

Music Quality Enhancement

MUSIQUE

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MusiQuE - Music Quality Enhancement

The Foundation for Quality Enhancement and Accreditation in Higher Music Education

Brussels, December 2019

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List of abbreviations

AEC: Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen

ANVUR: Italian National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes

AQU Catalunya: Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency

EASPA: European Alliance for Subject-Specific and Professional Accreditation & Quality Assurance

ECA: European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education

EMU: European Music Schools Union

EQAR: European Quality Assurance Register

EQ-Arts: Enhancing Quality in the Arts

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

EURASHE: European Association of Institutions in Higher Education

NCPA: National Centre for Public Accreditation

NVAO: Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders

PEARLE*: Live Performance Europe (the Performing Arts Employers Associations League Europe)

Message from the MusiQuE Board

It is with great pleasure that the Board of MusiQuE would like to give you an update on the work of MusiQuE in 2018. We are proud to report that MusiQuE is doing well.

Over the past few years, MusiQuE has seen a significant growth in terms of the number of procedures, the development of new services and approaches to external quality assurance, and its international reach. The positive feedback we have received, both from institutions reviewed and from our peer reviewers, confirms the health of the higher music education sector, and the importance of our work in providing a quality benchmark for the sector in Europe and, indeed, throughout the world. Its efforts have been acknowledged in a report published by the European Commission in 2018 about the latest developments in quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area, in which MusiQuE was identified as an example of good practice¹.

The organisation has also significantly professionalised its overall operation by expanding its staff and taking a rigorous approach to its own self-evaluation through surveys and the feedback from the external evaluator. The Board greatly benefited from the input of the first student member to the Board, who started in February 2018.

The MusiQuE register for peer-reviewers is expanding. The peer-reviewers come from AEC member institutions, but increasingly also from EMU and PEARLE*. As every year, a workshop was held in November 2018 to train new and update experienced reviewers, including a growing number of students.

MusiQuE is registered with EQAR, the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education. This is significant and means that, at the European level, we have the same status as national quality assurance agencies. We have also secured agreements with various European agencies, and therefore able to carry out independent or joint accreditation procedures in various European countries; and our services are increasingly sought internationally.

Despite these impressive achievements over a short period of time, MusiQuE is also facing challenges. Most of these are connected to the situation that cross-border quality assurance is still not a fully accepted phenomenon in all countries belonging to the European Higher Education Area, despite the fact that this ambition has been clearly expressed in various ministerial communiqués as part of the Bologna Declaration process. Even with its registration on the European Register for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (EQAR), MusiQuE is still not able to function independently in all EHEA countries and in some countries where it can, it has to charge fees while national agencies do not have to do so, giving an uneven level playing field for MusiQuE. Furthermore, the functioning of MusiQuE as an international quality

¹ Study to evaluate the progress on quality assurance systems in the area of higher education in the Member States and on cooperation activities at European level. Published:2019-01-21. Corporate Author(s): Austrian Institute of Technology; Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (European Commission); Lukas Bischof Hochschulberatung; PPMI.

assurance agency is challenging in that it requires significant investment in terms of time and resources to meet the many different national requirements and rules with regards to external quality assurance.

As can be read in this report, this challenging context has not stopped MusiQuE from taking significant steps forward. We should therefore express our sincere gratitude to all those that are working hard to make MusiQuE a success. Firstly, to our partner organisations AEC, Pearle and EMU for their trust and continuous support to the development of MusiQuE. Secondly, to the excellent MusiQuE team in Brussels: we are very fortunate to have such a highly skilled and professional staff team in place. And finally, to all MusiQuE reviewers: they are all helping us to realize our mission of working internationally to uphold and advance the quality of music education.

Bernd Clausen

Momchil Georgiev

Timo Klemetinnen

Gordon Munro

Martin Prchal

Rosa Welker

About MusiQuE

MusiQuE is an external evaluation agency dedicated to the continuous improvement of the quality of higher music education across Europe and beyond. 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 offers a range of services tailored to the needs of higher music education institutions: quality enhancement reviews and accreditation procedures for institutions, programmes and joint programmes, joint procedures with national quality assurance and accreditation agencies, evaluations of research activities, consultative visits, coordination of benchmarking projects, etc.

MusiQuE was established in October 2014 by the following three organisations, which have become MusiQuE's direct partner organisations: the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC), the European Music Schools Union (EMU) and Pearle* Live Performance Europe, the European Federation of Music and Live Performance Organizations. In this way MusiQuE functions as a unique partnership of the higher music education sector and the music profession and thus its work is assured and relevant in terms of the professional demands of today's world of music.

MusiQuE operates according to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and is registered on the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR). As such, MusiQuE is 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 tailored to the specific contexts and characteristics of higher music education.

More about MusiQuE's Vision and Mission can be found on the website at the following [link](#).

Board and Staff

The [MusiQuE Board](#) is responsible for overseeing all activities of MusiQuE, including the consideration of review reports and, where relevant, granting accreditation. A permanent seat for a Student member of the Board was established in 2017 and the first Student Board member joined the Board in February.

Board composition 2018:

- Martin Prchal, Chair of the Board, Royal Conservatory The Hague
- Gordon Munro, Secretary and Treasurer, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
- Bernd Clausen, University of Music, Würzburg
- Momchil Georgiev, Secretary General of Bulgarian Association of Employers in Culture
- Helena Maffli, President of the European Music School Union (Member until May 2018)
- Timo Klemetinnen, Managing Director of the European Music School Union (Member as of December 2018)
- Rosa Welker, Master Student at the Zürcher Hochschule der Künste (ZHdK) (Member as of February 2018)

Helena Maffli left the Board in May 2018. The MusiQuE Board and staff would like to express their gratitude to Helena for her commitment and considerable input in MusiQuE's activities. Based on the



proposal made by the EMU Council, the vacant seat was filled by Timo Klemettinen who joined the Board in December 2018.

At the end of 2018, the Board decided to renew the term of MusiQuE's Secretary and Treasurer Gordon Munro until November 2021.

Board meetings took place in Brussels (March and December 2018) and by Skype. Summaries of the physical meetings can be found on the following links: [Spring Board meeting](#); [Autumn Board meeting](#).

The [MusiQuE Office](#) is responsible for the day-to-day running of MusiQuE's operations and review processes, as well as for providing support to the Board and ensuring that the decisions taken by the Board are implemented.

Office composition 2018:

- Linda Messas, Director
- Jef Cox, Policy & Review Officer
- Paulina Gut, Review Officer (since June 2018)
- Blazhe Todorovski, Review & Administrative Officer (since June 2018)



Peer-Reviewers Register

Peer-reviewers form the panels that carry out the reviews commissioned by the Board of MusiQuE: in line with its subject-specific focus, MusiQuE works with a pool of international experts in relevant musical fields, who are familiar with and well informed about the specificities of higher music education.

Since October 2017, the criteria for the recruitment of peer-reviewers have been adjusted to allow for a greater diversity of profiles. The first peer reviewers originating from EMU and Pearle* were added to the MusiQuE register in spring 2018 and MusiQuE is working on including more reviewers from the music profession, including by inviting experts within the Pearle* and EMU communities to the annual MusiQuE Training for Peer-reviewers. Attending this training is one of the criteria to become listed on the Register. In addition, existing members of the Register are expected to update their familiarity with MusiQuE's standards and procedures by taking part periodically in the training.

In 2018, an analysis of the register was made, which demonstrated it included 80 experts from 29 countries speaking all together 14 languages. 65% of the reviewers were male and 35% female. The majority of them held a senior management position (33); the other reviewers were heads of departments (15), professors/teachers/lecturers (14), individuals holding a senior administrative position (7), retired (6) or in other roles (5). The fields of expertise mostly represented in the pool were: classical music, composition, music pedagogy and artistic research.

Peer-Reviewers Training Sessions

In November 2018, the MusiQuE training session for Peer-Reviewers took place at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz, Austria. 41 experts from all around Europe, including 7 students, participated in the training. This year's programme featured a newcomer's session as well as 'peer-to-peer' session for more experienced reviewers. The training session elicited very positive feedback from both participants and trainers, which will inform the training session in 2019. More about the training can be found on the following [link](#).

Information about the Review Team composition, the Peer-reviewers Register and the annual training can be found on the MusiQuE [website](#).



Review Procedures

During 2018, 11 procedures were carried out in 7 countries. Within these, MusiQuE makes a distinction between procedures within the scope of (and therefore in compliance with) the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and those outside the scope of the ESG due to their specific nature (e.g. focusing on educational levels other than higher education or on a particular area of interest only, or consultative visits):

Institutional Quality Enhancement Review (1) - within the scope of the ESG

- Real Conservatorio Superior de Música de Madrid, Madrid Spain, 12-14 March (reports: [English](#), [Spanish](#))

Institutional Accreditation (1) - within the scope of the ESG

- Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory (in cooperation with NCPA), Moscow, Russia, 4-6 December (reports: [English](#), [Russian](#))

Programme Quality Enhancement Reviews (4) - within the scope of the ESG

- Royal Conservatoire Antwerp, Antwerp, Belgium, 13-15 May ([BA&MA of Arts in music programmes report](#))
- Koninklijk Conservatorium Brussel, Brussels, Belgium, 16-18 May ([BA&MA Music report](#), [BA Musical report](#))
- Malmö Academy of Music, Malmö, Sweden, 30 September – 2 October ([Performance programme report](#)) [Critical Friend Review]
- Conservatorio della Svizzera italiana, Luganó, Switzerland, 23-25 October ([Scuola Universitaria di Musica programmes report](#))

Programme Accreditations (3 procedures) – within the scope of the ESG

- Escola Superior de Musica de Catalunya (in cooperation with AQU Catalunya), Barcelona, Spain, 20-21 November ([Bachelor of Music and Master in Advanced Music Performance Studies: Classical and Contemporary Music Instruments programmes report](#))
- Liceu Conservatorio (in cooperation with AQU Catalunya), Barcelona, Spain, 22-23 November ([Bachelor programme report](#))
- College of Music, Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand, 22-24 November ([Bachelor of Music programme report](#))

NEW PROCEDURE: Review of pre-college institutions and programmes (1) – outside the scope of the ESG

- Conservatorio della Svizzera italiana, Luganó, Switzerland, 26 October ([Pre-college programme report](#))

NEW PROCEDURE: Consultative visit (1) – outside the scope of the ESG

- European Music Council, Bonn

All the reports have been published in the '[Completed procedures](#)' section of the website.

Finances

Although MusiQuE's general level of activity increased quite substantially in 2018, with 11 review procedures (compared to 6 in 2017), the profit and loss statement shows a rather similar picture in 2017 and 2018:

- The direct income from reviews is slightly smaller in 2018, for two reasons. First, it does not include the income from two procedures in Belgium, for which invoicing was postponed until MusiQuE would obtain a VAT number in Belgium; in addition, in the context of the diversification of MusiQuE's services, some procedures were of smaller scale and therefore did generate less income than regular review procedures.
- On the expenditure side, review costs amounted to less than 50,000 euros, operational costs were maintained at a reasonable level and staff costs increased.

The profit and loss statement shows a positive result of 7,302€ (very similar to the 2017 result). 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.

Income	2018	2017
Direct income from Reviews	142,807	116,261
Total Income	114,106	116,261
Expenditures		
Review Costs (Expenses & Reviewers' fees)	48,856	62,398
MusiQuE operational costs	18,913	16,561
MusiQuE Staff costs	32,048	23,078
Total Expenditures	99,817	102,036
Overhead costs (=7% of total costs)	6,987	7,143
Result	7,302	7,083

Note on the staff costs

Based on the agreement between the three founding partners of MusiQuE, AEC, EMU and Pearle* to offer their financial support to MusiQuE in order to guarantee its financial viability in its first years of operation (without compromising its independence), staff costs of the MusiQuE Office in Brussels are covered by AEC, and progressively reimbursed by MusiQuE, until financial independence is reached. In 2018, as in 2017, MusiQuE reimbursed 50% of the total staff costs covered by AEC. In addition, 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 is paid to AEC.

Internal Quality Assurance

MusiQuE has developed a robust internal quality assurance system, which provides the MusiQuE Board with relevant feedback on the organizations fitness for purpose.

External evaluator

Since 2016, Stefan Delplace, Honorary Secretary General of the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), and an educationalist specialized in Business-Education cooperation, Quality Assurance, Recognition and Accreditation issues, has been serving as the External Evaluator of MusiQuE. His role is to review material documenting MusiQuE's activity, as well as to monitor the compatibility of MusiQuE's systems with the ESG. In 2018, the Board of MusiQuE extended Mr. Delplace's tenure for a further two-year period. In his 2018 report, Stefan Delplace highlighted the important progress achieved by MusiQuE, from establishing student representation on its Board to widening stakeholder's involvement. The Board expresses its gratitude to Mr. Delplace for his work in ensuring the quality of MusiQuE's systems and processes. The reports of the External Evaluator are published on the MusiQuE website.

Results of feedback questionnaires and improvements to MusiQuE review procedures

Feedback from institutions reviewed, and from members of Review Teams is considered annually by the Board of MusiQuE which then decides on any action to improve systems and processes or to fine-tune the Standards.

The feedback received from institutions has been very positive in 2018: institutions "recognise [them]selves in the recommendations that have been formulated", appreciated that "MusiQuE provides more opportunities [than the national procedures] for the programme to reflect" and "plan to integrate the recommendations into [their] quality enhancement follow up-plan".

Some suggestions for improvements were also made, such as the integration in the reviewers' reports of the definition of compliance level statements or the earlier communication to the institution of the classes which members of the Review Team have chosen to attend.

MusiQuE also collects suggestions for improvements to its various sets of standards for the Standards revision process undertaken every four years.

Communication and external relations

Bringing MusiQuE’s activities, and the higher music education sector in general, to the attention of a wide audience is MusiQuE’s continuous mission. In that regard, its services, activities and approach to quality and quality assurance have been presented on several occasions in 2018:

What was presented	Context in which it was presented	Date and venue	Audience
MusiQuE’s Critical Friend Reviews	ECA/NVAO Seminar, “Institutional and Programme Reviews: Towards New Combinations” – Brussels (European Consortium for Accreditation – ECA, Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders – NVAO)	1 February 2018, Brussels	National QA agencies, higher education institutions
MusiQuE’s approach to subject-specific quality assurance (special attention to the Critical Friend Reviews)	International Peer Learning Conference, Quality Assurance & Quality Development in Higher Education – (German Academic Exchange Service – DAAD)	10 April 2018 Berlin	Key stakeholders of the QA agencies in Europe, Representatives of the HMEIs
MusiQuE and how MusiQuE trains its peer-reviewers	ANVUR Training Session (Italian National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes – ANVUR)	18-19 April 2018 Rome	Academic staff, students of the HMEI in Italy, QA representatives from Europe
MusiQuE’s services and reviews, MusiQuE’s approach to subject-specific quality assurance	Information session organised at Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Warsaw	20 May 2018	Rectors all Polish Higher Music Education Institutions
MusiQuE’s approach to subject-specific quality assurance (special attention to the Critical Friend Reviews)	ASIIN / EASPA’s 5 th Global Conference (European Alliance for Subject-Specific and Professional Accreditation & Quality Assurance – EASPA)	10-11 December 2018 Berlin	Higher education institutions from all over the world; national QA agencies from all over the world

MusiQuE was also represented at various international conferences, including the ENQA Forum and the European Quality Assurance Forum.

It should be highlighted that MusiQuE is mentioned in the European Commission’s [Study to evaluate the progress on quality assurance systems in the area of higher education in the Member States and on cooperation activities at European level - Annexes to the final report](#) described as “a truly European quality assurance agency” (Annex 2.2.8. Good practice example 8). Indeed, MusiQuE can serve as an experiential model of how the ambitions with regards to cross-border quality assurance in the EHEA are actually being realised.

Finally, the following presentations to partner organisations and their constituencies were also delivered:

What was presented	Context in which it was presented	Date and venue	Audience
Dissemination of the MusiQuE Standards for Pre-College education	43rd General Assembly of the European Music School Union (EMU), Sneek, the Netherlands	9-11 May 2018	60 participants representing 23 members within the European Music School Union
MusiQuE - linking internationalisation and quality assurance	AEC Annual Meeting for International Relations Coordinators (IRCs)	13-16 September 2018 Prague	International Relations Coordinators (IRCs) of higher music education institutions
1) General update on MusiQuE (during AEC GA) 2) Parallel session presenting the 2017 Trend Analysis and introducing AEC members to the Critical Friend Review	45 th AEC Annual Congress and General Assembly	8-10 November 2018 Graz	More than 400 representatives, heads, teachers and students of higher music education institutions in Europe
MusiQuE and its concept of quality	56 th Pearle* annual conference	23 November 2018 Antwerp, the Netherlands	Representatives of national orchestra associations
MusiQuE's services and reviews, MusiQuE's approach to subject-specific quality assurance	Regional meeting of Polish higher music education institutions (held during the AEC Annual Congress and General Assembly)	8-10 November, Graz, Austria	Rectors and students of all Polish Higher Music Education Institutions

Annexes

- **MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement: Background, Mission and Regulations**
<http://www.musique-qe.eu/documents/musique-framework-document>
- **MusiQuE Standards**
<http://www.musique-qe.eu/documents/musique-standards>
- **Reports of institutions and programmes reviewed by MusiQuE**
<http://www.musique-qe.eu/completed-reviews>
- **Trend analyses**
<http://www.musique-qe.eu/documents/trend-analysis>
- **MusiQuE Templates**
<http://www.musique-qe.eu/documents/templates>
- **European references**
Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)
https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf



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