

# Involving students in Quality Assurance

Richard Fajnor for MusiQuE, November 29th , 2021

# 1. Tertiary Education in the Czech Republic

## Number of the schools

- 26 Public Universities
  - 2 State Universities
  - 34 Privat Higher Education Institutions
- 288 608 students (registered before 20.1.2021)
- Strong position of the research activities and their separate financing based on performance reporting (RIV) through Research Development and Innovation Council of Government of the Czech Rep.

# 1. Tertiary Education in the Czech Republic

## Professional versus Academic Study Programmes

Threats of professional study programme in arts and design:

- Non-existence of interdepartmental communication between the Ministry of Culture (MKČR) and the Ministry of Education (MŠMT) of Czech Republic
- Inhibition or ending of discussions about artistic research, its funding and development of equal rights with academic research
- Weakening of a perspective development of 3-cycle education in art, its quality of outputs and the balance of practice based artistic research and informed theoretical reflection of artists

## 2. Position of art universities in the Czech Republic

### Method of financing, introduction of a register of artistic outputs

- There are no strategic documents on the cultural policy of the state, the lack of inter-ministerial communication between MKČR and MŠMT, the tendency to approach art and education only as a commodity by the political representation
- Persistent lack of understanding of ministry representatives for financial and operational specifics of individual form of education, strengths and threads related to proportions of art departments
- Czech art schools have developed a new system for register of artistic performances, based on annual verification of results by external experts
- Contract-based budgeting (3 years) for only 4 autonomous schools (academies)

## 2. Position of art universities in the Czech Republic

### Study Programmes in Arts and Design

- Big differences between 4 academies and faculties organized by general or polytechnic research universities
- The size of schools and faculties with mostly or exclusively artistic study programmes is btw. 300 - 500 students in all cycles and in all disciplines and btw. 60 - 80 academic staff
- 2 schools only have faculties with performative disciplines such as the musical and dramatic arts - this is a problem for benchmarking
- Similar problem is in the field of film – 2 faculties of public schools and 1 privat school
- Fine art, Design and New media – 2 academies and 7 faculties
- Architecture – 3 faculties (discipline is not under field of art for accreditation)

### 3. Practice in the participation of students in the organization of activities of the schools

#### Basic definition of the role of students in institutional processes by legislation

Representation of students' voices in the Academic Senates of universities is guaranteed by the University Act

- Not everywhere is part of the rules the conciliation procedure of the student chamber
- Other committees are supplemented by students mostly only at large schools
- students are organized from below, especially in situations of serious mistakes, but this interest in participating is not more permanent
- Involvement of the students in executive committees and boards of art faculties should be the rule, in most crucial processes of most departments and workplaces

### 3. Practice in the participation of students in the organization of activities of the schools

At technical universities there is a problematic approach to the application of [the principles of student-centred learning](#) by setting of study plans (ESG 2015)

- A similar practice can be recognized also in some departments of art schools. We can identify it in particular by:
  - very low number of credits for profiling subjects
  - high time stress by performance of the requirements in compulsory subjects
  - low number or absence of optional subjects

### 3. Practice in the participation of students in the organization of activities of the schools

#### The ambiguous position of young researchers

- The common practice is considering PhD students only as students and not as young researchers
- Be employed for teaching and at the same time be listed as doctoral students - weakens the students' voice in the boards (conflict of interests)



## 4. Strengths and significantly improvement the situation of the last few years

- Substantial increase in level and quality of most doctoral programmes (the weakest are music interpretation study programs - with the main focus on stage performance)
- Much more open and responsive approach to the disabled (a major shift in the last 15 years)
- Shifts in gender balance
- Ne!musíš to vydržet (No! You have to endure it), MeeToo and open discussions about different forms of harassment or abuse (so far rather out of school)
- Turn towards increased mental health care and improving psychohygiene principles in schools (especially the last year)

## 5. Opportunities for improvement

- The need to strengthen student representation in decision-making and to take into account their needs, attitudes and perceptions.
- Continue to tackle stereotypes, social and cultural inequalities:
  - Better age balance in teaching staff
  - Approaches to gender equality
  - Large differences between different disciplines
- More community elements for students' lives - the school should also deal with creating space for informal meetings

## 5. Opportunities for improvement

**Complicated reviews of ethical transgressions**, non-transparency of the solution of disciplinary errors and violations of ethics (discussions are taking place at the level of the whole of Czech society)

- equal treatment usually concerns the correction of the evaluation process and the feeling of unfair treatment in the form of a commission check
- too much tolerance in recognizing signs of cheating and plagiarism
- persistence of serious deformations in view of the embrace of sexual harassment and physical attacks
- stigmatization of people with mental problem or handicap

Policy non-compliance - fairly well-established rules and regulations is different of daily practice in their application

## 6. An interesting phenomenon

- very high reporting skills

- Situation in schools that have passed through external evaluation
- Persistent lack of understanding of the basic principles for setting up a quality system and internal evaluation activities aimed at a quality culture building

## 7. Personal experience

### Faculty of Music

- students' lack of interest in setting up school processes
- these students are really satisfied with the condition, equipment, organization and settings of the institutes at which they are educated, they "don't need any change"
- it is a consequence of "lifelong" building of faith in the authority of a teacher (often an excellent artist), they are trained from early childhood - in the Czech Republic as standard are children educated to play the instrument from the age of 5
- very one-sided development of an interest in only one type of activity

## 7. Personal experience

### Theatre Faculty

- An interesting example of good practice how to engage students to have a look into the internal processes of the school and artistic functioning and operation through the organization of big international events – SETKÁNÍ/ENCOUNTER
- A special example of progressive thinking about the involvement of the disabled in artistic operation – Drama Educational for the Deaf.
- Ne!musíš to vydržet (No!Do you have to hang on it)

Thank you for your attention