

Vilnius Academy of Fine Art

Applied Arts Programmes

Final Accreditation Report

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Vilnius

2008

Vilnius Academy of Fine Art

APPLIED ARTS PROGRAMMES

Study Program	Type of Studies	University
61202M114 Applied Graphics	Bachelors's	Vilnius Art Academy (Kaunas Faculty)
62102M110 Applied Graphics	Master's	Vilnius Art Academy (Kaunas Faculty)
Glass 62102M109	Master's	Vilnius Art Academy (Kaunas Faculty)
Glass 61202M113	Bachelor's	Vilnius Art Academy (Kaunas Faculty)
62102 M 111 Applied Ceramics	Master's	Vilnius Art Academy (Kaunas Faculty)
61202 M 115 Applied Ceramics	Bachelors's	Vilnius Art Academy (Kaunas Faculty)
61202 M 116 Applied textile	Bachelors's	Vilnius Art Academy (Kaunas Faculty)
62102 M 112 Applied textile	Master's	Vilnius Art Academy (Kaunas Faculty)

Kaunas Faculty

Key Parameters of Study Quality.

- *aims and goals indicated in the study programme meets the expectations of students who live in a very dynamic world where professional qualities are valued more and more;*
- *content of the programme is in conformity with the aims and goals of the programme;*
- *content of the study programme is in conformity with the level of knowledge in the area (field) of science (arts)*
- *acquired knowledge, skills and abilities are in conformity with the requirements for professional activities*

Introduction

- The Experts spent two days at the Kaunas Faculty of the Academy assessing four departments and eight programmes. This experience provided a valuable understanding of the processes and practices employed at the faculty. The perception of the Experts based on this experience was that the Kaunas Faculty displays a lot of potential and generally has a commendable attitude and concern for future developments. The management team displayed a good level of perception about the future of arts education, the possible role of the faculty in those future developments and expressed a desire and an ability to address future needs by formulating contingency plans for discussion.
- The staff of some departments also perceived and expressed a need for change and a concern for the future needs of students and in adapting to developing requirements.
- The Experts recommend the urgent adoption of the organisational proposals, or something similar, supplied to them during the visit –
 - a) one entry point for all BA Students
 - b) 'Fundamental' diagnostic first year,
 - c) three years of study in one of three departments,
 - d) Visual Arts,
 - e) Design
 - f) Architecture
- The adoption of such an organisational structure, as that above, would provide a framework that would begin to address the majority of the concerns, weaknesses and deficiencies that are consistently expressed in this report in the majority of its sections.i.e.
- By addressing the structure of small scale divisions and departments that presently do not enhance but instead hinder the students learning experience as it maintains artificial boundaries between practices and forms of artistic expression and application that no longer exist in the world the graduates are entering.
- By providing an educational environment where the recurring prevalence to aim for the 'universal specialist' is not possible. The aim of producing a 'universal specialist' is not feasible in the long term and is a false premise. It is ill informed and not properly grounded in market research or an accurate analysis of future requirements. It is also highly ill-advised as it lacks

integrity of purpose both in the Experts' experience and knowledge and when considering the 'Key Parameters'¹ of study quality.

- a) The adoption of the new organisational structure suggested (or similar) would also directly address many other outstanding issues:
- b) The need to focus on cognitive and creative skills
- c) Modernise the existing methodological basis of the teaching which is outmoded
- d) Provide opportunities to develop:-
- e) critical mass (of students)
- f) Autonomous learning
- g) Independent learning
- h) Horizontal learning
- i) Synergy
- j) Interdisciplinary study

61202 M 115 Applied Ceramics Bachelors's (Kaunas Faculty)
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Aims and goals of the study programme:

- Generally there is a lack of coherence within the stated aims and a lack of coherence between the stated aims and the programme provided. Better consideration could be given to how the programme aims are formed and reflected in the course elements, learning outcomes and assignments set.
- The experts recommend that a clearer definition of the niche study specialisms and their aims within the existing programme is required, the are potentially and inherently present within the programme. These study pathways should be clearly defined, made available to students as options within the programme and could purposely link practical and theoretical competences more explicitly to defined career opportunities.
- If the translation into English can be reasonably relied upon and the garbled nature of the text understood then the aims of the programme contain both

troubling statements-

- *The aim of applied ceramics studies is to prepare wide profile artists-ceramicists. Students perform artistic-decorative and functional task, where*

¹ ibid

projects and works from materials are done in department. So next to it there are formed skills of material mastering,²

and interesting statements

- *also encouraged to experiment. KAI ceramics programme and technical basis open good opportunities for students to master main technologies of clay, stoneware and porcelain processing.*
- *8. Study programme seeks for not to straiten students' creative self-expression. For realization of students' works often there are used materials unusual for ceramics: concrete or plastic, glass and etc. Thanks to contemporary technologies, realization possibilities of creative ideas splay out.³*
- *To aim to prepare wide profile artists-ceramicists is not feasible in the long term and is a false premise. It is ill informed and not properly grounded in market research or an accurate analysis of future requirements. It is also highly ill-advised as it lacks integrity of purpose both in the Experts' experience and knowledge and when considering the 'Key Parameters'⁴ of study quality.*
- *The Experts found it difficult to equate the content of the programme as being in conformity with the aims and goals of the programme*

3 Analyses of programme

3.1.1. Structure, contents and study methods

- *Credit weightings must meet the requirements of the law with regard to credit allocations and the number of subjects, at present there are more subjects than allowed and the Study Plan includes 1 credit units, not only breaking regulations but indicating a fragmented over complicated study plan in opinion of the experts*
- *At present there is an excessive quantity subjects in the Study Plan that also includes an excessive number of 2 credit units. It is the opinion of the experts that this indicates a fragmented over complicated study plan that is not producing a coherent holistic student experience of the type that is required to fully meet the *Key Parameters of Study Quality*⁵ and is not consistent with standard practice in Higher Arts Education institutions in Europe*

² SER P 7

³ ibid

⁴ ibid

⁵ ibid

- The range and type of subjects and courses available, in all Blocks A,B,C in the view of the experts, do not produce a coherent holistic student experience of the type that is required to fully meet the *Key Parameters of Study Quality*⁶
- The programme is very strongly rooted in a concept that the Experts perceive as problematic: the "encyclopaedic" approach to teaching the foundations of the technological and general art practices (painting, graphic etc.) This method stands in the way of developing a graduate with individual creativity and a sense of responsibility for his/her own artistic decisions. The pedagogy employed seems strongly rooted in the idea of "crafts first, creativity second". It is recommended that the programme move towards an approach that focuses on individual problem solving where craft and creativity are simultaneously combined instead of orienting students towards "safe and tested solutions"
- Serious consideration should be given to restructuring the programme and modernising the teaching methodology. Most of the changes envisaged or recently made that were presented to the experts did not seem to embrace restructuring and did not seem to be based on an acceptance of the fact that an encyclopaedic approach to skills and knowledge was no longer possible or appropriate.
- The experts perceived a worrying tendency to want to include all innovations and existing and traditional ceramic practices into the programme without divesting outmoded and unnecessary content. This leads to an over taught over complex programme and inhibits students from discovering new creative processes and the development of ambitious new ideas and limits independent learning and personal development and the greater development of cognitive and creative skills
- The programme remains strongly rooted in traditional ways of teaching although a wider use of materials by students is tolerated. The Experts recommend that the programme team take bolder steps to remove the constraints of tradition and objectively reassess the value of its remaining qualities.
- The Study Plan for Block C does not contain enough opportunity to study the Theory of Contemporary Art and/or Design and is heavily biased towards historical studies. In the view of the Experts the study of Contemporary Art and/or Design Theory and related issues is essential at all stages (years) of this type of programme.

⁶ ibid

- The Experts consider it excessive to provide so much ‘input’ and teaching beyond the first 3 Semesters. The present methodology does not meet with best practice in Higher Arts Education institutions. It is important that the emphasis be shifted to the independent and autonomous study of studio practice, professional practice, personal development and the greater development of cognitive and creative skills

3.1.2. Execution of studies and support for students

- The practice of presenting the works of previous cohorts of students and staff to new or current students as models of good practice is a highly questionable practice. It promotes an inward-looking culture, emphasises the achievements of the past as exemplary over the need for future innovations and inhibits incoming students from exploring opportunities for new creative processes and the development of ambitious new ideas that explore uncharted territory.
- Serious consideration should be given to reducing teaching contact time in favour of structured learning time. More self study needs to be introduced into the programme. This would have the positive effect of aiding students to become more responsible for their own learning and adopt a more positive approach to life long learning.
- The programme team need to reconsider how standards of achievement are set and arrived at and transparently communicated. The development of a student centred, outcomes based approach is required in the present educational environment⁷.

Students reported:

- Many of them were in employment to support themselves and that those students found it hard to meet the programme requirements. The employed students were dependent on individual teaching staff to be flexible and that they had to “*fit it in*”.
- desire for more *help “not more classes but a different quality and type of information”*
- that “*sometimes there is not enough time to do what you want-because you have to do the programme*”
- they were not aware of any way to change the programme and that any request had to be made on an individual basis, and they could not provide

⁷ John Biggs ‘Teaching Teaching & Understanding Understanding (Open University Press/McGraw Hill, 2003)

any examples of change or any request to change the programme being addressed

- concern that teachers were influencing not only their creative but their *“personal lives”* and that they desired more *“personal space and time”* and preferred *“guidance only”*
- requested more career guidance that whilst they *“each know (what they had planned for the future) nobody talks to them”* and that they are only *“being told it is not easy”*
- there was *“not enough”* independent learning and a *“very specific programme with a lot of detail”*
- that they knew there was *“an assessment Appeals process”* and that it existed *“in Glass but not in Ceramics”*

3.1.3. Variation in the number of students

- Student numbers appear consistent but the priority on which they are selected does vary.
- However the Experts advise that, the student numbers studying at present do not attain the critical mass per year group that is crucial to provide for a rich varied and stimulating learning environment. The experience and value of horizontal learning (students learning from each other) in institutes of art and design is considered to be hugely significant and recognised internationally. Horizontal learning is an internationally appreciated factor that all the best programmes not only strive to encourage but actively seek to achieve.

3.1.4. Teaching staff

- There is an urgent need to review the established methodological basis of the teaching as the experts advise that it is outmoded (and historical) and as a methodology it is highly improbable that it is capable of producing programmes that can sufficiently meet the *‘Key Parameters of Study Quality’*⁸, as defined by the agency. The focus on contemporary practice and on contemporary theory should be developed and enhanced.
- Serious consideration should be given to reducing teaching contact time. This would allow teaching staff more time to involve themselves in

1 Page 2 External Assessment of Study Programmes, STUDIJU KOKYBES VERTINIMO CENTRAS

professional development as teachers of higher education studies and to engage as researchers in the pedagogies of their discipline

- There is an urgent need to develop a meaningful Staff Professional Development processes in the Department to support and encourage teachers in the enhancement of their role as 'learning facilitators' rather than the present established, outmoded (and historical) 'master' teachers' role. In this way the true potential of the intrinsic talent that students possess, and bring with them to the study process, can be fully realised and made available to society on their graduation.

3.1.5. Advantages and disadvantages of the programme

Advantages

- The programme displays a good level of craftsmanship and a great focus on technical expertise
- The previous success of the Programme is centred on (traditional) ceramic skills and technical training should now be refocused and developed towards educating the higher registers of cognitive and creative skills and a critical, research oriented mind set, with the inclusion, project management and entrepreneurial/marketing/business skills
- The Experts perceive that the capacity exists within the programme and within the department to ensure future development to a satisfactory level that would meet the 'Key Parameters of Study Quality'⁹

Disadvantages

- The financing of the programme is inadequate and:-
 1. the salaries of teachers are unjustifiably low. Teachers work with great devotion and often at the expense of higher personal well being.
 2. The financing of the programme is inadequate and the provision of equipment particularly IT equipment is inadequate to provide for the programme to meet satisfactorily the '*Key Parameters of Study Quality*'¹⁰

⁹ ibid

¹⁰ Ibid

3. The financing of the programme is inadequate and the provision of a satisfactory working environment is essential.
- The Experts perceive that, the Ceramics Programme Team are hindered and constrained by many traditions all of which they are not fully aware of at present
 - At the present time there is an over emphasis on the development of professional skills over personal development

62102 M 111 Applied Ceramics Master's (Kaunas Faculty)

- In the Experts opinion the Self Evaluation Report for this programme is vague and inadequate in quantity and in quality. Written in descriptive platitudes it does not meet the standards of analysis and evaluation required for assessment by an international peer group. These factors emphasize the Expert's perception that master's studies are viewed by many departments as a mere extension of the bachelors programme without their own discreet objectives, learning outcomes, competences and ethos and focus. (Compare: European Higher Education Area¹¹ , Qualifications Framework¹², Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Skills¹³, Arts Tuning Documents inter}artes European Thematic Network Report¹⁴).

Aims and goals of the study programme:

- The borderline and the distinction between Applied Ceramics Bachelor and Applied Ceramics Masters study programmes needs much better and clearer delineation- defining more clearly the distinct and stand alone quality of the Bachelor and emphasising the research element at MA level and the development of the capacity for conceptual and critical thinking. The research element should not necessarily be limited to History of Art or Artistic Theory but should be broadened to include marketing research,

¹¹ www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050218_QF_EHEA.pdf

¹² Ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/eqf/index_en.html

¹³ www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html

¹⁴ Inter}artes Tapping into the Potential of Higher Arts Education in Europe, ELIA 2008

design research, manufacturing and production research, materials and processes research.

- The aims of the programme are somewhat vague and ill-defined:

The aim of the programme is to form personality able to works and realize creative tasks individually, integrate into process of contemporary art, participate in artistic projects, have independent, individual view on phenomenon of art and culture, analyse creative process in the context of modern art critically. Be able to use up-to-date technologies as way of plastic expression in creative work, form and realize ideas-projects, work individually and in groups, take part at considerations of exhibitions and discussions.¹⁵

- If this is the “aim” of the Programme it is the view of the Experts that they are clearly not ambitious enough for a Master programme and are more aligned to what can be expected from a Bachelor graduate. (Compare European Higher Education Area¹⁶ - Qualifications Framework¹⁷, Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Skills¹⁸).
- It is recommended that the Academy/Faculty/Department formulates the aims of the (any) programme in a concise and consistent format (as numbered statements, not in a descriptive narrative) that:
 1. reflect the European standards of achievement of learning in Higher Arts Education
 2. makes a clear distinction of the achievements and career opportunities of a BA and an MA graduate
 3. are addressed in one section of the SER, namely the “Aims and Objectives of the Programme”

3 Analyses of programme

3.1.1. Structure, contents and study methods

- Credit weightings must meet the requirements of the law with the number of subjects, at present there are more subjects than allowed in the Study Plan, not only breaking regulations but indicating a fragmented over complicated study plan in opinion of the experts.
- At present there is an excessive quantity of subjects in the Study Plan that also includes an excessive number of 2 credit units. It is the opinion of the

¹⁵ SER P 19

¹⁶ www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050218_QF_EHEA.pdf

¹⁷ Ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/eqf/index_en.html

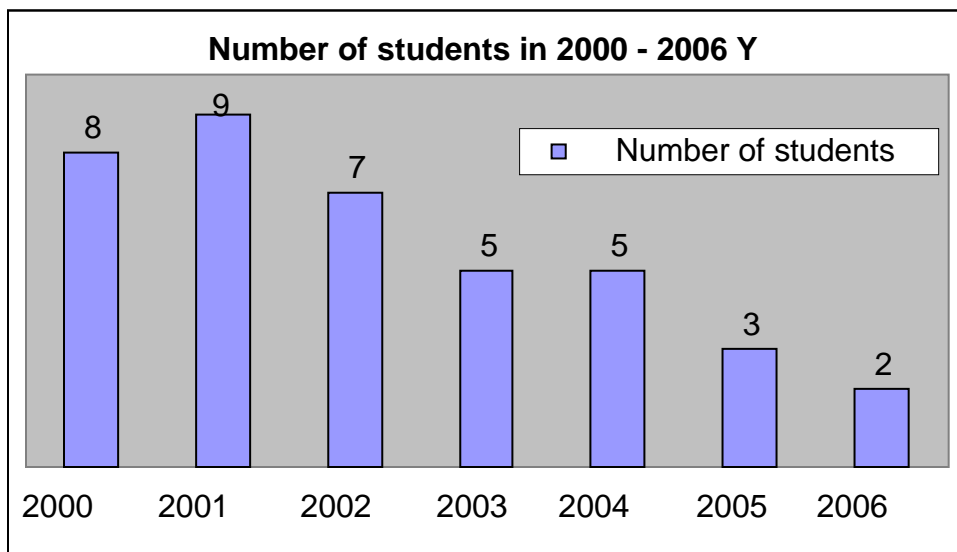
¹⁸ www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html

experts that this indicates a fragmented over complicated study plan that is not producing a coherent holistic student experience of the type that is required to fully meet the *Key Parameters of Study Quality*¹⁹and is not consistent with standard practice in Higher Arts Education institutions in Europe.

3.1.2. Execution of studies and support for students

- The practice of presenting the works of previous cohorts of students and staff to new or current students as models of good practice is a highly questionable practice. It promotes an inward-looking culture, emphasises the achievements of the past as exemplary over the need for future innovations and inhibits incoming students from exploring opportunities for new creative processes and the development of ambitious new ideas that explore uncharted territory.
- Very serious consideration should be given to reducing teaching contact time in favour of structured learning time. More self study needs to be introduced into the programme. This would have the positive effect of aiding students to become more responsible for their own learning and adopt a more positive approach to life long learning.

3.1.3. Variation in the number of students



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- The table above displays an alarming decline in student numbers for which the Experts did not obtain an explanation, the decline requires serious consideration and calls into question the future viability of the programme.

¹⁹ ibid

²⁰ SER P23

The Experts would expect that an educationally viable number studying at MA level would not fall below 15 per year group.

- The Experts advise that, the student numbers studying at present do not attain the critical mass per year group that is crucial to provide for a rich varied and stimulating learning environment. The experience and value of horizontal learning (students learning from each other) in institutes of art and design is considered to be hugely significant and recognised internationally. Horizontal learning is an internationally appreciated factor that all the best programmes not only strive to encourage but actively seek to achieve.
- If the programme is not a continuation of the Applied Ceramics BA programme it is recommended and expected that all students on the MA programme would benefit from the presence of students from more diverse backgrounds on the MA Applied Ceramics programme

3.1.4. Teaching staff

- The teaching is outmoded (and historical) and as a methodology it is highly improbable that it is capable of producing programmes that can sufficiently meet the '*Key Parameters of Study Quality*²¹', as defined by the agency. The focus on contemporary practice and on contemporary theory should be developed and enhanced.
- Very serious consideration should be given to radically reducing teaching contact time on the Master's programme. This would allow teaching staff more time to involve themselves in professional development as teachers of higher education studies and to engage as researchers in the pedagogies of their discipline
- There is an urgent need to develop a meaningful Staff Professional Development processes in the Department to support and encourage teachers in the enhancement of their role as 'learning facilitators' rather than the present established, outmoded (and historical) 'master' teachers' role. In this way the true potential of the intrinsic talent that students possess, and bring with them to the study process, can be fully realised and made available to society on their graduation.

3.1.5. Advantages and disadvantages of the programme

Advantages

1 Page 2 External Assessment of Study Programmes, STUDIJU KOKYBES VERTINIMO CENTRAS

- The programme displays a strong level of craftsmanship and a focus on technical expertise
- The Programme should be developed towards further educating the higher registers of cognitive and conceptual and creative skills and a critical, research oriented mind set, with the inclusion of teamwork skills, project management and entrepreneurial/marketing/business skills. The research element should be broadened and not necessarily be limited to History of Art or Artistic Theory or limited to those contexts when applied to Textiles. The research element should be broadened to include practice based research, marketing research, design research, manufacturing and production research, materials and processes research.
- The programme/department has a commendable record of participation in International collaboration and student exchanges and utilises the experience within the department.

Disadvantages

- The financing of the programme is inadequate:
 1. the salaries of teachers are unjustifiably low. Teachers work with great devotion and often at the expense of higher personal well being.
 2. the provision of equipment particularly IT equipment is inadequate to provide for the programme to meet satisfactorily the '*Key Parameters of Study Quality*'²² and international standards of graduate study.
 3. the provision of a satisfactory working environment is essential.
- Consideration should be given to collaborating with other disciplines to produce new programmes with umbrella titles rather than an individual free standing study specialisation. This will lead to rationalisations of study that would promote horizontal learning and interdisciplinary studies, and the conceptual and creative development of students. It would provide essential broadening as well as deepening which is somewhat overemphasised at present.
- Student numbers presently studying under the Applied Ceramics nomenclature do not attain the critical mass that is crucial to provide a rich varied and stimulating learning environment, populated both by enough

²² Ibid

peers and staff to encourage learning of a satisfactory level, nor does the learning environment presently have enough quantity or quality of equipment available.

- At the present time there is an over emphasis on the development of professional skills over personal development

Glass 61202M113 Bachelor's Kaunas Faculty
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Aims and goals of the study programme:

- Generally there is a lack of coherence within the stated aims and a lack of coherence between the stated aims and the programme provided. Better consideration could be given to how the programme aims are formed and reflected in the course elements, learning outcomes and assignments set.
- The Self-Assessment Document²³ suggests that the programme seeks to develop students as either 'artists' or to undertake 'applied professional activity'. However, the aims of the programme are not clearly articulated within the Self-Assessment, making it hard for the experts to comment accurately on how these two outcomes are achieved through the curriculum offered.
- The Self-Assessment Document sets out the following broad aim:

The aim of the artistic glass speciality Bachelor studies' programme is to provide with fundamental, universal for artist-professional needed knowledge and abilities. Also graduate acquires Professional technological theoretical knowledge and practical skills and becomes able to create and realize creative projects in functional glass, stained-glass and sculptural glass areas.

In the view of the Experts these summarise a relatively un-ambitious set of aims for a Bachelor's degree and would not prepare students adequately for study at Masters level in terms of critical and conceptual skills.

3 Analyses of programme

3.1.1. Structure, contents and study methods

- Credit weightings must meet the requirements of the law with regard to credit allocations and the number of subjects, at present there are more

²³ Self-Assessment Document – The Aims and Tasks of the Programme (Page 6)

subjects than allowed and the Study Plan includes 1 credit units, not only breaking regulations but indicating a fragmented over complicated study plan in opinion of the experts

- At present there is an excessive quantity subjects in the Study Plan that also includes an excessive number of 2 credit units. It is the opinion of the experts that this indicates a fragmented over complicated study plan that is not producing a coherent holistic student experience of the type that is required to fully meet the *Key Parameters of Study Quality*²⁴ and is not consistent with standard practice in Higher Arts Education institutions in Europe
- The range and type of subjects and courses available, in all Blocks A,B,C in the view of the experts, do not produce a coherent holistic student experience of the type that is required to fully meet the *Key Parameters of Study Quality*²⁵
- The programme is very strongly rooted in a concept that the Experts perceive as problematic: the "encyclopaedic" approach to teaching the foundations of the technological and general art practices (painting, graphic etc.) This method stands in the way of developing a graduate with individual creativity and a sense of responsibility for his/her own artistic decisions. The pedagogy employed seems strongly rooted in the idea of "crafts first, creativity second". It is recommended that the programme move towards an approach that focuses on individual problem solving where craft and creativity are simultaneously combined instead of orienting students towards 'tried and tested solutions'.
- The staff team informed the Experts that the programme was being "continually renewed" (Quote). However, the Experts saw little evidence of this, particularly in how the programme might prepare students to develop their careers following graduation, in light of the dynamically changing context of the creative industries & arts in Lithuania. The Experts consider that there is an urgent need to develop curriculum provision in self-management, business and marketing skills to assist graduate students.
- The Study Plan for Block C does not contain enough opportunity to study the Theory of Contemporary Art and/or Design and is heavily biased towards historical studies. In the view of the Experts the study of Contemporary Art and/or Design Theory and related issues is essential at all stages (years) of this type of programme.

²⁴ ibid

²⁵ ibid

- The Experts noted that the programme sought to “*train creative independency*”²⁶ and would ask the programme team to reflect upon the contradictory nature of this intention. In general, the Experts consider it excessive to provide so much ‘input’ and teaching beyond the first 3 Semesters. The present methodology does not meet with best practice in Higher Arts Education institutions. It is important that the emphasis be shifted to the independent and autonomous study of studio practice, professional practice, personal development and the greater development of cognitive and creative skills.

3.1.2. Execution of studies and support for students

- The practice of presenting the works of previous cohorts of students and staff to new or current students as models of good practice is a highly questionable practice. It promotes an inward-looking culture, emphasises the achievements of the past as exemplary over the need for future innovations and inhibits incoming students from exploring opportunities for new creative processes and the development of ambitious new ideas that explore uncharted territory.
- Serious consideration should be given to reducing teaching contact time in favour of structured learning time. More self study needs to be introduced into the programme. This would have the positive effect of aiding students to become more responsible for their own learning and adopt a more positive approach to life long learning.
- The programme team need to reconsider how standards of achievement are set and arrived at and transparently communicated. The development of a student centred, outcomes based approach is required in the present educational environment²⁷.
- The student learning experience is enhanced through teaching interventions by visiting professors and staff also utilize feedback from students returning from international exchange visits to broaden knowledge of techniques and materials within the department. Staff also utilize their international links and experience of staff exchange visits to appraise the quality of their own curriculum.

Students reported:

- Many of them were in employment to support themselves and that those students found it hard to meet the programme requirements. The employed

²⁶ Self-Evaluation Document – The Aims and Tasks of the Programme (page 6)

²⁷ John Biggs ‘Teaching Teaching & Understanding (Open University Press/McGraw Hill, 2003)

students were dependent on individual teaching staff to be flexible and that they had to “*fit it in*”.

- A desire to have ready access to concrete and clear assessment criteria well in advance of assessments taking place.
- there was “*not enough*” independent learning and the students wanted “*more freedom.*”
- that they knew there was “*an assessment Appeals process*” but that most students were afraid to use it.

3.1.3. Variation in the number of students

- Student numbers appear consistent.

3.1.4. Teaching staff

- There is an urgent need to review the established methodological basis of the teaching as the experts advise that it is outmoded (and historical) and as a methodology it is highly improbable that it is capable of producing programmes that can sufficiently meet the ‘*Key Parameters of Study Quality*’²⁸, as defined by the agency. The focus on contemporary practice and on contemporary theory should be developed and enhanced.
- Serious consideration should be given to reducing teaching contact time. This would allow teaching staff more time to involve themselves in professional development as teachers of higher education studies and to engage as researchers in the pedagogies of their discipline
- There is an urgent need to develop a meaningful Staff Professional Development processes in the Department to support and encourage teachers in the enhancement of their role as ‘learning facilitators’ rather than the present established, outmoded (and historical) ‘master’ teachers’ role. In this way the true potential of the intrinsic talent that students possess, and bring with them to the study process, can be fully realised and made available to society on their graduation.

3.1.5. Advantages and disadvantages of the programme

Advantages

- The programme displays a good level of craftsmanship and a great focus on technical expertise
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- The established success of the Programme is centred on (traditional) glass skills and techniques, training should now be refocused and developed towards educating the higher registers of cognitive and creative skills and a critical, research oriented mind set, with the inclusion of project management, entrepreneurial, business and marketing skills.
- The enhancement of the student learning experience through offering teaching interventions by visiting professors, utilization feedback from students returning from international exchange visits to broaden knowledge of techniques and materials within the department and the utilization of the staff's own international links and experience of exchange visits to appraise the quality of their own curriculum.
- The Experts perceive that the capacity exists within the programme and within the department to ensure future development to a satisfactory level that would meet the 'Key Parameters of Study Quality'²⁹

Disadvantages

- The financing of the programme is inadequate and:-
 1. the salaries of teachers are unjustifiably low. Teachers work with great devotion and often at the expense of higher personal well being.
 2. The financing of the programme is inadequate and the provision of equipment particularly IT equipment is inadequate to provide for the programme to meet satisfactorily the '*Key Parameters of Study Quality*'³⁰
 3. The financing of the programme is inadequate and the provision of a satisfactory working environment is essential.
- There needs to be a greater emphasis placed upon career planning for students within the curriculum. This element should fully recognise the

²⁹ ibid

³⁰ Ibid

dynamic changes taking place in the creative industries and artistic practice within Lithuania.

- The Experts perceive that, the Glass Programme Team are hindered and constrained by many traditions all of which they are not fully aware of at present.
- At the present time there is an over emphasis on the inculcation of professional skills over personal development.

Glass 61202M109 Master's (Kaunas Faculty)
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- In the Experts opinion the Self-Assessment Report for this programme is vague and inadequate in quantity and in quality. Written in descriptive platitudes it does not meet the standards of analysis and evaluation required for assessment by an international peer group. These factors emphasize the Expert's perception that master's studies are viewed by many departments as a mere extension of the bachelors programme without their own discreet objectives, learning outcomes, competences and ethos and focus. (Compare: European Higher Education Area³¹, Qualifications Framework³², Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Skills³³, Arts Tuning Documents inter}artes European Thematic Network Report³⁴).

Aims and goals of the study programme:

- The borderline and the distinction between Glass Bachelor and Glass Masters study programmes needs much fuller and clearer delineation - emphasising more distinctively the quality of the Bachelor and emphasising the critical, theoretical and research components at MA level. The research element should not necessarily be limited to History of Art or Artistic Theory but should be broadened to include marketing research, design research, manufacturing and production research, materials and processes research.
- The objective of the programme is somewhat vague and, for the most part, could also be applied to Bachelors level:

"The objective of the study programme is to prepare graduate for independent creative activity, able to form and solve problems of creative activity in different extent artistic projects.."

³¹ www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050218_QF_EHEA.pdf

³² Ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/eqf/index_en.html

³³ www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html

³⁴ Inter}artes Tapping into the Potential of Higher Arts Education in Europe, ELIA 2008

The “objective” and “goals” of the Programme are, in the view of the Experts, not ambitious enough for a Master programme and are more aligned to what can be expected from a Bachelor graduate. (Compare European Higher Education Area³⁵ - Qualifications Framework³⁶, Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Skills³⁷).

- It is recommended that the Academy/Faculty/Department ensures that the aims of the (any) programme are formulated in a concise and consistent way (as numbered statements, not in a descriptive narrative) that:
 - a) reflect the European standards of achievement of learning in Higher Arts Education
 - b) makes a clear distinction of the achievements and career opportunities of a BA and an MA graduate
 - c) are addressed in one section of the SER, namely the ‘Aims and Objectives of the Programme’

3 Analyses of programme

3.1.1. Structure, contents and study methods

- Credit weightings must meet the requirements of the law with the number of subjects, at present there are more subjects than allowed in the Study Plan, not only breaking regulations but indicating a fragmented over complicated study plan in opinion of the experts.
- At present there is an excessive quantity of subjects in the Study Plan that also includes an excessive number of 2 credit units. It is the opinion of the experts that this indicates a fragmented over complicated study plan that is not producing a coherent holistic student experience of the type that is required to fully meet the *Key Parameters of Study Quality*³⁸ and is not consistent with standard practice in Higher Arts Education institutions in Europe.

3.1.2. Execution of studies and support for students

- The practice of presenting the works of previous cohorts of students and staff to new or current students as models of good practice is a highly questionable practice. It promotes an inward-looking culture, emphasises the achievements of the past as exemplary over the need for future innovations and inhibits incoming students from exploring opportunities for

³⁵ www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050218_QF_EHEA.pdf

³⁶ Ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/eqf/index_en.html

³⁷ www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html

³⁸ *ibid*

new creative processes and the development of ambitious new ideas that explore uncharted territory.

- Very serious consideration should be given to reducing teaching contact time in favour of structured learning time. More self study needs to be introduced into the programme. This would have the positive effect of aiding students to become more responsible for their own learning and adopt a more positive approach to life long learning.

3.1.3. Variation in the number of students

- In the view of the Experts, the student numbers studying Glass at MA level at present do not achieve the critical mass per year group that is crucial to provide for a rich varied and stimulating learning environment for postgraduate students. The experience and value of horizontal learning (students learning from each other) in institutes of art and design is considered to be hugely significant and recognised internationally. Horizontal learning is an internationally appreciated factor that all the best programmes not only strive to encourage but actively seek to achieve. The Academy is advised to consider developing a generic MA Arts programme with specialist pathways that reflect the various subject specialisms offered but promote student interaction and inter-disciplinary study at postgraduate level. If the programme is not simply to provide a continuation of the BA Glass programme it is recommended and expected that all students on the MA programme would benefit from the presence of students from more diverse backgrounds on the MA Glass programme

3.1.4. Teaching staff

- The teaching is outmoded (and historical) and as a methodology it is highly improbable that it is capable of producing programmes that can sufficiently meet the '*Key Parameters of Study Quality*³⁹', as defined by the agency. The focus on contemporary practice and on contemporary theory should be developed and enhanced.
- Very serious consideration should be given to radically reducing teaching contact time on the Master's programme. This would allow teaching staff more time to involve themselves in professional development as teachers of higher education studies and to engage as researchers in the pedagogies of their discipline
- There is an urgent need to develop a meaningful Staff Professional Development processes in the Department to support and encourage teachers in the enhancement of their role as 'learning facilitators' rather than

1 Page 2 External Assessment of Study Programmes, STUDIJU KOKYBES VERTINIMO CENTRAS

the present established, outmoded (and historical) 'master' teachers' role. In this way the true potential of the intrinsic talent that students possess, and bring with them to the study process, can be fully realised and made available to society on their graduation.

3.1.5. Advantages and disadvantages of the programme

Advantages

- The programme displays a strong level of craftsmanship and a focus on technical expertise
- The Programme should be developed towards further educating the higher registers of cognitive and conceptual and creative skills and a critical, research oriented mind set, with the inclusion of teamwork skills, project management as well as entrepreneurial, marketing and business skills. The research element should be broadened and not necessarily be limited to History of Art or Artistic Theory or limited to those contexts when applied to Textiles. The research element should be broadened to include practice based research, marketing research, design research, manufacturing and production research, materials and processes research.
- The programme/department has a commendable record of participation in International collaboration as well as student exchanges and the experience of these are utilised within the department. However, the Experts feel that this experience should be more consistently be used as a means of critically appraising the quality and efficacy of their own provision rather than as a means of valorising the technical and artistic standards achieved by their own students.

Disadvantages

- The financing of the programme is inadequate:
 1. the salaries of teachers are unjustifiably low. Teachers work with great devotion and often at the expense of higher personal well being.
 2. the provision of equipment particularly IT equipment is inadequate to provide for the programme to meet satisfactorily the '*Key Parameters of Study Quality*'⁴⁰ and international standards of graduate study.
 3. the provision of a satisfactory working environment is essential.

⁴⁰ Ibid

- Consideration should be given to collaborating with other disciplines to produce new programmes with umbrella titles rather than an individual free standing study specialisation. This will lead to rationalisations of study that would promote horizontal learning and interdisciplinary studies, and the conceptual and creative development of students. It would provide essential broadening as well as deepening, which is somewhat overemphasised at present.
- Student numbers presently studying under the Glass nomenclature do not attain the critical mass that is crucial to provide a rich varied and stimulating learning environment, populated both by enough peers and staff to encourage learning of a satisfactory level, nor does the learning environment presently have enough quantity or quality of equipment available.
- At the present time there is an over emphasis on the development of professional skills over personal development

<p>61202M114 Applied Graphics Bachelors's (Kaunas Faculty)</p>

Introduction

- This programme/department has undergone and is still undergoing an intense period of reflection and introspection and expresses a strong desire for change without having, as yet, reached a conclusive and concise view as to what it will become.
- At its meeting with the Applied Graphics Self Evaluation Report group the Experts were informed that the SER Group did not have a clear vision about the direction of the programme/department when the document was written.
- The SER was very difficult to understand by the Experts even after it had been retranslated. At the visit in Kaunas there was a disconnection between the SER and the information provided verbally during the meetings with the Experts. The staff did not seem to have a good understanding of the content of the SER themselves and were unable to provide answers to many of the questions arising from the document.
- As a result, the Self Evaluation Report for this programme is rhetorical and inconclusive. Written in descriptive or declarative terms it does not meet the standards of analysis and evaluation that are normally expected for assessment by an international peer group. The Experts recommend that

before any decisions are made about the future of Applied Graphics and before any further documents are written a literary research is required. (Compare: European Higher Education Area⁴¹, Qualifications Framework⁴², Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Skills⁴³, Arts Tuning Documents-inter}artes⁴⁴).

- The prospective changes being considered include a possible change of name of the programme formed on a new more discreet set of aims and outcomes. The concern for the future of the programme/department is commendable, but the Experts recommend very strongly that a deadline be set immediately for a working conclusion to be reached, sooner rather than later, as delay jeopardizes the future success of both the programme/department but more importantly students and graduates.
- The Experts recommend that very serious consideration be given to the positioning of this programme in any new faculty/departmental structure⁴⁵. That very serious consideration be given to the development of two separate programmes, one 'fine art' printmaking and another 'design, visual communication' programme. If, that is, demand is completely established for two separate programmes, in student numbers and from industrial, business and cultural communities.

Aims and goals of the study programme:

- The experts respectfully suggest that at present the marriage of 'graphic design/visual communication' and 'fine arts' pathways in a single applied graphic arts programme is ill-conceived, lacks sufficient educational or professional synergy and is inhibiting the development of what they perceive as two distinct directions.

3 Analyses of programme

3.1.1. Structure, contents and study methods

- The Experts have received an array of Study Plans both in the SER Document and during the visit, there is considerable confusion about the exact status of the plans submitted and the contents of the plans and which one actually applies. This confusion requires immediate clarification with the submission to the agency of a Study Plan approved by the Academies authorities at senior level.

⁴¹ www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050218_QF_EHEA.pdf

⁴² Ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/eqf/index_en.html

⁴³ www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html

⁴⁴ Inter}artes, Tapping into the Potential of Higher Arts Education in Europe, ELIA 2008,

⁴⁵ Pages 22,23 of this document

- Credit weightings must meet the requirements of the law with the number of subjects, at present there appears to be more subjects than allowed in the Study Plan, not only breaking regulations but indicating a fragmented over complicated study plan in opinion of the experts
- At present there appears to be an excessive quantity of subjects in the Study Plan that also includes an excessive number of 2 credit units. It is the opinion of the experts that this indicates a fragmented over complicated study plan that is not producing a coherent holistic student experience of the type that is required to fully meet the *Key Parameters of Study Quality*⁴⁶ and is not consistent with standard practice in Higher Arts Education institutions in Europe
- In the view of the experts the present programme based on both a 'fine art' and a 'design' ethos does not produce a curriculum with enough focus on either to fully provide the required knowledge, skills and abilities that are in conformity with professional activities in either the 'fine art' or 'graphic design/visual communication' areas.
- In 'graphic design/visual communication' – design problem solving methodologies, team work design experience, professional practice learning, interdisciplinary methodologies, marketing, business skills and versatility in creative technologies are not sufficiently evident
- In the 'fine arts' printmaking- conceptual development, analytical abilities, independent learning, professional practice learning and interdisciplinary methodologies are not sufficiently evident

3.1.2. Execution of studies and support for students

- The appointment of new younger staff with IT and CAD skills and photography is commendable and the continuous update of the skills of all staff particularly in pedagogic and IT areas needs to be developed.
- The Experts recommend closer consultation with employers and graduates particularly in the 'design' sector. At the present time there is a discernable gap both in communication and between the requirements of employers and the content and relevance of the programme to meet future requirements specified in points a) and d) of the *Key Parameters of Study Quality*⁴⁷
- Employers and graduates reported that presently there is conflict between artistic idealism and the real world demands they encounter and were specific deficiencies identified to the Experts

⁴⁶ ibid

⁴⁷ ibid

- Employers recommend as essential the learning of skills in the use of IT specifically Macintosh platforms and Adobe software programmes and the acquisition of more knowledge of industry printing processes and designing for commercial printing.
- Employers and graduates recommend the learning of skills in the writing of design briefs, project management, team-working skills, entrepreneurial, business and marketing skills

Students reported that:

- they *“respected the young lecturers”*
- *“a friendly environment and good communication with lecturers”*
- *“freedom of choice of self-expression and scope to experiment”*

But also that:

- *“work stations were too small and working conditions hazardous”* (Health & Safety concerns were confirmed by the Experts during the visit)
- *“not enough exchange programmes were available”*
- *“not enough contact and collaborative projects with companies were available”*
- assessment was not objective and there was a lack of respect for their own ideas
- the same projects *“my city, Kaunas, every semester”*
- a desire for *“more visiting staff”*

3.1.3. Variation in the number of students

- The Experts advise that, the student numbers studying at present do not attain the critical mass per year group that is crucial to provide for a rich varied and stimulating learning environment. The experience and value of horizontal learning (students learning from each other) in institutes of art and design is considered to be hugely significant and recognised internationally. Horizontal learning is an internationally appreciated factor that all the best programmes not only strive to encourage but actively seek to achieve.

- International experience would suggest that the study of ‘graphic design and visual communication’ is popular and under demand from prospective students, this would indicate a possible opportunity for growth, if confirmed by local market surveying and research

3.1.4. Teaching staff

- There is a need to review the established methodological basis of the teaching as the experts advise that it is outmoded and improbable that it is capable of producing programmes that can sufficiently meet the ‘*Key Parameters of Study Quality*⁴⁸, as defined by the agency. The focus on contemporary practice and on contemporary theory should be developed and enhanced. Graphic design and visual communication practices are highly evolved in Europe and staff need to constantly benchmark their activities and methods within international and contemporary contexts
- Serious consideration should be given to reducing teaching contact time. This would allow teaching staff more time to involve themselves in professional development as teachers of higher education studies of graphic design and visual communication practices and to engage as researchers in the pedagogies of their discipline
- There is an urgent need to develop a meaningful Staff Professional Development processes in the Department to support and encourage teachers in the enhancement of their role as ‘learning facilitators’ rather than the present established, outmoded (and historical) ‘master’ teachers’ role. In this way the true potential of the intrinsic talent that students possess, and bring with them to the study process, can be fully realised and made available to society on their graduation.

3.1.5. Advantages and disadvantages of the programme

Advantages

- The programme displays a good level of craftsmanship and a great focus on technical expertise
- The Programme team communicated the perception that theirs was a programme in ‘transition’ and displayed concern at the need for ‘change’. This is particularly valued by the Experts in comparison to the inertia and complacency of other Departments.

- The students perceive themselves as part of a friendly team with the staff and that they are being educated as free and independent artists.
- The students appreciate the extent to which they are consulted about changing the programme and value even the very limited access they have to IT processes and the appointment of younger staff with more modern skills
- The opportunity and energy created by the 'change atmosphere' should now be refocused and developed towards educating the higher registers of cognitive and creative skills and a critical, research oriented mind set, with the inclusion of teamwork skills, project management and entrepreneurial/marketing/business skills
- The Experts perceive that it is possible that the energy and capacity exists within the programme and within the department to ensure future development to a satisfactory level that would meet the '*Key Parameters of Study Quality*'⁴⁹

Disadvantages

- The financing of the programme is inadequate and the:-
 1. salaries of teachers are unjustifiably low. Teachers work with great devotion and often at the expense of higher personal well being.
 2. the provision of equipment particularly IT equipment is inadequate to provide for the programme to meet satisfactorily the '*Key Parameters of Study Quality*'⁵⁰
 3. the provision of a satisfactory and safe working environment is essential.

<p>61202 M 116 Applied Textile Bachelors's (Kaunas Faculty)</p>
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Introduction

In their visit to the Department of Applied Textiles, the Experts met an energetic and critically engaged community of staff and students who shared a clear commitment to the subject and the programme of study. The staff team were clearly proactive in ensuring that the programmes they offered (at BA and MA

⁴⁹ ibid

⁵⁰ Ibid

levels) had currency, both in terms of national and international perspectives and they were also well networked into the creative industries and communities of artistic practice that their students would enter on graduation.

2. Aims and goals of the study programme:

- The aims and tasks of the study programme are clearly set out within the Self-Assessment Document and also includes a set of descriptors that define the competencies, understandings and knowledges of a graduate student.
- In support of the above, it was clear to the Experts that the staff team consult widely with employers, graduates and other stakeholders to ensure that the programme remains responsive to the needs and opportunities presented by the external environment.
- The Experts particularly welcomed the following pedagogical aim of the Department:

To develop creative and critical contemplation, discursive and interdisciplinary attitude at problems which are being analyzed by artistic methods.

It was clear to the Experts that the aims and objectives of the programme were fully 'owned' by the staff team and the Experts were informed that the team had researched into the aims and objectives of other similar programmes through their engagement with the Erasmus exchange programme – thereby ensuring that their own programme has a level of international currency.

3. Analysis of programmes

3.1.1. Structure, contents and study methods

- The programme team have been proactive in ensuring that the content of Block B and C is fully complementary to the content and delivery of Block A in order to deliver a coherent educational experience to students.
- The staff team has clearly thought carefully about the progression of student learning throughout the programme and have devised the curriculum in a way that promotes the appropriate incremental development of the student and offers them an appropriate level of challenge at each stage.

- It was clear to the Experts that the staff team engaged regularly with external stakeholders with a view to ensuring that curriculum content appropriately reflects the prevailing conditions within the creative industries and artistic practice.
- The programme places significant emphasis on the students' understanding of contemporary culture, current artistic trends and practices and this appears to be effectively supported and extended through the way in which the staff team have negotiated the content of blocks B and C.
- The programme appears to utilize, wherever possible, open assessment processes. The system of studio-based critiques of student work is established at level 1 and is developed through the rest of the programme. This approach has the benefit of clarifying both staff and student understanding of assessment criteria and ensuring that the student learning experienced is enhanced tacitly through hearing a broad range of critical feedback.

3.1.2. Execution of studies and support for students

- The staff team make positive and constructive use of student feedback and data relating to student progression and achievement in order to continually improve the learning experience.
- The Department maintains its own supplementary collection of specialist books and journals for student use. This collection includes many international publications and offers students a valuable additional resource to the broader library provision within the Academy.
- Staff provide strong encouragement to students to engage with symposia, exhibitions and the community of professional practice outside of the Academy.
- Staff are highly proactive and imaginative in identifying sources of funding and/or additional resources from outside of the academy that enable them to enhance the facilities and other learning resources that it offers to students.
- Students reported positively on the warm relationship that they enjoyed with staff and the clarity of communication between the staff and student body, Students summed up the character of the staff as being “professional and friendly” (quote).

- When asked to comment on the effectiveness of the programme in preparing students to enter professional practice, one graduate reported that on leaving the Academy they felt like “a fish in water” (quote).

3.1.3. Variation in the number of students

- Student numbers appear to be consistent though the Experts noted that the cohorts were almost exclusively female.

3.1.4. Teaching staff

- The staff team appear to be highly motivated and enthusiastic and clearly have the ability to work very effectively together for the benefit of the programme. It was clear to the Experts that the team had a sound understanding of pedagogy, matters of quality assurance and a keen appreciation of the subject in relation to the needs of the contemporary national and international landscapes.
- The staff team is proactive and strategic in ensuring that all aspects of the programme, including those outside of their direct control (such as the content of Blocks B & C and the availability of technical and material resources), form part of a coherent learning experience for applied textile students

3.1.5. Advantages and disadvantages of the programme

Advantages

- The currency of the programme, both in terms of contemporary artistic and creative industry practice, and the way in which staff reference (benchmark) the programme to similar international programmes.
- The clearly defined and differentiated aims and objectives of the programme and the evident staff ‘ownership’ of these.
- The highly proactive and imaginative ways in which the staff identify sources of funding and/or additional resources from outside of the academy so as to enable them to enhance the facilities and other learning resources that it offers to students.
- The ethos of the programme that offers strong encouragement to students to engage with symposia, exhibitions and communities of professional practice outside of the Academy.

- The positive and constructive use that is made from student feedback and the data relating to student progression and achievement in continually improving the learning experience.
- The way that the programme team have sought to ensure that the content of Block B and C is fully complementary to the content and delivery of Block A in order to deliver a coherent educational experience.

Disadvantages

- Although the staff team do regularly seek feedback from current students and graduates (and use this productively) there are few formal mechanisms for doing this. The Experts would recommend that the staff team consider devising a more systematic approach to the gathering and recording of such feedback.
- The staff team are advised to ensure that the programme fully meets the requirements of the appropriate regulatory framework.
- The financing of the programme is inadequate:
 1. the salaries of teachers are unjustifiably low. Teachers work with great devotion and often at the expense of higher personal well being.
 2. the provision of equipment particularly IT equipment is inadequate to provide for the programme to meet satisfactorily the '*Key Parameters of Study Quality*'⁵¹

<p>62102 M 112 Applied textile Master's (Kaunas Faculty)</p>

Introduction

In their visit to the Department of Applied Textiles, the Experts met an energetic and critically engaged community of staff and students who shared a clear

⁵¹ Ibid

commitment to the subject and the programme of study. The staff team were clearly proactive in ensuring that the programmes they offered (at BA and MA levels) had currency, both in terms of national and international perspectives and they were also well networked into the creative industries and communities of artistic practice that their students would enter on graduation.

2. Aims and goals of the study programme:

- The aims of the Masters study programme is clearly defined within the Self-Assessment Document and this also includes a set of descriptors that define the competencies, critical understandings and conceptual knowledge that a graduate of the MA programme is expected to evidence.
- In support of the above, it was clear to the Experts that the focus on students developing their critical, analytical and research skills was highly appropriate to a Masters level programme.
- The Experts particularly welcomed the following pedagogical aim of the Department:

To prepare an artist of textile who is able to analyze, evaluate and interpret art phenomenon and processes in the wide cultural context.

It was clear to the Experts that the aims and objectives of the programme were fully 'owned' by the staff team and the Experts were informed that the team had researched into the aims and objectives of other similar programmes through their engagement with the Erasmus exchange programme – thereby ensuring that their own programme has a level of international currency.

3. Analysis of programmes

3.1.1. Structure, contents and study methods

- The programme team have designed the programme in such a way as to require the student to relate the written thesis to the Masters graduation work. This ensures that the practical work of the student is appropriately theorized and grounded in a strong framework of research and critical evaluation.
- In order to ensure that there is an appropriate level of critical and theoretical engagement evidenced within the written thesis – students are only allowed to select supervisors for this element of study from a list of staff who are art critics.

- It was clear to the Experts that the staff team engaged regularly with external stakeholders with a view to ensuring that curriculum content appropriately reflects the prevailing conditions within the creative industries and artistic practice.

3.1.2. Execution of studies and support for students

- The staff team make positive and constructive use of student feedback in order to continually improve the learning experience.
- The Department maintains its own supplementary collection of specialist books and journals for student use. This collection includes many international publications and offers students a valuable additional resource to the broader library provision within the Academy.
- Staff provide strong encouragement to students to engage with symposia, exhibitions and the community of professional practice outside of the Academy.
- Staff are highly proactive and imaginative in identifying sources of funding and/or additional resources from outside of the academy that enable them to enhance the facilities and other learning resources that it offers to students.
- Students reported positively on the warm relationship that they enjoyed with staff and the clarity of communication between the staff and student body, Students summed up the character of the staff as being “professional and friendly” (quote).
- When asked to comment on the effectiveness of the programme in preparing students to enter professional practice, one graduate reported that on leaving the Academy they felt like “a fish in water” (quote).

3.1.3. Variation in the number of students

- Student numbers appear to be consistent though the Experts noted that the cohorts were almost exclusively female.

3.1.4. Teaching staff

- It was clear to the Experts that the staff team had a sound understanding of both the purpose and academic requirements of postgraduate study. The staff were able to articulate clearly the difference between study at undergraduate and postgraduate levels and it was clear to the Experts that the expectations of students undertaking the MA Applied Textiles programme were broadly consistent with international standards.

3.1.5. Advantages and disadvantages of the programme

Advantages

- The currency of the programme, both in terms of contemporary artistic and creative industry practice, and the way in which staff reference (benchmark) the programme to similar international programmes.
- The clearly defined and differentiated aims and objectives of the programme and the evident staff 'ownership' of these.
- The highly proactive and imaginative ways in which the staff identify sources of funding and/or additional resources from outside of the academy so as to enable them to enhance the facilities and other learning resources that it offers to students.
- The ethos of the programme that offers strong encouragement to students to engage with symposia, exhibitions and communities of professional practice outside of the Academy.
- The positive and constructive use that is made from student feedback and the data relating to student progression and achievement in continually improving the learning experience.

Disadvantages

- Although the staff team do regularly seek feedback from current students and graduates (and use this productively) there are few formal mechanisms for doing this. The Experts would recommend that the staff team consider devising a more systematic approach to the gathering and recording of such feedback.
- The staff team are advise to ensure that the programme fully meets the requirements of the appropriate regulatory framework.
- The financing of the programme is inadequate:
 1. the salaries of teachers are unjustifiably low. Teachers work with great devotion and often at the expense of higher personal well being.

2. the provision of equipment particularly IT equipment is inadequate to provide for the programme to meet satisfactorily the 'Key Parameters of Study Quality'⁵²

62102M110 Applied Graphics Master's (Kaunas Faculty)

Aims and goals of the study programme:

- The same doubts and confusion described earlier with reference to the Applied Graphics BA programme obviously apply to the MA programme. This has resulted in an MA SER of three pages which is rhetorical and inconclusive. Written in descriptive terms it does not meet the standards of analysis and evaluation that are normally expected for assessment by an international peer group. The Experts recommend that before any decisions are made about the future of Applied Graphics and before any further documents are written literary research is required. (Compare- European Higher Education Area⁵³ - Qualifications Framework⁵⁴, Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Skills⁵⁵, Arts Tuning Documents- inter}artes⁵⁶)

The programme aims are;

*The main role belongs to Master studies' student. It gives possibility to **form leader's features** which are necessary for **heads of creative collectives and artists** who represent their own creation in different graphic visual forms.*

Not less important task of Master studies level's programme is professional perfecting.

*Master studies programmes' level's tasks stimulate not only students' **analytic** mindset, origin, expertise and **professional perfecting**.*⁵⁷

- Whilst the concepts of 'leadership', 'analytic' and 'professional perfecting' maybe laudable no information or analysis of what these may entail or about why or how these qualities will be learnt or how they will be assessed is available in the SER
- These factors emphasize the Expert's perception that master's studies are viewed by many departments as a mere extension with aspirations to higher

⁵² Ibid

⁵³ www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050218_QF_EHEA.pdf

⁵⁴ Ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/eqf/index_en.html

⁵⁵ www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html

⁵⁶ Inter}artes tapping into the Potential of Higher Arts Education in Europe, ELIA 2008

⁵⁷ SER P 15

aims of the bachelors programme without their own discreet objectives, learning outcomes, competences and ethos and focus and methodology.

- *Master studies' student does not understand the difference between Bachelor and Master studies' purposes and aims. This fallacy complicates the process, searching of formulations and finally determines enough poor quality of the work⁵⁸.*
- This realisation above challenges the quality of the information initially provided to prospective students, and the quality of the communication provided before and during the process. It is possible that the students maybe subliminally reflecting the lack of clarity of the teaching staff with regard to the distinction between BA and MA studies and the staff's inability to articulate it sufficiently.
- The borderline and the distinction between Applied Graphics Bachelor and Applied Graphics Masters study programmes needs much better and clearer delineation- defining more clearly the distinct and stand alone quality emphasising the research element at MA level and the development of the capacity for conceptual and critical thinking and higher register cognitive skills. The research element should not necessarily be limited to History of Art or Artistic Theory but should be broadened to include design research, manufacturing and production research, materials and processes research and the advanced study of the writing of design briefs, project management, team-working skills, entrepreneurial, business and marketing skills
- The Experts recommend that very serious consideration be given to the positioning of this programme in any new faculty structure⁵⁹. That very serious consideration be given to the development of two separate programmes , one 'fine art' printmaking and another 'design, visual communication' programme. If, that is, demand is completely established for two seperate programmes, in student numbers and from industrial, business and cultural communities.

3 Analyses of programme

3.1.1. Structure, contents and study methods

- The information available in the SER is rudimentary in quantity and quality other than to conclude that this MA follows the established but less than satisfactory pattern of many others, research and formulation followed by final project. The methodology employed appears to be that of 'apprentice' and 'master' utilizing one to one mentoring.

⁵⁸ ibid

⁵⁹ Pages 22,23 of this document

- The Experts have had submitted to them an array of Study Plans both in the SER Document and during the visit, there is considerable confusion about the exact status of the plans submitted and the contents of the plans and which one actually applies. This confusion requires immediate clarification with the submission to the agency of a Study Plan approved by the Academies most senior authorities.
- At present there appears to be an excessive quantity of subjects in the Study Plan that also includes an excessive number of 2 credit units. It is the opinion of the experts that this indicates a fragmented over complicated study plan that is not producing a coherent holistic student experience of the type that is required to fully meet the *Key Parameters of Study Quality*⁶⁰ and is not consistent with standard practice in Higher Arts Education institutions in Europe particularly within the context of a Master's programme

3.1.2. Execution of studies and support for students

- A commendable aspect is the workplace learning opportunities that the programme encourages-

*Because mostly all of Master studies' students with rare exceptions work in different firms or organizations and actively take part in the country's cultural work. It is asked to represent works which were created not in the academic surrounding and the materials of introduction; to indicate the aims of done works, the ways of decision and the role and contribution of his own to this work's realizing (if the work is done in collective)*⁶¹

- However the information about the methodology, aims, learning outcomes, management and co-ordination of this workplace learning is not provided in the SER

3.1.3. Variation in the number of students

Table 4. TABLE GENERAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS
(Master studies' students)

Year	Of al courses			Of graduation courses		
	M	F	Generally	M	F	Generally
2002	-	12	12	-	2	2
2003	-	10	10	-	5	5
2004	-	7	7	-	3	3
2005	1	8	9	-	3	3
2006	2	5	7	-	4	4
Year	Number of stricken					

⁶⁰ ibid

⁶¹ SER P16

	students
2003	-
2004	4
2005	1
2006	6

- The Experts advise that, the student numbers studying at present do not attain the critical mass that is crucial to provide for a rich varied and stimulating learning environment. The experience and value of horizontal learning (students learning from each other) in institutes of art and design is considered to be hugely significant and recognised internationally. Horizontal learning is an internationally appreciated factor that all the best programmes not only strive to encourage but actively seek to achieve particularly on advanced programmes.
- International experience would suggest that the study of 'graphic design and visual communication' is popular and under demand from prospective students, this would indicate a possible opportunity for growth, if confirmed by local market surveying and research
- The number of 'stricken students' at this level of study is alarming and again raises issues about the quality of the information initially provided to prospective students, and the quality of the communication provided before and during the process. It is possible that the students maybe subliminally reflecting the lack of clarity of the teaching staff with regard to the distinction between BA and MA studies and their inability to articulate it sufficiently.

3.1.4. Teaching staff

- There is a need to review the established methodological basis of the teaching as the experts advise that it is outmoded and improbable that it is capable of producing a programme that can sufficiently meet the '*Key Parameters of Study Quality*⁶²', as defined by the agency. The focus on contemporary practice and on contemporary theory should be developed and enhanced. Graphic design and visual communication practices are highly evolved in Europe and staff need to constantly benchmark their activities and methods within international and contemporary contexts
- Serious consideration should be given to reducing teaching contact time. This would allow teaching staff more time to involve themselves in professional development as teachers of higher education studies of graphic design and visual communication practices and to engage as researchers in the pedagogies of their discipline

1 Page 2 External Assessment of Study Programmes, STUDIJU KOKYBES VERTINIMO CENTRAS

- There is an urgent need to develop a meaningful Staff Professional Development processes in the Department to support and encourage teachers in the enhancement of their role as ‘learning facilitators’ rather than the present established, outmoded (and historical) ‘master’ teachers’ role. In this way the true potential of the intrinsic talent that students possess, and bring with them to the study process, can be fully realised and made available to society on their graduation.

3.1.5. Advantages and disadvantages of the programme

Advantages

- The programme displays a good level of craftsmanship and a great focus on technical expertise
- The Programme team communicated the perception that theirs was a programme in ‘transition’ and displayed concern at the need for ‘change’. This is particularly valued by the Experts in comparison to the inertia and complacency of other Departments.
- The opportunity and energy created by the ‘change atmosphere’ should now be refocused and developed towards educating the higher registers of cognitive and creative skills and a critical, research oriented mind set, with the inclusion of teamwork skills, project management and entrepreneurial/marketing/business skills
- The Experts perceive that it is possible that the energy and capacity exists within the programme and within the department to ensure future development to a satisfactory level that would meet the ‘*Key Parameters of Study Quality*’⁶³
- The workplace learning opportunities that the programme encourages and the involvement of the programme/department in international collaborations

Disadvantages

- The financing of the programme is inadequate:
 1. the salaries of teachers are unjustifiably low. Teachers work with great devotion and often at the expense of higher personal well being.

⁶³ ibid

2. the provision of equipment particularly IT equipment is inadequate to provide for the programme to meet satisfactorily the '*Key Parameters of Study Quality*'⁶⁴
3. the provision of a satisfactory and safe working environment is essential.

4. Material conditions

Kaunas

- The acquisition and intended refurbishment of the old 'psychiatric hospital' is encouraging and a great opportunity both for the Faculty and the Academy. However, it may be many years before the building is ready for proper occupation and the existing buildings appear inadequate in size to accommodate even the existing quantity of programmes their staff and their students.
- The library facilities are highly inadequate for students and staff of BA and MA programmes both the stock available to browse and the size of the accommodation to facilitate readers. Although volumes can be requested from Vilnius the Experts believe it is essential that an adequate learning resource is developed where students and staff can select a volume/publication available from the shelves and sit and read in sympathetic and comfortable surroundings. The library should also be equipped with an adequate quantity and quality of computer terminals to allow for internet, web and database research.
- Computer Information Systems facilities for all academic staff, students, administration, ancillary and library staff, including a communication system needs to be installed with 'Intranet' and 'internet' access
- The Experts recommend as essential that facilities be provided for the learning of skills in the use of IT generally and specifically Macintosh platforms and Adobe software programmes.
- The adequacy of the facilities with regard to European Health & Safety laws and standards is very uncertain in the view of the Experts. It is highly

⁶⁴ Ibid

recommended that an audit of the Health and Safety aspects of the facilities be urgently undertaken.

5. External relations

- All the programmes assessed have in some manner and to some extent established credible but limited international relations with other programmes and universities as well as involving their students in exchanges and competitions. This process should be encouraged, enhanced both administratively and financially. In particular exchanges of academic staff are particularly beneficial as a developmental tool and international experience for all staff should be fully supported
- The Experts recommend that the Applied Arts programmes could be more systematic in the way they garner the experience of other educational cultures that has been provided by their individual involvement with Erasmus, EU exchange programmes and other international collaborations, competitions and exhibitions. Those Applied Arts educators and practitioners who have participated in Erasmus or other exchange programmes should use the information available to them, arising from their exchange experience, to critically analyse and evaluate their experiences. By noting the comparative strengths and weaknesses of the venues visited. This information should be used as a basis for discussion on an Academy wide basis and be available and disseminated to all interested parties, perhaps on a website.
- The Applied Arts programmes/departments have an established record of participation in International collaboration as mentioned above. However, there appears to be a tendency to perceive much of the participation as 'competitive' and inevitably viewing their own students as the 'best' and using this experience as a bench mark of quality. This attitude can be myopic and limiting the value of the experience. The value in such experiences is seeing 'differences' and 'diversity' and in trying to analyse 'why'. 'Quality' is not determined by the beauty or 'professionalism' of students work but by the value, quantity and quality of the 'learning' achieved.
- It appeared very anomalous to the Experts that whilst the Applied Arts programmes were anxious to develop international relations and collaborations they are not as yet collaborating or developing working relationships and synergies with each other. However, there are some examples and these need to be encouraged, enhanced both administratively and financially. Much can be gained by all concerned in developing more synergy between programmes/departments in differing subject areas and particularly between the faculties in Vilnius and Kaunas. Examples of developing good practice are emerging in each programme

and faculty and this expertise needs to be exchanged to the benefit of all. This development of corporate (academy wide) knowledge and expertise is essential.

6. Feedback

- Whilst the process of utilizing questionnaires of student's opinions is good and signify the beginning of a Quality Assurance process practice they mostly indicate quantitative and not qualitative material. Their distribution needs to be followed and supported by an adequate analyses process and an information management system to implement and monitor the resulting developments.
- Student questionnaires are only one leg of a Quality Assurance and Enhancement system that requires feedback from other sources that includes, graduates, employers, academic and ancillary staff. The collection of this feedback needs to be followed and supported by an adequate analyses process and an information management system to implement and monitor the resulting developments
- The Experts experience when meeting graduates and employers was that it was the first time that anyone had ever asked them about the quality and content of the programmes. Of those that had been consulted they reported that the process was informal and usually based on their personal contact or relationship with a particular member of staff. In the vast majority of cases they reported that their advise had not been acted on.

7. Internal assurance of study quality

- It is obvious to this expert group that the development of Quality Assurance is in its infancy. However at the Academy of Fine Arts, even basic awareness, information and understanding is missing. This deficit of information, understanding, knowledge and practices needs to be addressed as matter of urgency.
- The perception of the Experts has been that the Applied Arts sector has been insufficiently prepared and supported for their engagement with the accreditation process. The experts found that any genuine understanding of the mechanisms necessary to provide for accreditation, quality assurance and programme enhancement was lacking and the value of and need for such processes was rarely appreciated or understood by those involved at Academy, Faculty and Departmental level.
- There is an urgent need to develop meaningful staff and particularly managerial Professional Development processes at the Academy

throughout its Faculties and Departments to support and develop institutional management practices and encourage the embedding of quality assurance practices. All teaching staff but particularly Academy managers also require complete understanding of the Bologna Declaration and its implications.

- The Experts advise that the academy, faculty and departments take a much more formal approach to gathering feedback from students/graduates/employers. This recorded information gathered according to a formal recorded process and where the information is properly analysed is invaluable to develop a strategic view of the development of these, or any other arts programmes
- The Experts advise as essential that a senior member of staff should be allocated the role of 'Quality Assurance' manager to champion the introduction and embedding of a comprehensive system. Computer Information Systems facilities for all staff, academic, administration, ancillary, library and students with an ICT communication system needs to be installed with 'Intranet' access to facilitate a comprehensive QA&E system

8. General assessment of the programmes within the study field

8.1. Recommendations to the higher education institution

Essential recommendations

- Reorganise the existing Academy structure of small scale divisions and departments that presently do not enhance the curricula but instead limits the students learning experience as it maintains artificial boundaries between practices and forms of artistic expression and application that no longer exist in the world the graduates are entering. The attempts being made by the Kaunas Faculty to address this should be urgently realised and similar structures adopted across the Academy.
- Develop programme management systems* that clearly articulate the 'ownership' and responsibility for programme content and the methods available to change curricula, structure and, content. The aim being to provide coherence of all Blocks A,B,C to produce holistic student

experiences of the type that are required to fully meet the *Key Parameters of Study Quality*⁶⁵

- Define the niche study specialisms and their aims within the BA and MA programmes.* These study pathways when clearly defined should be made available to students as options within a programme and could purposely link practical and theoretical competences more explicitly to defined career opportunities within a discipline.
- A refocusing within the Academy towards developing the higher registers of cognitive and creative skills⁶⁶ * and a critical, research oriented mind set.
- Refocus on advanced areas of education in the programmes.* The establishment of colleges has resulted in a new competitive context in the area of higher education in Lithuania. The colleges successfully centre on (traditional) handicraft skills and technical training leaving more advanced areas for development by the Academy.
- It is recommended that the Academy/Faculty/Departments formulate the aims and outcomes of the programmes in a concise and consistent format* (as numbered statements, not in a descriptive narrative) that-
 1. reflect the European standards of achievement of learning in Higher Arts Education⁶⁷
 2. makes a clear distinction of the achievements and career opportunities of a BA and an MA graduate⁶⁸
 3. are addressed in one section of the SER, namely the “Aims and Objectives of the Programme”
 4. utilise a ‘learning outcomes, competencies’ methodology

⁶⁵ ibid

⁶⁶ John Biggs ‘Teaching Teaching & Understanding Understanding (Open University Press/McGraw Hill, 2003)

*(Applied Textiles, Kaunas, is the only successful example the Experts have been able to identify).

⁶⁷ see the Qualification Framework for Higher Education Institutions

⁶⁸ http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/EN/BASIC/050520_Framework_qualifications.pdf

* (Applied Textiles, Kaunas, is the only successful example the Experts have been able to identify).

- Commence the development of a Quality Assurance and Enhancement system that begins to meet Bologna requirements and is comparable with standard European practice in Higher Education Institutions
- The Experts recommend as essential that Computer Information Systems facilities be provided for all staff, academic, administration, ancillary, library and students. An ICT communication system needs to be installed that includes open access to 'Intranet' and 'Internet' access for all
- Instigate urgently a greater focus on contemporary practice and on contemporary theory in the programmes. Where it already exists it should be increased in quantity and enhanced in quality.
- The designing of programmes that allow the student time and space for independent study and personal development is viewed as an urgent need.
- Develop programmes that produce graduates who are able to create and apply creative/artistic knowledge and problem solving skills* not only in the state subsidised and commercially limited sector of (fine) arts but also in the rapidly developing adjacent field of enterprise (or research). The Experts found that, generally, Applied Arts programmes are oriented towards the development of individual artists with a 'fine art' base; the profile aimed for seeks to combine the traditional concepts of a 'master of handicraft' and an 'artist' whilst European best practice is rapidly developing in other domains
- The Academy should define and clearly delineate the borderline between Bachelor and Masters study * - defining more clearly - the distinct and stand alone quality of the Bachelor and emphasising the research element at MA level and the development of the capacity for conceptual and critical thinking. The research element should not necessarily be limited to History of Art or Artistic Theory but should be broadened to include marketing research, design research, manufacturing and production research, materials and processes research.
- Consideration should be given to the nomenclature of the Masters programmes considering the use of umbrella titles rather than individual free standing study specialisations. This will lead to the creation of programmes with student numbers that reach a critical mass. The resulting rationalisations of study at MA level would then promote horizontal learning and interdisciplinary studies, and the conceptual and creative development of students. It would provide essential broadening as well as deepening which is somewhat overemphasised at present in the MA programmes

Highly recommended

- Relate Applied Arts education and training more to design education with the inclusion of the development of teamwork skills, project management and entrepreneurial, marketing and/or business skills. In light of this, the positioning of Applied Arts within Faculty structures should be very carefully considered and based on accurate research of future needs.
- Seriously reconsider the recurring prevalence to aim for the ‘universal specialist’ as it is not feasible in the long term and is a false premise. It is ill informed and not properly grounded in market research or an accurate analysis of future requirements. It is also highly ill-advised as it lacks integrity of purpose both in the Experts’ experience and knowledge and when considering the *‘Key Parameters of study quality’*⁶⁹
- Applied Arts Departments across the Academy should undertake a self analysis of the current state of the Applied Arts programmes and how their educational practices compare to those of the wider European context.* This analysis should be undertaken by all staff teaching on the programmes from Blocks A, B and C. The results of the self analysis should feed into a staff forum where the results of the self analysis and a programme for change and development is agreed.
- Develop meaningful Staff Professional Development processes at the Academy to support and encourage teachers in the enhancement of their role as ‘learning facilitators’ rather than the present established, outmoded (and historical) ‘master’ teachers’ role. In this way the true potential of the intrinsic talent that students possess, and bring with them to the study process, can be fully realised and made available to society on their graduation.
- In the view of the experts the present ubiquitous practice of presenting the works of previous cohorts of students to new or current students as models of good practice is a highly questionable practice. It promotes an inward-looking culture, emphasises the achievements of the past as exemplary over the need for future innovations and inhibits incoming students from exploring opportunities for new creative processes and the development of ambitious new ideas that explore uncharted territory.
- There is an urgent need to review the established methodological basis of the teaching as it is outmoded (and historical).* It is highly improbable that the methodology presently employed is capable of producing programmes

⁶⁹ Ibid

* (Applied Textiles, Kaunas, is the only successful example the Experts have been able to identify).

that can sufficiently meet the '*Key Parameters of Study Quality*'⁷⁰, as defined by the agency.

- Serious consideration should be given to reducing teaching contact time in favour of structured learning time. More self study needs to be introduced into the programmes encourage students to be autonomous and life-long learners. This would have the positive effect of aiding students to become more responsible for their own learning; and would allow teaching staff more time to involve themselves in professional development as teachers of higher education studies and to engage as researchers in the pedagogies of their disciplines.

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