

STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Lietuvos muzikos ir teatro akademijos Kauno fakulteto

ATLIKIMO MENAS (62401M108, 621W31001)

VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT

of *MUSIC PERFORMANCE ART (62401M108, 621W31001)*

STUDY PROGRAMME

at Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre

(Kaunas Faculty)

Grupės vadovas:
Team leader: Philippe Dinkel

Grupės nariai:
Team members: Andras Batta
Robert Fitzpatrick
Darius Kucinskas
Mist Thorkelsdottir
Gerda Van Zelm

Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
Report language - English

Vilnius
2010

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme	<i>Music Performance Art</i>
State code	62401M108
New state code	621W31001
Study area	Arts
Study field	Music
Kind of the study programme	university studies
Level of studies	second
Study mode (length in years)	full-time (2)
Scope of the study programme in national credits ¹	80 (national), 120 (ECTS)
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Master of music, performer or conductor
Date of registration of the study programme	02/08/2001

¹ – one credit is equal to 40 hours of student work

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CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION.....	4
II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS	4
1. Programme aims and learning outcomes.....	4
1.1. Programme demand, purpose and aims	4
1.2. Learning outcomes of the programme.....	5
2. Curriculum design	6
2.1. Programme structure.....	6
2.2. Programme content.....	7
3. Staff	7
3.1. Staff composition and turnover	7
3.2. Staff competence	8
4. Facilities and learning resources	9
4.1. Facilities	9
4.2. Learning resources.....	9
5. Study process and student assessment.....	9
5.1. Student admission.....	10
5.2. Study process.....	11
5.3. Student support.....	13
5.4. Student achievement assessment.....	14
5.5. Graduates placement.....	14
6. Programme management	15
6.1. Programme administration	15
6.2. Internal quality assurance	15
7. Influence on cultural life.....	
8. Interaction with the profession.....	
III. RECOMMENDATIONS	16
IV. GENERAL ASSESSMENT.....	17

I. INTRODUCTION

The visiting experts hand over this Evaluation Report, based on the Self-Assessment of the Art of Performance Master program submitted by the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre Kaunas Faculty (LMTA Kaunas) and on information gathered during the site visit of September 22-23, 2010 from the various bodies of the institution (administration, authors of the Self-Assessment report, staff, students, graduates and employers). The experts found the SA clearly written with significant detail concerning the education and training of music students from recruitment and admission through the completion of studies. On behalf of the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, they thank the institutions submitting assessments for their welcome and the CQAHE for the careful preparation of the process.

The Introduction to the Art of Performance Self-Assessment Report for post-graduate studies gives the visiting experts a clear picture of the organizational structure of the LMTA KF in general and of the Self-Assessment process and its personnel in particular. The experts note the institution's own recommendations for improvement as a result of this self-assessment effort and will comment on them in the course of this evaluation.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

1.1. Programme demand, purpose and aims

1.1.1. Uniqueness and rationale of the need for the programme

According to the Self-Assessment (SA) of the Art of Performance program, specialists trained at LMTA account for a significant number of solo performers in the country and the majority of the creative personnel at professional art groups including orchestras, music theatres, chamber ensembles, choirs, concert organisations, music schools and other establishments influencing cultural life in Lithuania. The effectiveness of the program in the area of career placement has been reported anecdotally in the past and was based primarily on feedback from former students. The first official poll, a 2009-2010 written survey, shows that an overwhelming percentage of graduates has been effectively placed in positions directly related to their education and training. Since the admission standards and the level of instruction appear to be the highest in the country, the visiting experts concur with the program analysis of the SA.

But, the experts note with interest and concern that, according to the SA, the Art of Performance study program is bound by structural requirements mandated for universities which restrict the breadth of artistic activity and the development of skills demanded by the labor market for music performers. The SA also makes clear that LMTA KF students lack opportunities for specialisation in studies of particular musical styles and their authentic performing traditions (e.g. early music or contemporary music), and that the link between theoretical musical subjects and performance studies is weak. Therefore, students appear to lack the skills for practical application of music theory. The experts agree that a plan to deal with this situation could be part of a long-range strategic plan for LMTA. (see recommendation III, 3.4)

1.1.2. Conformity of the programme purpose with institutional, state and international directives

As stated in the SA: *'the Art of Performance study program is intended for the training of broad specialisation music performers who are capable of engaging in public performance activity, interpretation of musical compositions of various styles and genres, well-familiar with the basic principles of music language and music history, possess humanitarian and other knowledge, are*

capable of critical assessment of the repertoire selected and performance quality, expanding their horizons and engaging in self-training. The visiting experts concur that this stated purpose is congruent with the institutional mission of the LMTA. Since the institution is governed by national legislation, it appears that the purpose of this program conforms with those guidelines. Given the LMTA's membership in various organizations of international scope including the Association of European Conservatoires (AEC) and, according to the SA, the focus on the long tradition of artistic training in the country's institutions of higher education in the arts as well as on European and international standards of artistic training, the visiting experts feel that the stated purpose of the Art of Performance program of LMTA conforms with institutional, state, and international directives.

1.1.3. Relevance of the programme aims

The relevance of the aims of the program is evident to the visiting experts based on the information provided. A clear progression exists toward the desired subject outcomes which clearly relate to the programmatic outcomes and the institutional mission. The visiting experts note that, according to the SA, the Art of Performance postgraduate programme *does not have any exclusive features beyond those included in the first cycle (Bachelor) but does not repeat the subjects taught in the first cycle. The in-depth subjects are directly related with the specific type of Art of Performance, therefore, they are compulsory. The function of postgraduate studies of Art of Performance is to expand and deepen knowledge and capacities, which have been acquired during undergraduate studies. Qualification degree of master of music is granted to students who:*

- *have successfully completed the full 80-credit (120 ECTS) programme of second cycle of in-depth studies;*
- *have acquired the art of performance competences envisaged for the second cycle of studies, which exceed the knowledge and capacities of the first phase and are related with artistic skills that are demonstrated by way of original creative solutions, theoretical competences of own field and general capacities, which enables to present artistic ideas in a scientific context;*
- *are able to adapt the acquired competences for solution of problems under new or unusual circumstances or in a broader (for instance, interdisciplinary) context;*
- *are able to collate knowledge with judgement and formulate a reasoned own opinion;*

The visiting experts feel that the above excerpt of the SA clearly expresses the parameters and aims of the program.

1.2. Learning outcomes of the programme

1.2.1. Comprehensibility and attainability of the learning outcomes

In the SA, the visiting experts found a set of clearly stated and attainable learning outcomes for the Art of Performance program which are divided into 3 categories: special or practical skills, theoretical competencies, and general competencies. Because Lithuania does not have documents which specifically regulate musical higher education, LMTA acts within the framework of documents developed by the Bologna Working group of the AEC in addition to the general university studies requirements. The experts commend the institution for these efforts.

1.2.2. Consistency of the learning outcomes

There appears to be a consistent correlation between the objectives (aims) and outcomes of individual subjects and courses, and between the desired programmatic outcomes of the Art of

performance program. The visiting experts found Table 4 of the SA very helpful for understanding this relationship.

Table No. 4. Learning Outcomes of Art of Performance studies programme (expected results of studies):

Practical achievements (skills)	
Artistic expression skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to implement an art project in solo and various compositions of ensembles (orchestra, choir) at a high professional level, featuring creativity and individual interpretation solutions; • Understanding and performing experience of solo and ensemble repertoire of own instrument; • Ability to head a musical ensemble and organise its work.
Learning and rehearsal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to choose the most suitable learning and rehearsal skills; • Ability to organise learning as a creative process aimed at implementation of a conceived interpretation;
Theoretical knowledge	
Recognition of repertoire and music materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of own instrument's repertoire, interpretation history and theory.
Comprehension of musical context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to independently examine historical, theoretical and creative context features of performed music that are necessary for professional interpretation of the piece.
Verbal capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to examine and elaborate on the music programme he performs in various contexts of performance; • Ability to state his attitude towards the interaction and significance of theory and performing practice; • Ability to write a research, which would demonstrate his capacity to examine artistic ideas from the scientific point of view.
General competences	
Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work independently, deepen his knowledge and perform complex tasks.
Psychological competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability of efficient and skilled work with self-confidence.
Critical thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to make critical and well-grounded evaluation of artistic activities from the point of view of interpretation.
Communication capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work in joint creativity projects and initiate such activities; • Ability to work in a team by way of performing negotiations and organising activities; • Ability to communicate and cooperate with the audience, the media, culture and arts staff and employers.

1.2.3. Transformation of the learning outcomes

Because the validity of learning outcomes is evaluated every two years by reviewing or updating the study program, there seems to be a mechanism in place to renew and/or transform the learning outcomes of the program and their relationship to broader institutional objectives.

2. Curriculum design

2.1. Programme structure

2.1.1. Sufficiency of the study volume

According to the SA, the Art of Performance Master program complies with all government mandated requirements concerning the course of study. The visitors agree with this assessment.

2.1.2. Consistency of the study subjects

General studies and music theory studies are similar for all major areas of study within the Art of Performance Master program. However, there are differences in the plan for the development of practical skills because of the demands of individual instrumental disciplines. The visiting experts felt that this plan for the organization of study subjects is consistent with nationally mandated and internationally accepted standards for such a program

2.2. Programme content

2.2.1. Compliance of the contents of the studies with legal acts

According to the submitted self-assessment material and information obtained during the meetings on site, the experts understand that the Art of Performance Master degree studies program is broadly consistent with General Requirements for the degree-conferring Second Cycle study program confirmed by Minister of Education and Science on July 22, 2005, Order No. 1551. The study plan includes 5 subjects per semester which is in correlation with the requirements. The program is 80 credits (minimum of 60 required by law), and is divided to three different categories of units: Advanced (in-depth) subjects of study program for 54 credits (minimum of 40 required by law). Applied subjects (research paper and basics of research work; Master's project and ensemble project) for 24 credits; and i.e., 30% of the total study program (requirements of the volume shall be not less than 25%); part B - the framework of the program of study subjects for 35 credits (the volume of requirements must be at least 30 credits); part C - special education matters for 37 credits, i. e., 46% of the total study program (requirements specified volume must be at least 25%). Practices for 10 credits (requirements specify that it must be at least 10 credits). Final project preparation and defense are given 10 credits (requirements specify it must be at least 8 credits). Therefore the experts note that the program and its contents appear in compliance with all legal acts as documented both in the text and by the footnotes of the SA.

2.2.2. Comprehensiveness and rationality of programme content

There appears to be a logical progression of courses including ensembles and other practical performing experiences which builds in a rational manner toward the final year projects and performances. The general study plan gives the visiting experts a comprehensive overview of program content for the disciplines. The experts feel that this plan meets external standards for comparable programs.

As stated in the SA: *The studies consist of two groups of subjects, scope of which answers the requirements of postgraduate university studies. This includes in-depth (advanced) subjects, which improve the capacities acquired during undergraduate education, and applied subjects s. In-depth subjects account for more than 80 per cent of the scope of the curriculum of postgraduate programme of Art of Performance. The course Basics of Research Work and the final Research Paper also distinguish this program from the first cycle of studies.*

3. Staff

3.1. Staff composition and turnover

3.1.1. Rationality of the staff composition

The teaching staff is composed of highly qualified, certified professionals who hold various academic ranks. The Art of Performance Faculties appear to comply with the mandate that over half of the instruction must be done by "scientists or acknowledged artists." In fact 60% of the teachers in this program are either professors or associate professors. A significant amount of teaching is done by visiting artists but this is not an unusual situation in high-level conservatories

internationally who seek to have the very best instruction for their students even if the teachers are not permanent members of their faculties.

Teachers' qualification is in accordance with *REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY STUDY PROGRAMMES*, that “no less than half of the volume in every study programme part should be taught by the higher education institution regular teachers who have a scientific degree or are recognised artists (for teaching art subjects).

3.1.2. Turnover of teachers

According to the SA, the turnover of teachers has been minimal since 2005. There have been 11 vacancies since that time, mostly the result of the retirement of older teachers, which the LMTA KF has successfully filled. The SA cites the positive effect of this transfusion of “new blood” on studies in performance, theory, and general education. The experts feel that this limited but regular turnover is appropriate for the continued renewal of the program.

3.2. Staff competence

3.2.1. Compliance of staff experience with the study programme

Teachers involved in Art of Performance programme comply with the minimum job qualification requirements to scientific employees, other researchers and teachers of public science and studies institutions¹ approved by LMTA Senate according to the SA. A teacher is permitted to continue pedagogic activity, provided his/her activity in the five recent years complies with the requirements. The visiting experts feel that the balance of longevity and competence as expressed in Chart No. 9 on page 21 of the SA and the indication of the artistic achievements of the teachers and their students justify compliance with the needs of the post-graduate Art of Performance program.

Table 9. Student training experience of teachers at the Kaunas Faculty of the LMTA

Department (division)	1-9 yrs.	10-19 yrs.	20-29 yrs	30-39 yrs.	40-50 yrs.
Piano	-	1	3	-	-
String instruments	4	2	-	1	-
Wind instruments	2	6	3	1	1
Vocal performance	2	9	2	-	-
Total:	8	18	8	2	1

3.2.2. Consistency of teachers' professional development

Table No. 11 (below) clearly indicates the scope and variety of the artistic activities and accomplishments of the Art of Performance teaching staff. The experts encourage additional international exposure for teachers in the area of Opera. However, the experts also suggest continued growth in the area of Erasmus and other international exchanges for teachers.

Table 11. Practical work experience of teachers at the Kaunas Faculty of the LMTA

Department (division)	1-9 yrs	10-19 yrs	20-29 yrs	30-39 yrs	40-50 yrs	Over 50 yrs
Piano	-	1	2	1	-	-

String instruments	2	2	2	1	-	-
Wind instruments	2	1	2	5	2	1
Vocal performance	2	8	2	1	-	-
Total:	6	12	8	8	2	1

4. Facilities and learning resources

4.1. Facilities

4.1.1. Sufficiency and suitability of premises for studies

The building of the Kaunas Faculty of LMTA has an attractive exterior surrounded by a park-like campus which is characteristic of the area. According to the SA, the number of classrooms and auditoria is sufficient for the current student population which has the opportunity to study from early morning (6 AM) till evening (10 PM), and 8 AM – 6 PM during holidays. Although there are plans to extend the number of workplaces for group classes, the students confirmed during the experts' visit that there is sufficient study space for them. However, it is the visiting experts' impression that the interior of the building needs significant renovation. According to the SA, 10% of the Faculty will be renovated in 2011. (See recommendation in part III, 3.1a)

The Library work area and reading room provide sufficient space for the current student body. Plans to expand the number of workstations with audio and computer equipment have been suspended because of a shortage of funds. Since LMTA KF Library is a subunit of LMTA Library in Vilnius, materials that are not available in the LMTA KF stock can be ordered at the LMTA Library, arriving within one or two days. Students can also make use of public libraries in Kaunas. (See recommendation III, 3.1b)

4.1.2. Suitability and sufficiency of equipment for studies

The SA indicates a catalogue of available equipment for student use including instruments, concert attire, and printed performance materials (scores and parts). The quantity of instruments currently in Kaunas is sufficient according to the SA; nevertheless, plans include acquisition of 4 new grand pianos' in the next 5 years. The SA also states that audio and video equipment, and computer hardware and software are available for student use but need to be improved and increased. The visiting experts note that the faculty is aware of the need to improve and expand the materials and equipment and that budgetary support and fundraising for this is an issue because the LMTA KF finances are totally dependent on LMTA Vilnius. (See recommendation III, 3.1b)

4.1.3. Suitability and accessibility of the resources for practical training

The experts agree that accessibility and suitability of resources for practical training appear adequate as stated in the SA. Internal performance spaces and external halls are available for student performance projects, realized in Kaunas under co-operation agreements with LMTA Vilnius and local organizations. Students of the LMTA KF find their practical training in music education in various music schools and cultural institutions in Kaunas and the surrounding area. The experts agree that the ratio of suitable practice spaces is generally adequate for current needs and that the LMTA KF has managed the selection and accommodation of locations for practical tasks in an effective way.

4.2. Learning resources

4.2.1. Suitability and accessibility of books, textbooks and periodical publications

Although suitability and accessibility of books, textbooks and periodicals appear adequate for the program, there are several issues which the SA brings to light. The availability of contemporary and early music performance material (scores and parts) appears to be a weakness of the LMTA Library system. (See recommendation III, 3.2)

There also appears to be a shortage of publications available to students in the area of Jazz which is especially problematic because most recognized texts in this area are in languages other than Lithuanian. The LMTA KF acknowledges the shortage of texts in Lithuanian in this and other areas and has partially solved the problem by encouraging Art of Performance teachers to create their own texts, several of which have become recognized, published and widely-used textbooks in Lithuania. The visiting experts commend the institution for this effort and encourage even further progress as financial conditions allow.

4.2.2. Suitability and accessibility of learning materials

As mentioned above in this report, the scholarly activities of the LMTA KF faculty have helped fill the publications deficiencies of quality texts in Lithuanian. According to the SA, the greatest current need is for textbooks that deal with Lithuanian contemporary music since 1950. The visiting experts encourage the LMTA to continue to find solutions, both internal and external, to reduce this shortage.

The Library appears well stocked to meet student needs in most areas and has operating hours which appear adequate based on student traffic, faculty needs, and budgetary considerations. Since students from that Kaunas Faculty have access to the stock of the Vilnius Library, it is the experts' opinion that they have sufficient access to learning materials. Availability of electronic subscriptions including Jstor and Project Muse appears sufficient for the needs of the program. In the opinion of the experts, LMTA is well provisioned with methodological publications and provides access to necessary learning materials and aids.

5. Study process and student assessment

5.1. Student admission

5.1.1. Rationality of requirements for admission to the studies

The LMTA is one of the leading institutions in professional musical education of Lithuania and belongs to the number of excellent Eastern-European music academies. Thanks to the high standards of the elementary and secondary schools, a heritage of the former Soviet system, students with outstanding preliminary training can apply for admission to the Academy. The visiting experts were informed that, if the elementary musical training (music schools) still works well, the secondary level (conservatoires) is being harmed in the general process of political and social transformation. The students applying to musical performance majors may surmount the gap between secondary and university level by attending private lessons, thus securing the international standards at their own expenses. The new admission system also leads to a decrease in the number of state-financed domestic students, but without the benefit of welcoming more international students since few of them have yet discovered the excellence of Lithuanian higher music education. For this reason, the question of international mobility should be a crucial part of an overall strategy and brand.

The visit of the Commission indeed happens at a very specific moment since the assessed programmes are under the process of heavy modifications to fit to the new law passed in 2010. Furthermore, the new admission rules edited in May 2009 have already been applicable for the academic year 2009-10, with as a result some confusion and significant changes in the students' profiles and students number in the various programmes. The Commission expresses concern about the weight of the general education scores compared to the artistic and pedagogical skills of potential students in the new system, who can indeed be discarded for irrelevant reasons.

This may create discrepancies and negative tensions under the various fields of the institution, not to speak about the general quality level. Although the Commission is sure that the new regulations were applied on a fair and transparent basis, it encourages the partners to find specific regulations for the field of music in order not to bypass talented students. After talking to representative of the post-secondary and precollege level, the experts also encourage LMTA KF to tighten the links between the conservatoires and the higher level music institutions. The admission criteria for the post-graduate program mentioned in the SA appear sufficiently clear and appropriate for this cycle of studies (Master).

5.1.2. Efficiency of enhancing the motivation of applicants and new students

As mentioned in 5.1.1. some inadequacies in the institutional secondary music education may affect the motivations of the applicants. The visiting experts think that these inadequacies can be partially overcome by the LMTA organizing open days and preparation training classes. Deliberate marketing activity is also advised in the regional cities and - at least - the neighboring countries as well (website, master classes, talent scouting competitions and the like), thus helping the LMTA to keep and develop its leading role in Lithuanian musical higher education.

The visiting experts also recommend monitoring closely the study programs to keep them in phase with the interests of young potential students in new emerging eras and to develop opportunities for ensemble playing (orchestras and chamber ensembles), thus enhancing the LMTA participation to the musical life in Vilnius.

Since many members of the LMTA teaching staff are extremely active and visible throughout Lithuania and abroad, their performances and teaching activities contribute to attract new candidates. The publication efforts of the teachers also create a national, and in some cases international presence which is effective in attracting future candidates, according to the SA. The visiting experts encourage the continuation and the expansion of these activities.

Students who receive good grades are rewarded with performance opportunities in the Grand Hall of the LMTA and receive encouragement to participate in competitions. Although the visiting experts support these activities, the most talented and self-motivated students usually function at full capacity whether or not they receive this type of external stimulation.

Exchange programs, according to the SA, are another means used by the teaching staff to reward the best students by giving them a chance to expand their musical and personal horizons on both a national and international level. The visiting experts commend this openness to mobility on the part of the LMTA and encourage an increase in activities on both the student and faculty levels.

Once admitted, students receive encouragement from the teaching staff to pursue an active concert life including preparation for competitions. According to the SA, there is the possibility of receiving financial incentives through the form of scholarships and monetary awards from the Faculty scholarship fund.

Postgraduate studies at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre attract increasing numbers of students from abroad who study at the Academy in the postgraduate cycle within the framework of the Erasmus student exchange programme. The visiting experts encourage this trend.

5.2. Study process

5.2.1. Rationality of the programme schedule

There are two types of classes in the program: those attended by all Art of Performance students and those organized specifically by instrumental specialization. According to the SA, the schedule appears to have a rational organization in terms of content with a clear progression by year of study. Schedules tend to be heaviest in first year and also in the first part of each week. There is a certain amount of student choice even in the earliest years; therefore, individual

student schedules can have a fairly wide variation. There appears to be sufficient opportunity for individual practice time (self-training).

5.2.2. Student academic performance

The performance of students and the retention rate appear appropriate for this level of music program with a small percentage of students asked to withdraw because of poor performance. Most student who do not complete the program leave for personal reasons and there is a counselling system in place to advise them in an attempt to keep them enrolled or help them find their way after early departure from the program. Charts 14 and 15 of the SA clearly show the withdrawal and graduation rates from 2006-2009 for the post-graduate program.

Table 14. Annual drop-out rate

Academic year	Admitted to the 1st year	Completed	Drop-out reason		Percentage of total student number in the Programme	
			Dismissal	Termination	Dismissal	Termination
2005-2006	17	17	3	0	7.5	0
2006-2007	10	14	1	5	3.57	17.86
2007-2008	12	10	1	0	4.76	0
2008-2009	20	5	1	1	3.57	3.57
2009-2010	17	-	0	0	0	0

Table 15. Admission/completion statistics

Academic year	Admitted	Completed	Percentage of the admitted
2003-2004	16	9	56.25
2004-2005	17	17	100
2005-2006	17	14	82.35
2006-2007	10	10	100
2007-2008	12	5	41.67

5.2.3. Mobility of teachers and students

Table 17. Teaching visits abroad

Academic year	Number	Percentage of total number of full-time teachers in the Programme	Institution (country)
2009-2010 (autumn term)	1	2.7	Japan (1)
2008-2009	11	24.44	Italy (2), Finland (2), Poland (3), Ukraine (2), Denmark (1), Estonia (1).
2007-2008	8	17.78	Ukraine (2), Poland (2), Italy (1), Belgium (1), Latvia (1), Germany (1)
2006-2007	11	24.44	Russia (4), Estonia (2), Poland (1), Ukraine (1), Latvia (1), Sweden (1), Austria (1)
2005-2006	7	15.56	Russia (2), Ukraine (2), Poland (1), Sweden (1), Germany (1)

The SA indicates sufficient mobility of faculty visiting other institutions for short periods (Table 17 above of the SA) but this number appears to have diminished in recent years, perhaps because of financial considerations resulting from the international crises. On average, about 4% of the student body participate annually in activities at other international institutions with a less significant number of external students coming to Kaunas for LMTA activities. LMTA is a partner in multiple (84) Erasmus exchange agreements and is active in Nordplus (jazz) and Sibelius/Espansiva (classical) networks. The visiting experts encourage the LMTA to work to increase this external (incoming) student participation in order to balance the mobility efforts of the Art of Performance program.

5.3. Student support

5.3.1. Usefulness of academic support

In every musical institution, the traditional one-to-one tutorial workshop system in music education allows a personal and intimate relation between the teacher and the student. On the other hand, the student may remain very dependent on one person only and be prevented from being proactive enough in a complex and quickly changing environment. It is therefore crucial for the LMTA to be fully aware of the international evolution and to take full benefit of the new electronic communication means, thus helping every stakeholder to be a partner in the development of the global corporate institutional identity and strategy. The general effort towards free and open information must also be especially appraised in the context of post-Soviet transformations.

The first effort toward student support which the LMTA makes is communication of basic information about each study program including courses and financing, expected outcomes, study structure and opportunities for mobility both on its website and during open-door sessions each Spring. According to the SA, new students have appropriate orientation meetings with Faculty Deans and administrators during which they reinforce the basic information and answer students' questions. There also appears to be appropriate, ongoing counselling, both oral and written, for students during their period of study at LMTA.

Career counselling is an important part of the process with LMTA teachers serving as the primary conduit to the profession. At the end of 2009, the LMTA began a student career consulting service. It also signed a joint activity agreement for participation in the project *Development and introduction of models for career education and career monitoring of students in higher education establishments, skills improvement of professional orientation specialists working with students and development of instruments for their use*, and the project *Development of career education and career monitoring infrastructure in higher education institutions* (applicant – Vilnius University) in the framework of the *National Programme for Professional Orientation in the Education System*.

5.3.2. Efficiency of social support

There appears to be psychological support available for students as needed but the experts encourage the expansion of this area through the development of resources especially those available through other institutions of Higher Education in Vilnius. The LMTA rents various facilities so that students have access to sports facilities. The current emphasis of this support appears to be for singers who can consult a medical specialist for vocal problems.

If necessary, LMTA KF makes available dormitory accommodation by renting from the Lithuanian University of Agriculture and Kaunas District. According to the SA, 20 LMTA KF students stay in dormitories each year. The experts found that this is sufficient based on information gathered during the visit because other students can rent accommodations at a reasonable rate nearby.

5.4. Student achievement assessment

5.4.1. Suitability of assessment criteria and their publicity

According to the SA, there is an ongoing assessment system in place with the criteria for assessment and the grading system (1 through 10; table 22) published in an official document. The criteria for assessment of Art of Performance subjects and the expected outcomes are published and available to students and faculty

Table No. 22. Assessment criteria

Passed / failed	Assessment system	Description
PASSED	10 (excellent)	Excellent, exceptional knowledge and skills
	9 (very good)	Solid good knowledge and skills
	8 (good)	Above average knowledge and skills
	7 (average)	Average knowledge and skills, some insignificant mistakes
	6 (satisfactory)	Knowledge and skills below average, some mistakes
	5 (poor)	Knowledge and skills up to minimum requirements
FAILED	4, 3, 2, 1 (unsatisfactory)	Minimum requirements not met

5.4.2. Feedback efficiency

According to the SA, students traditionally receive the most exhaustive information about advantages and shortcomings of their performance from their major performance teacher. However an increasing number of departments are using group discussion with multiple teachers giving students feedback on their performance and achievement. The visiting experts suggest that LMTA continue using both methods as appropriate to the department and the individual student.

5.4.3. Efficiency of final thesis assessment

There appears to be an efficient process of final project assessment described in the SA. A jury of experts assesses the performance including someone who has not worked in the department for at least 3 years serving a chairperson. The visiting experts feel that this is an example of the typical internationally recognized system of evaluating graduation concerts using a jury of experts, some or all of whom have no direct connection with the candidate, to validate the course of study toward the second cycle diploma (Master of Music, in this case). Graduates of postgraduate studies take their graduation examination in the form of a public solo concert (recital) held in the Academy's halls.

5.4.4. Functionality of the system for assessment and recognition of achievements acquired in non-formal and self-education

Paragraph 256 of the SA indicates a suitable process for the assessment of achievements acquired in non-formal or self-education. The total credits may not exceed 20% of the total required for graduation. Although this system appears fair and thorough, the visiting experts caution the LMTA to be especially vigilant in the administration of this process which is based primarily on the evaluation of documents including credits earned through mobility activities.

5.5. Graduates placement

5.5.1. Expediency of graduate placement

Although the LMTA job placement rate appears very high at 96%, a rate of 83% seems to more accurately reflect the percentage of graduates who are placed in positions related to their

education and training. In spite of this success, there is a rather high rate of job dissatisfaction (29%) among recent graduates and statistics that point to possible deficiencies in their preparation. This process of gathering information is very new (2009-2010) to the LMTA.

Because national funding is declining and the state remains the principal employer of performing artists in Lithuania, a strategic plan which deals with this issue and the placement of future graduates would be a helpful exercise for the LMTA in the opinion of the experts. (see recommendation III, 3.3 and 3.4).

6. Programme management

6.1. Programme administration

6.1.1. Efficiency of the programme management activities

Although the LMTA does not have a specific manager in place for program implementation and quality assurance, the state issued Statutes under which the LMTA and Art of Performance program are organized appear to provide a structure sufficient to accomplish these goals. These duties are distributed from the Rector through various administrators and to the faculties in a clear and organized manner as viewed by the visiting experts.

6.2. Internal quality assurance

6.2.1. Suitability of the programme quality evaluation

The SA states: *The current LMTA internal quality assurance system hasn't been formalised. The entire activity and processes related to study quality improvement are distributed among different divisions, commissions, task forces, etc. (see paragraph 2.6.1). In 2010 LMTA started implementing an internal quality assurance system based on the experience of other higher education institutions in Lithuania and abroad.*

The experts strongly recommend the continuation and development of this recent internal quality assurance effort. (see recommendation III, 3.5)

6.2.2. Efficiency of the programme quality improvement

Since the SA already states that *the greatest achievements are in the fields of study plan, study process and student assessment*, the visiting experts encourage the LMTA to continue the process to include all aspects of curricular and non-curricular student experiences in the Bachelor cycle of the Art of Performance program. (see recommendation III, 3.6)

6.2.3. Efficiency of stakeholders participation.

The SA indicates some progress in involving the primary stakeholders, the students, in the process of improving their program. To the visiting experts, the process at this point appears reactive to problems and difficulties. A more proactive approach will be important for future improvements and quality assurance. One way to accomplish this is to formulate a plan that includes strategies for the future with input from all stakeholders: students, faculties, administrators, graduates and the members of the profession who are the primary consumers of the LMTA KF most important product: its well-trained and educated artist performers.

7. Influence on cultural life

The visiting experts question this statement in the SA: *The involvement of external stakeholders has little influence on study quality. LMTA Council has been formed in 2005 by Order of the*

Minister of Education because of the contradictory statement which follows under the next paragraph: *Positive changes are stimulated by close ties of LMTA with the LNOBT, the National Philharmonic, Kaunas, Klaipėda and Šiauliai city Philharmonics, orchestras, choirs and other concert organisations and societies.*

Perhaps the difference is that the ties between the institution and these external stakeholder organizations has been cultivated for many years at the personal and artistic level. If the first statement above were to be true, the fault might be the lack of contact with the administrators and officials of these organizations. It is obvious to the visiting experts that the LMTA has great impact and influence on the cultural life of its cities and on the cultural life of Lithuania. During the meeting with external stakeholders, the experts noticed a disconnect between the expectations of older, more traditionally oriented stakeholders and the needs of the current profession, especially graduating students. The experts recommend that LMTA take steps to remedy this situation. (see recommendation III, 3.4)

8. Interaction with the profession

In the SA, there is ample documentation of long-standing interaction with performing and educational institutions in Lithuania. The visiting experts suggest that Erasmus and other mobility efforts might be included here to show the spirit of international interaction with the profession that already exists.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1.a.

The experts recommend a longer-term plan for renovation of the interior of the building of LMTA Kaunas Faculty. With understanding for the financial implications, 10% renovation in 2011 seems rather modest and should be looked upon as a first step to be followed by more intense renovations (II, 4.1.1).

3.1.b.

With understanding for the fact that the library of LMTA KF is part of a subordinate structural division of LMTA the experts recommend LMTA and LMTA KF to do an extra effort to give preference to expand the number of computer workstations and auditoriums with audio and computer equipment. Since the Kaunas Faculty cannot have the same stock of materials it is more important for users of the library to have access to digital available materials. Also the disposal of audio and computer equipment has to be a point of attention.(II, 4.1.1).

3.2.

The experts recommend a systematic plan for solving the lack of materials (score and parts) especially in the area of printed contemporary music. (II, 4.2.1)

3.3.

The experts recommend the continuation of the annual survey begun in 2009 to survey graduates and recommend the use of the results to influence curricular decisions and counselling efforts for students about to enter their final year of study in the Bachelor cycle of the Art of Performance program in order to prepare them for post-graduate study and career entry. (II, 5.5.1)

3.4.

The experts recommend the development of a strategic plan with a scope of at least 5 years to address the issue of declining national funding for the arts since the state remains the principal

employer of performing artists (and graduates of LMTA) in Lithuania. This plan would also deal with admissions and enrolment projections that will result from mandated national standards, and other issues such as overcoming restrictions to programs which occur within the framework of national regulations. This long-range strategic plan would also address the need to build stronger ties with the external stakeholders, especially those bound by traditions that no longer appear relevant to the current needs of LMTA graduates and the music profession in the 21st century (II, 1.1.1, 5.5.1, 7).

3.5.

The experts recommend the continuation, further development, formalisation and implementation of the internal quality assurance process begun in 2010. (II, 6.2.1).

3.6.

Being a faculty of LMTA in Vilnius, KF LMTA plays an advisory role in the development of the Art of Performance. In 2005-2009 facilities have been constantly upgraded and in 2009 a Jazz department started as a response to proposals from stakeholders. The visiting experts recommend LMA KF to continue developing the program in accordance with interaction, feedback and advice from stakeholders in the Kaunas region. (II, 6.2.2)

IV. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Music Performance Art* (state code – 62401M108, 621W31001) is given positive evaluation.

Table. *Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.*

No.	Evaluation area	Assessment in points*
1	Programme aims and learning outcomes	4
2	Curriculum design	4
3	Staff	4
4	Facilities and learning resources	2
5	Study process and student assessment (student admission, student support, student achievement assessment)	3
6	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	3
	Total:	20

*1 (unsatisfactory) - there are essential shortcomings that must be eliminated

2 (poor) - meets the established minimum requirements, needs improvement

3 (good) - the area develops systematically, has distinctive features

4 (very good) - the area is exceptionally good

ASSESSMENT FORM

Criterion	Assessment*				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Programme aims and learning outcomes					
<i>1.1. Programme demand, purpose and aims</i>					
1.1.1. Uniqueness and rationale of the need for the programme					X
1.1.2. Conformity of the programme purpose with the institutional, state and international directives					X
1.1.3. Relevance of the programme aims					X
<i>1.2. Learning outcomes of the programme</i>					
1.2.1. The comprehensibility and attainability of the learning outcomes				X	
1.2.2. Consistency of the intended learning outcomes				X	
1.2.3. Transformation of the learning outcomes				X	
2. Curriculum design					
<i>2.1. Programme structure</i>					
2.1.1. Sufficiency of the study volume					X
2.1.2. Consistency of the study subjects					X
<i>2.2. Programme content</i>					
2.2.1. Compliance of the contents of the studies with legal acts					X
2.2.2. Comprehensiveness and rationality of the programme content					X
3. Staff					
<i>3.1. Staff composition and turnover</i>					
3.1.1. Rationality of the staff composition					X
3.1.2. Turnover of teachers					X
<i>3.2. Staff competence</i>					
3.2.1. Compliance of staff experience with the study programme				X	

3.2.2. Consistency of teachers' professional development				X	
4. Facilities and learning resources					
<i>4.1. Facilities</i>					
4.1.1. Sufficiency and suitability of premises for studies			X		
4.1.2. Suitability and sufficiency of equipment for studies			X		
4.1.3. Suitability and accessibility of the resources for practical training			X		
<i>4.2. Learning resources</i>					
4.2.1. Suitability and accessibility of books, textbooks and periodic publications			X		
4.2.2. Suitability and accessibility of learning materials			X		
5. Study process and student assessment					
<i>5.1. Student admission</i>					
5.1.1. Rationality of requirements for admission to the studies				X	
5.1.2. Efficiency of enhancing the motivation of applicants and new students					X
<i>5.2. Study process</i>					
5.2.1. Rationality of the programme schedule					X
5.2.2. Student academic performance					X
5.2.3. Mobility of teachers and students		X			
<i>5.3. Student support</i>					
5.3.1. Usefulness of academic support				X	
5.3.2. Efficiency of social support			X		
<i>5.4. Achievement assessment</i>					
5.4.1. Suitability of assessment criteria and their publicity					X
5.4.2. Feedback efficiency					X
5.4.3. Efficiency of graduation papers assessment					X
5.4.4. Functionality of the system for assessment					x

and recognition of achievements acquired in a non-formal and self-study way.					
<i>5.5 Graduate placement</i>					
5.5.1 Expediency of graduate placement					X
6. Programme management					
<i>6.1. Programme administration</i>					
6.1.1. Efficiency of the programme management activities				X	
<i>6.2. Internal quality assurance</i>					
6.2.1. Suitability of the programme quality assessment			X		
6.2.2. Efficiency of the programme quality improvement			X		
6.2.3. Efficiency of stakeholders' participation					X
7. Influence on cultural life					X
8. Interaction with the profession					X

* – **Values of scores:**

1 – based on this criterion the programme is unsatisfactory, as there are essential shortcomings that must be immediately eliminated;

2 – based on this criterion the programme is poor, as there are a lot of shortcomings which are not essential;

3 – based on this criterion the programme is satisfactory; the programme meets the established minimum requirements and has one or two shortcomings which are not essential;

4 - based on this criterion the programme is good; the programme meets the requirements higher than those established by legal acts;

5 – based on this criterion the programme is excellent; the quality of programme implementation is of an exceptionally high level.