, across Europe and further afield, in their enhancement of quality. It treats quality assurance and enhancement from a subject-specific viewpoint and enables institutions to engage with the improvement of the discipline and its curricula from artistic, practical and other relevant perspectives. Furthermore, MusiQuE works to stimulate and support European institutions in the achievement of highly valued reputations internationally for their artistic output, education and research.

With its extensive expertise in the field of music, and knowledge of diverse national systems, MusiQuE participates in the public debate about musical quality and it contributes to the broad dissemination of information, new ideas and strategies concerning quality enhancement, learning, education and research, especially where these impinge upon the discipline of music and how it is taught, practised and researched.

Organisation

Legal basis

MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement was founded as a legal entity under Dutch law in The Hague on 7 October 2014. Formally, the organisation has the legal status of a foundation ('stichting' in the Dutch legal terminology).

Board Composition and Meetings

The MusiQuE Board is responsible for all decision-making and for the commissioning of actions in relation to the operations of MusiQuE. It is therefore the key entity in MusiQuE's structure and its composition, roles and responsibilities have a critical bearing on the effective and appropriate functioning of MusiQuE.

Board meetings took place on 18 May 2016 in Wroclaw to meet jointly with the Evaluation Group of the AEC's 'FULL SCORE' project, and on 8 October 2016 in Brussels.

In 2016, the Board was composed of following members:

- Board member mandated by EMU:
 - Helena Maffli, Board Member, EMU President
- Board member mandated by Pearle*:
 - Géza Kovacs, Board Member, Director-General of the Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir, President of the Association of Hungarian orchestras and Vice-President of Pearle*
- Board members mandated by AEC:
 - Gordon Munro, Board Secretary and Treasurer, Royal Conservatoire Scotland
 - Martin Prchal, Board Chair, Royal Conservatory The Hague
 - Mist Thorkelsdottir, Board Member, Academy of Music and Drama at the University of Gothenburg

The representatives of EMU and Pearle* are mandated for 3 years (November 2014-November 2017). For AEC, with its multiple representation on the MusiQuE Board, a rolling system has been established, with different representatives starting and finishing their terms in different years, to balance the requirements of regular refreshment of the Board's composition with a necessary stability in its functioning during MusiQuE's first years of activity.

Mist Thorkelsdottir left the Board in November 2016. Mist's contributions to the Board and to the former AEC Quality Enhancement Committee have been crucial to the development of MusiQuE in its first year of operation as an independent evaluation agency. The MusiQuE Board and staff are thankful to Mist for her commitment.

Bernd Clausen (Hochschule für Musik Würzburg) was appointed as the new Board member based on the proposal made by the AEC Council. With many years of experience in quality enhancement and higher music education, Bernd's profile is an excellent addition to the Board's current composition.

Staff

The MusiQuE Board depends for its effective functioning on support provided between its meetings and during its reviews by suitably qualified individuals. The individuals who make up the MusiQuE staff are responsible for ensuring

continuous support to the MusiQuE Board; they prepare the Board meetings, ensure that the Board decisions are implemented and coordinate the review processes..

Members of the MusiQuE staff in 2016 were:

- Linda Messas, serviced from AEC Office staff
- Jef Cox, serviced from the AEC Office staff
- Rosanne van der Voet, intern, serviced from the AEC Office staff

The office which the MusiQuE staff is operating from is located in Brussels, Belgium.

Application to the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR)

To be able to conduct quality enhancement reviews or accreditation procedures independently in various European countries, it was desirable to have MusiQuE recognised by and listed on EQAR. To gain this recognition MusiQuE had to undergo an external evaluation by a team of international experts in quality assurance and be assessed against the latest version the ESG. A Review Panel composed of international experts in quality assurance visited MusiQuE in 2015, and subsequently produced an external review report. The report considered the compliance of MusiQuE's activities to the ESG and contained a list of valuable of recommendations for the further development of the organisation. Subsequently, MusiQuE submitted an application, including the external review report, for inclusion on EQAR to the EQAR Register Committee.

On 6 June 2016, the Register Committee confirmed that MusiQuE's application to be listed on EQAR had been successful. This made MusiQuE the first European-level subject-specific agency in the field of music, arts and humanities to gain registration on EQAR,

At the European level, MusiQuE thus has the same formal status as most national quality assurance or accreditation agencies. A full list of all agencies currently listed on EQAR can be found on <http://www.egar.eu/register/search.html>. The decision of the EQAR Register Committee on the inclusion of MusiQuE onto the register was based on an analysis of the compliance of MusiQuE with the ESG. Out of fourteen standards, MusiQuE met twelve standards with full compliance and only two with partial compliance, which shows the confidence of the EQAR Register Committee in MusiQuE's relevance and future perspectives. The decision of the EQAR Register Committee has been published at https://egar.eu/register/search/detailpage.html?tx_pxdegar_pi1%5Bcid%5D=66.

Finances

The finances for the year 2016 demonstrate the first year of a growing level of activity by MusiQuE. As was mentioned during the review for EQAR, the financial sustainability (and therefore financial independence) of the organisation is subject to a medium-term development. In order to guarantee MusiQuE financial viability in its first years of operation, the three founding partners of MusiQuE, AEC, EMU and Pearle* engaged in a written statement to offer their financial support, without compromising the independence of MusiQuE, whenever this would be required to sustain MusiQuE's activities during its first years of operation. Following this statement, the MusiQuE Board agreed to a commitment in which the reimbursement of staff costs would increase on an annual basis with the aim to reach financial independence in 2020. In 2016, MusiQuE reimbursed 33% of the total staff costs covered by AEC. Staff costs include the costs for the staff at the MusiQuE Office in Brussels, while no remuneration is offered to MusiQuE Board members. For overhead costs covering the daily operation of the MusiQuE Office, an annual contribution to AEC calculated on the basis of 7% of MusiQuE direct costs was agreed upon, which was paid in 2016 in full for the first time.

The profit and loss statement for 2016 shows a positive result of 12,055€. This is consistent with the decision of the MusiQuE Board to create a reserve over the coming years with the aim to finance the next external review for EQAR in 2020. It should be pointed out here that the ambition by MusiQuE to become financially independent as soon as possible (which indeed was an important recommendation made by the EQAR Register Committee) is being slowed down by the need to build up a reserve for the next review for EQAR.

Profit and loss statement 2016 (in euro)

Income		
Direct income	2016	2015
Fees for review procedures	39,600	
Reimbursements of review costs by institutions	20,799	
Direct contribution from the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC)		43,765
	60,399	43,765
Total Income	60,399	43,765
Expenses		
General management expenses	2016	2015
Board meetings costs	2,314	3,808
Invoiced wages for MusiQuE Staff	12,400	0
	14,714	3,808
Office and organisation costs	2016	2015
Postal charges	13	0

Legal expenses Chamber of commerce/Notary	36	56
Bank fees	106	0
Subscriptions (ENQA, EASPA, EQAR)	5,190	3,317
Translations	320	3,620
Annual workshop for peer-reviewers	688	1,079
Costs of review procedures	19,799	
Travel and subsistence costs Board and Staff	2,998	4,074
External review process of MusiQuE	0	26,144
Website development and maintenance	58	445
Fees external evaluator and author trend analysis	605	
Publication and production costs	653	1,222
	30,467	39,957
Total Expenses	45,182	43,765
Overhead costs for AEC (=7% of total direct costs)	3,163	
Result	12,055	0

Review Framework

In order to have a well-functioning system for the review of institutions and programmes, MusiQuE has developed various documents that provide a basis for its review activities.

The Framework Document *MusiQuE – Background, Mission and Regulations*

MusiQuE's review system is documented in the MusiQuE Framework Document: *MusiQuE - Background, Mission and Regulations*. This document contains information about MusiQuE, its history and rationale and its structure, and sets out in a systematic way the accreditation, quality enhancement and advisory procedures which MusiQuE provides. The MusiQuE Framework Document is available for download on the MusiQuE website at <http://www.musique-qe.eu/documents/musique-framework-document>.

The Framework Document is not cast into stone but meant to constantly evolve, as MusiQuE does not see itself as a static and inflexible entity: procedures are in place to enable MusiQuE to be responsive and helpful to its stakeholders such as higher music education institutes and professional music bodies. Some sections of the Framework Document are therefore being revised regularly (such as the Section describing the review procedures) following feedback received from various stakeholders through the annual consultation process or through feedback questionnaires distributed following review procedures.

The following notable modifications to the Framework Document were made in 2016:

- Chapter 5.3: a paragraph has been inserted explaining that certain aspects of MusiQuE's procedures are flexible and can be adapted to the specific needs of institutions.
- Chapter 8.2.4: the reference to GNI's with regard to the determination of review fees has been taken out. A sentence indicating that AEC member institutions are offered special rates for MusiQuE's services compared to non-members has been inserted into the text.

A translation of the Framework Document into German has been finalised in 2016 as well. An overall update of the Framework Document is planned in 2017-2018.

MusiQuE Standards and their revision

Three sets of standards have been designed to meet different institutional needs:

- A set of Standards for Institutional Review, to be used for reviews covering the whole institution.
- A set of Standards for Programme Review, to be used for the evaluation of one or more programmes within an institution.
- A set of Standards for Joint Programme Review, to be used for the evaluation of a study programme jointly developed by several partner institutions from different countries (not necessarily leading to a joint degree).

The MusiQuE Standards are mapped against Part one of the most recent version of the ESG. This way, institutions and programmes reviewed by MusiQuE are ensured that Part one on internal quality assurance of the ESG is fully addressed in MusiQuE review procedures.

It is crucial that the standards and procedures employed by MusiQuE undergo continuous development to ensure that they remain relevant to the current reality of higher music education and the artistic professions, respond to any further evolution of the ESG and answer the changing needs of institutions and society. The MusiQuE Board is responsible for the regular revision and updating of the standards and procedures in order to ensure their relevance. As a result, a call was launched among all AEC member institutions in spring 2015 to send comments and

suggestions for revisions to the MusiQuE standards by 31 January 2016. In addition to the open call, MusiQuE addressed a specific request to the Student Working Group of the 'FULL SCORE' in order to receive feedback from student representatives on the standards.

The Board considered all the feedback received and decided to make minor modifications to the standards. The new version of the standards prepared by the MusiQuE Board was endorsed by the AEC General Assembly on Saturday 12 November 2016. The 2016 version of the standards is published on the MusiQuE website at <http://www.musique-ge.eu/documents/musique-standards>.

Further development of the Review Framework

In 2016, MusiQuE continued to contribute to the work done by the Evaluation Group of the AEC's 'FULL SCORE' project, which has the aim to develop standards for the review of pre-college education institutions and programmes for classroom teacher training. It is foreseen that once the standards for these levels of education are finalised, they will become a part of MusiQuE's Review Framework, giving MusiQuE the opportunity to operate in different sectors and levels of music education.

Throughout 2016 MusiQuE has also been developing a draft Framework for the Evaluation of Research Activities. The term 'research activities' is meant to describe activities with a focus on research into and through artistic practice. Such activities are generally conducted by a research institute or research unit, but can also take place as part of regular study programmes in all three study cycles offered by higher music education institutions. With the development of the Framework for the Evaluation of Research Activities, MusiQuE aims to support institutions with a review service providing an analysis of their research objectives and results, and their relevance within the European and international landscape of research into and through artistic practice. The draft Framework for the Evaluation of Research Activities will be further developed within the next years.

Review procedures completed

During 2016, the following review procedures were carried out:

1. **Programme accreditation: Hochschule für Musik Karlsruhe, 6-8 June 2016.** Procedure in cooperation with ZEvA - Zentrale Evaluations und Akkreditierungsagentur, Hannover. Programme accreditation. Reviewed programmes: Bachelor Instrumentalfächer, Gesang, Dirigieren, Komposition, Musiktheorie; Bachelor Operngesang; Bachelor Musikjournalismus; Bachelor Kombinationsfach Musikwissenschaft/Musikinformatik; Master (konsekutiv) Instrumentalfächer, Gesang, Klavierkammermusik, Liedgestaltung, Dirigieren, Komposition, Musiktheorie, Bläser-Kammermusik, zeitgenössische Musik, Musikpädagogik; Master (konsekutiv) Operngesang; Master (konsekutiv) Musikjournalismus; Master (konsekutiv) Musikwissenschaft; Master (konsekutiv) Musikinformatik; Master Musiktheater-Regie.
2. **Joint collaborative review at the University Mozarteum, Tyrolean State Conservatory, 16-17 November 2016.** Evaluation concerning the further development of the bachelor programme IGP offered by the University Mozarteum Salzburg in cooperation with the Tyrolean State Conservatory to a master programme. Procedure in cooperation with Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (AQ Austria).
3. **Programme accreditation: Kazakh National Kurmangazy Conservatory, 22-24 November 2016.** Reviewed programmes: Vocal (bachelor, master and doctor); Instrument (bachelor, master and doctor); Conducting (bachelor, master and doctor); Composition (bachelor, master and doctor); Traditional music (bachelor, master and doctor); Musicology (bachelor, master and doctor); Art-management (bachelor, doctor); Pedagogy and psychology (bachelor and master); Music education (bachelor).
4. **Institutional quality enhancement review: School for Young Talent, 24-25 November 2016.** Pilot Review to test the Standards for Pre-College Education designed by the FULL SCORE Evaluation WG.
5. **Cluster programme accreditation in the Netherlands.** Programme under review: Bachelor of Music. MusiQuE transferred the implementation of this review procedure involving four institutions to the Netherlands Quality Agency (NQA) in December 2015 following an agreement with the cluster of institutions. However, two member institutions of the cluster, the Conservatoire Maastricht and the Royal Conservatoire The Hague, confirmed their continued intention to use the merged NVAO-MusiQuE standards as framework for the accreditation procedure, and accordingly expressed its wish to submit the report to the MusiQuE Board once the formal accreditation would be granted by the national authorities in order to receive the confirmation that the report is consistent with, and relevant to, MusiQuE's procedures and standards.

The reports resulting from the review and accreditation procedures listed above have been published in the 'Completed reviews' section of the website at <http://www.musique-ge.eu/completed-reviews>.

During 2016, MusiQuE also continued exploring the situation of higher music education institutions with regard to quality assurance and accreditation at national level to determine in which countries it could be of assistance to institutions and in which way. National quality assurance agencies were approached to explore opportunities for joint procedures and several institutions in various European countries requested exploratory meetings with MusiQuE.

Peer-Reviewers Register

Maintenance of the Peer-Reviewers Register

Peer-reviewers form the panels that carry out the reviews commissioned by the MusiQuE Board. In line with its subject-specific focus, MusiQuE works with a pool of international experts in the relevant musical fields, who are familiar with and well informed about the specificities of higher music education. For the admission of individuals to the Peer-Reviewers Register, MusiQuE has established a set of criteria, describing the expertise, background and competences of the peers.

Representatives of MusiQuE's partner organisations can put themselves forward as peer-reviewers sending their application in time of the annual deadline. In 2016, the Board decided to adapt the current MusiQuE Template for Peer-reviewers in such a way that the questions in the application form are more relevant for experts from EMU and Pearle* members representing the profession.

The MusiQuE Board considers applications for Peer-Reviewers once a year. In 2016, 11 new peers were admitted to the Register. At the end of 2016, 61 peers from 20 countries were listed on the Peer-Reviewers Register.

In 2016, the MusiQuE staff completed a major update of the entire Peer-reviewers Register: peer-reviewers listed in the Register were asked if they wished to remain on the Register and, if so, to review their profile and update it with their latest details.

Peer-Reviewers Training Sessions

Each year, MusiQuE organises a training sessions for individuals interested in becoming a MusiQuE peer-reviewer prior to the AEC Annual Congress. In 2016, the MusiQuE training session for Peer-Reviewers took place on Thursday 10 November at the Academy of Music and Drama in Gothenburg in Sweden. 41 experts participated in this edition. The session included an introduction to MusiQuE's structure and services, a presentation of the roles and responsibilities of Peer-Reviewers during MusiQuE review procedures, and two workshop sessions in small groups entitled 'Acting as Peer-Reviewer' (Role-Play) and 'Working as Part of a Team'.

Communication

MusiQuE Website

The website (<http://www.musique-ge.eu/>) contains information about MusiQuE and its activities.

The MusiQuE website is organised as follows:

- The Section *About MusiQuE* provides information on MusiQuE, its vision and mission, its partner organisations, and its structure.
- The Section *News* is meant to update the reader about the latest developments and activities of MusiQuE.
- The Section *Types of reviews* provides detailed information on MusiQuE services, their objectives, process and outcome.
- The Section *Peer-Reviewers* addressed the criteria and procedure for admission on the Peer-Reviewers' Register and presents how Review Teams are composed and how Review Team members are appointed.
- The Section *Completed Reviews* lists all review procedures undertaken since 2008, and provides access to all review reports.
- Finally, the Section *Documents* includes MusiQuE Standards for Institutional, Programme and Joint Programme Review (also downloadable separately), MusiQuE framework document *Background, mission and regulations* (each chapter being downloadable separately), MusiQuE templates, articles published and presentations delivered, as well as any other relevant documents.

In general, this resource is developed as a comprehensive portal through which the activities of MusiQuE can be made accessible to a wide public.

News items and newsletters

New items are regularly published on the news section of the website (<http://www.musique-ge.eu/news>). Selected news items have also been published as part of the AEC newsletter distributed to all AEC members and contacts and as part of the regular newsletter distributed by ENQA to all its members.

Annual call for Peer-Reviewers, Board members, and suggestions for the revision of standards and procedures

In June 2016, a call was sent out by MusiQuE to AEC members in order to encourage AEC representatives to put themselves forward as a Board member for the seat becoming vacant from November 2016 onwards. The call also informed AEC members to suggest changes to MusiQuE standards and procedures by the deadline of 31 January 2017.

MusiQuE aims to expand this annual communication to EMU and Pearle* members within the next years. The EMU members will be approached after the Standards for Pre-college Music Education have been finalised and tested.

Information sessions, presentations and publication of articles

The MusiQuE Board is responsible to ensure that the Boards and General Assemblies of each of the partner organisations are informed about the work of MusiQuE. A presentation about MusiQuE's services was delivered at the AEC General Assembly meeting on 10-12 November 2016 in Gothenburg, Sweden. The session featured information about the consequences of MusiQuE's EQAR registration for AEC members. In addition, MusiQuE Board

and staff members met at the AEC Congress with representatives of conservatoires in Switzerland, Lithuania, Belgium, Poland, Finland, Sweden, Croatia, Romania, Norway and Denmark, each time in separate regional meetings. The Chair of the MusiQuE Board also participated in the AEC Council meeting of 31 March 2016 to report to the AEC on MusiQuE's latest activities.

MusiQuE was also represented at the General Assembly of Pearle* on 25-26 November 2016 in Zürich, Switzerland, and a presentation was delivered during the EMU General Assembly on 5-8 May 2016 in San Sebastian.

MusiQuE's services were also presented to AEC member institutions at a number of events organised by the AEC:

- MusiQuE's draft Framework for the Evaluation of Research Institutes/Units was presented at the AEC's European Platform for Artistic Research in Music 2016 in Vicenza, Italy, on 20-22 April 2016. The presentation can be found at <http://www.musique-ge.eu/news/musiques-framework-for-artistic-research-evaluation-presented-at-the-aec-eparm-forum>.
- MusiQuE's services were presented at the AEC Annual meeting for International Relations Coordinators in Krakow, Poland, on 15-18 September 2016. The presentation included examples of how international activities can contribute to the enhancement of quality (of curricula, learning outcomes and educational processes), and how AEC member institutions can benefit from MusiQuE's services in that context. The presentation is available for download at <http://www.musique-ge.eu/news/musiques-services-to-be-presented-at-the-aec-ircs-meeting-and-the-aec-annual-congress>.

MusiQuE has developed a detailed country overview of QA developments and MusiQuE information activities, which shows the main national QA systems and the actions that MusiQuE has undertaken to promote its services at national level. This working document is constantly being updated and used as a monitoring tool for MusiQuE information and promotions activities in the various countries.

An article entitled 'How to make quality assurance processes more meaningful to teaching staff – a proposal from the field of music' was presented at the European Quality Assurance Forum 2016 and subsequently published on the MusiQuE website at <http://www.musique-ge.eu/documents/articles>. The paper addresses a challenge that is often referred to in quality assurance processes: the involvement in these processes of teaching staff. The authors suggest that this challenge can be approached effectively by creating a common language based on a concept of quality culture, which addresses both (artistic) standards and educational quality. Furthermore, an understanding of a diversity of disciplines and the need for a diversity of quality assurance tools supporting this understanding are described as essential elements to increase the relevance of quality assurance processes to teachers. The paper describes the work done in the field of higher music education in this regard, ranging from the development and use of European-level subject-specific standards, procedures and frameworks, to the new and experimental 'critical friend' approach, which can be used alongside more traditional models of external review.

Trend analysis

Every two years the MusiQuE Board invites an expert well experienced in higher music education and in quality assurance activities within this sector to produce a trend analysis. This analysis uses the feedback material from MusiQuE reviews, External Evaluator reports and the MusiQuE's annual reports as its primary sources but also places these in a wider context. In 2016, the MusiQuE Board commissioned a trend analysis focusing on eight reports, to be prepared in 2017 by former Board member Christopher Caine (Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance). The trend analysis will be made available on the MusiQuE website at <http://www.musique-ge.eu/documents/trend-analysis>. Successive trend analyses will be able to add a longitudinal dimension, evaluating key areas of change from one analysis to the next.

Internal Quality Assurance

With the aim to monitor its own procedures and activities, MusiQuE has developed a robust internal quality assurance system, which consists of various tools providing the MusiQuE Board with relevant feedback on MusiQuE's fitness for purpose.

External evaluator

Stefan Delplace, former General Secretary of EURASHE, was appointed to serve as external evaluator of MusiQuE in 2015. The external evaluator is appointed by the MusiQuE Board to review material documenting MusiQuE's activity, as well as to monitor the compatibility of the system with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). The external evaluator is appointed for 2 years, and is in charge of producing an annual evaluation report with comments addressed to the Board.

The first report by the external evaluator covering 2016 takes into consideration part of the evolution and modification that MusiQuE has gone through and highlights important progress in the further development of MusiQuE's range of activities. The report concludes that MusiQuE, through its inclusion in EQAR, has increased its potential as a trustworthy and sustainable quality assurance agency, and consequently enhanced its prestige and visibility at European level. The Board is committed to discuss in detail with Mr. Delplace the various actions MusiQuE has undertaken as a response to the recommendations formulated in the report. A working document has been produced which lists all recommendations made by both the external evaluator and the EQAR Register Committee and keeps track, on a permanent basis, of the actions that are being initiated to answer to these recommendations. The report has been made available for download on the MusiQuE website at <http://www.musique-qe.eu/documents/external-review-report>.

Results of feedback questionnaires and improvements to MusiQuE review procedures

Once a final review report has been sent to the institution by the MusiQuE Board, feedback questionnaires are sent by the MusiQuE staff to the reviewed institutions as well as to the reviewers. Once a year, the MusiQuE staff compiles all results of the questionnaires and makes an analysis of any trends discernible in these results. The results and their analysis are then considered by the Board, which also has access, if required, to the original questionnaires. The Board then decides on any actions that it believes should be undertaken to improve the review system and, where applicable, to fine-tune the standards themselves.

In 2016, the MusiQuE Board considered feedback received from review procedures in 2016. Overall the comments were positive: institutions expressed to be satisfied about the review process and peer-reviewers felt well supported. In order to further support review team members in the preparation of site-visits, a Template for peers to analyse the self-evaluations reports prepared by the institution or programme(s) under review was developed in 2016. Review team members welcomed the new template as a helpful tool.

External relations

Connection with European organisations in the field of quality assurance and attendance of events

In 2016, MusiQuE took over from AEC the (affiliate) memberships of ENQA (<http://www.enqa.eu/>) and EASPA (<http://www.easpa.eu/>). The AEC has been an affiliate member of ENQA since January 2011 and a founding member of EASPA. ENQA is an umbrella organisation which represents quality assurance organisations from the European Higher Education Area member states. EASPA provides a collaborative forum for the community of disciplinary, field specific European networks of quality assurance that assess the quality of study programs, schools or professional individuals.

MusiQuE was represented at the following quality assurance events throughout 2016:

- An EQUIP (Enhancing Quality Enhancing Quality through Innovative Policy & Practice) workshop in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, on 14-15 March 2016.
- The ENQA Forum on 28-29 April 2016 in Budapest, Hungary.
- The EASPA General Assembly on 2 May 2016 in Berlin, Germany.
- The ENQA General Assembly on 20-21 October 2016 in Gloucester, United Kingdom. At the ENQA event, MusiQuE delivered a poster-presentation entitled "Will subject-specific international agencies help to bridge the gap between quality assurance, teachers and students?". The poster and further information is available at <http://www.musique-ge.eu/news/musiques-concept-of-quality-presented-at-the-7th-enqa-general-assembly>.
- The European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF) on 17-19 November 2016 in, Ljubljana, Slovenia. At EQAF, MusiQuE presented its new article "How to make quality assurance processes more meaningful to teaching staff".

Cooperation with national quality assurance and accreditation agencies

MusiQuE has signed a cooperation agreement with the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (AQ Austria). In this context, MusiQuE and AQ Austria have developed a handbook for the implementation of joint audits.

Discussions concerning a cooperation agreement between MusiQuE and the Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation (NVAO) with regard to limited programme assessment procedures in The Netherlands have been started. One of the MusiQuE staff members also took part in a training session of NVAO and is now certified as NVAO secretary. NVAO certified secretaries are entitled to draft review reports in the context of Dutch accreditation procedures.

There are ongoing negotiations with national quality assurance agencies to increase MusiQuE's activities in the following countries: Poland (A3ES), Lithuania (SKVC), Poland (PKA), France (HCERES), Italy (ANVUR), and Catalunya (AQU Catalunya). MusiQuE has also been in touch with representatives of various agencies, such as NOKUT (Norway), ANQA (Armenia) and RANNIS (Iceland) to learn about the latest developments and opportunities for reviews in the near future.

Reaction to European policy developments

The MusiQuE Board took note of the outcomes of the PHExcel (Professional Higher Education Excellence) project, which was concluded in December 2015. The main outcome of the project is a consultancy service for higher education providers that strive to excel at integrating with the world of work.

List of relevant documents and articles produced

MusiQuE Framework Document

MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement: Background, Mission and Regulations

<http://www.musique-qe.eu/documents/musique-framework-document>

MusiQuE Standards

MusiQuE Standards for Institutional, Programme and Joint programme Review

<http://www.musique-qe.eu/documents/musique-standards>

Reports of institutions and programmes reviewed by MusiQuE

<http://www.musique-qe.eu/completed-reviews>

Articles

'How to make quality assurance processes more meaningful to teaching staff – a proposal from the field of music'

<http://www.musique-qe.eu/documents/articles>

Trend analysis

<http://www.musique-qe.eu/documents/trend-analysis>

MusiQuE Templates

<http://www.musique-qe.eu/documents/templates>

MusiQuE Template for Peer-Reviewers Profile

MusiQuE Template for self-evaluation report

MusiQuE Template for institutional site-visit schedule

MusiQuE Template for follow-up process

External Evaluation

MusiQuE External Review Report

<http://www.musique-qe.eu/documents/external-review-report>

European references

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)

http://www.engq.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/ESG_endorsed-with-changed-foreword.pdf