



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Vilniaus dailės akademijos Kauno fakulteto  
**TAPYBOS PROGRAMOS (612W10009)**  
**VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

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**EVALUATION REPORT**  
**OF *PAINTING* (612W10009)**  
**STUDY PROGRAMME**

at the Vilnius Academy of Fine Arts, Kaunas Faculty

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## DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Tapyba</i>
Valstybinis kodas	612W10009
Studijų sritis	menai
Studijų kryptis	dailė
Studijų programos rūšis	universitetinės
Studijų pakopa	pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinė (4)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	240 ECTS
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	dailės bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	1997-05-19

## INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Painting</i>
State code	612W10009
Study area	Art
Study field	Fine Arts
Kind of the study programme	University studies
Study cycle	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (4)
Volume of the study programme in credits	240 ECTS
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Bachelor of fine arts
Date of registration of the study programme	1997-05-19

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In carrying out the review of the BA Painting course the Expert Team (the Team chaired by Professor John Butler, Head of Birmingham School of Art, Birmingham City University, UK; with Rugilė Ališauskaitė, an undergraduate student of Vytautas Magnus University, working towards a BA in Baltic Region Culture and Art, Lithuania; Virginija Januškevičiūtė a curator at the Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius, Lithuania; Prof. dr. Atis Kampars, the Latvian Academy of Culture, Riga, Latvia; and Prof. dr. Vojtěch Lahoda from the Institute of Art History of Charles University in Prague and also the Director of the Institute of Art History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic) were guided by the principles of objectivity, impartiality, respect for the participants of the evaluation process, confidentiality and cooperation.

The Team followed the criteria defined by the *Methodology for Evaluation of Higher Education Study Programmes* and other Lithuanian legal acts governing quality evaluation in higher education.

VAA Kaunas is a faculty of Vilnius Academy of Arts and is the major education centre of fine arts in central Lithuania attracting students from all regions of the country. The Faculty has two cycles of study programme for Fine Arts Painting – Bachelor's and Master's.

VAA Kaunas' states *"Speaking about the mission of the higher education school, it has to be emphasised that VAA KF expediently aims at becoming one of the most significant centres of art studies in the central region of Lithuania"* Self Evaluation Report (SER p.8)

The Team visited Vilnius Academy of Fine Arts, Kaunas Faculty on Thursday 24th October 2013 after they had carried out a rigorous analysis of the BA Painting Self Evaluation Report, the previous Accreditation Reports of 2008 and 2011 and the preparation of Preliminary Reports.

Following the subject review guidelines the study programme evaluation involved the examination of 6 areas: the aims and learning outcomes of the study programme; the curriculum design; teaching staff; facilities and learning resources; the study process and students' performance assessment and programme management.

The visit to Vilnius Academy of Fine Arts, Kaunas Faculty involved the Team meeting with the following groups:

1. the senior management & administrative staff
2. the SER preparatory team
3. the students
4. the teaching team
5. the alumni
6. the social partners

Site observations of the physical resources were conducted by the Team during the visit and the Team were also able to view art and final project work including the final thesis produced by the students.

Two members of the Team have been involved in previous review and accreditation exercises in 2008 and 2011 and they were able to note that the general organisation and level in Lithuanian higher art education has improved. This improvement was evident during the visit to Kaunas in October.

After the completion of the report the Kaunas Faculty programme representatives presented an argument that although our Team's observations on the material resources were correct at the time of the visit, the academy has in the interim been able to present evidence demonstrating they have been able to rectify the key issues regarding the space provision for the BA & MA Painting programmes. Although this request to review the Team's decision is very unusual, to support the programmes and the Academy, we are willing to adjust our evaluation for Material Resources as it appears from the photographic evidence sent to us the appropriate work has been carried out, but we strongly recommend a qualified Health & Safety expert inspects the premises and provides certification to signify that it meets the legal requirements.

The Team would like to thank the Academy and programme team for the generosity and hospitality shown to them and the openness and frankness presented throughout the day. The level of involvement by the students and staff they encountered during the visit greatly enhanced the efficiency of the work that was carried out and made for an enriching experience for all involved.

## II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

### 1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The programme states *“The aim of the first-cycle university-level bachelor study programme of Painting is to develop broad-profile contemporary painters who have acquired appropriate general and subject competences allowing them to work independently and use various techniques and means in the sphere of painting, integrate themselves into the contemporary art context, and highlight personal professional creative expression.”* SER (p.7). The programme goes on to claim that after the Bachelor's students have the skills and attributes to progress on to Master's level.

The Team believes these aims are well articulated, appropriate for the study level, realisable and show no tendency of exaggeration – they point at the desire to educate broadly educated professionals working in the environment of contemporary culture. Preparation for studies at the second cycle of higher education is a separate and positive aim.

The Team also believes the Learning Outcomes (LO) are well defined and aligned to the programme's aims. The LO system at the Kaunas Faculty is based on two blocks of competences: General competences (transferable abilities) and Subject competences. This is a simple model of LO's, however, it covers all basic forms of competences necessary for a BA study programme. General competences speak more about the creativity, intellectual research skills and social awareness but Subject competences cover practical forms of artistic activities.

Re-initiated in 1995, the study programme of *Painting* at Kaunas *“has not changed much; priorities are given to expression of modern painting based on personal (initial) contact with the painting object and the painting surface. Photography and video means are used (secondary means) as additional. However, it needs to be mentioned that at the moment student projects representing the Painting Studio have changed. This happened because of the changing international painting context and a natural effect of multidisciplinary arts.”* SER (pp. 5&6). The Painting Studio of VAA KF gradually integrates into the Bachelor's study programme of *Painting* *“more experience of specialists of other professional spheres, i.e. photography, digital technologies, installation, earth art, business, etc”* SER (p.8). The Team support these changes and new additions, but believe there is a considerable way to go to facilitate multidisciplinary arts practice and the teachers have to engage more with digital technology, both as a creative tool and as learning and teaching tools.

The Team welcomes these changes and sees the change as very necessary as it enhances the programme, making it more competitive in the national and international higher arts education sector.

The interviewed alumni confirmed that their expectation towards writing skills were fully met by the programme (“we did not have to write anything, and that’s good”), but the fostering of such skills are explicit in the aims of the programme (which are, among others, the “*development of painter’s ... ability to ... express oneself in the cultural context. Special attention is on ... problem of communication between an individual and society, as well as on the ability to express oneself creatively in interdisciplinary spheres*” SER p.8); therefore by neglecting writing as one of the crucial means of communication and artistic/professional articulation the programme does not fully meet its implied aims. This issue of students improving their communication skills was also commented on by the social stakeholders. The Team are aware that Bachelor students do now have to write and they are taught by the Humanities Department, but recommend the proposed Dissertation Writing Guidelines is produced as soon as possible.

Future steps in the direction of collecting feedback from the social stakeholders regarding the priorities of the programme should be better considered to reach relevant respondents who are outside of the prepared context who will only provide a predictable response: i.e. reach out for a carefully balanced and diversified selection of art professionals rather than online audience of a website of one or another organisation, which was done in case of an online questionnaire organised together with the Lithuanian Artist's Association. The design of such evaluation studies should be more rigorous for the sake of the programme's alumni becoming better embedded in the processes of foreseeable future. The Team recommends a more considered and rigorous process to gain appropriate data for the evaluation process.

The Team believe that the programme aim and learning outcomes are consistent with the level of studies and the level of qualification offered.

The name of programme – ‘Painting’ – clearly reflects its content. The learning outcomes and the qualification awarded ‘Bachelor of Fine Arts’ in their turn speak about broader competences than a single speciality may provide, e.g., ‘Subject competence’ ‘*Ability to use contemporary art practices and technologies professionally*’ (SER page 6).

## **2. Curriculum design**

The programme curriculum complies with national legal acts and regulations and the general requirements for undergraduate study programmes in Lithuania, with the study volume of the programme is 240 credits and all the study elements meeting the requisite volume and number of modules per semester. The number of studied subjects in the study programme does not exceed 7 per semester. The extent of each subject is at least 3 credits.

The programme consists of two major parts: general university and study field subjects. The study subjects and modules are equitably spread across the years giving the students a balanced workload.

Students were very positive about the study subjects, but the Team recommend the programme to reconsider the timing of these subjects to ensure they are delivered at the right moment; e.g. theoretical modules should be better distributed through the programme. The programme’s collaboration with the Department of Humanities has noticeably strengthened the theoretical components of the MA and the Team recommends this is expanded to the BA programme.

The programme should look at the greater use of e-learning strategies (lectures, references, social media and interactive communication tools) as a learning and teaching tool. Through discussions with the teachers and students the Team discovered there is a notable difference between the use by theory staff and practitioners and studio staff.

The Team is very positive about the widening range of elective modules available to the students, such as the new Leadership module.

Through the strong emphasis on training painters techniques and processes using classical subjects over the first two years, the programme is very successful in developing students' practical painting and observational skills, but the shift from teacher-led to more student-centred learning is slow in being introduced in the programme. Whilst the Team supports the development of the craft skills it recommends students should take more responsibility for their learning earlier in the course and elements for independent learning, risk taking should happen earlier and with increasing credit value.

There is good collaboration between the Humanities and Painting Departments, the theoretical and art-historical courses fit well into the curriculum as well as those on art market and cultural management.

The Team acknowledges and appreciates the programme deliberately focuses on practice based around the development of traditional painting skills at the start of the course, but questions the late introduction of more contemporary practice (Semesters 7&8), discourse and theory. The Team find quite an inconsistency between the description of the aims of this programme in the SER and the content and timetable of the courses in the delivery of it. However the Team believes there should be a more historic linear timeline in the delivery of the content and questions whether post-modern painting should be taught at the same time as the ancient technology of painting including *Canvas Preparation* and *Varnishing*. One practice can inhibit the other and it is not clear how these painterly basics 'get together with post-modernism'?

The students met by the Team also stated they would like Performance Art introduced into the curriculum and teachers from other disciplines contributing such as Video Art.

The Team recommends the programme staff consider introducing more 'space' for independent practice and contemporary theory earlier in the student's study. Traditional painting techniques and methods could be re-defined in a form of student's self-cognition studies to provide thorough understanding on the gradual development of imagery. Currently the Teachers informed the Team that 25% must be totally independent study.

The Team appreciate especially an interdisciplinary module Creative Laboratory and Art and Science, which is very appropriate and contemporary and was strongly supported by the students we met. In fact the students would like more training in digital software to enable them to engage more in interdisciplinary practice.

The Team recommends the programme staff introduce more digital software training to enable students to manipulate digital images and produce and edit video.

### **3. Staff**

In accordance with the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania (No. XI-242), the Order of the Minister for Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania Approving the General Requirements of the First Degree and Integrated Study Programmes (No. V-501), and the Description of the Qualification Requirements for Scientists' and Artists'

Positions and the Order of the Organisation of Assessment and Competitions to Hold Positions as well as the Order of the Awards of Pedagogical Titles at VAA approved by the Senate (26 May 2010) the staffing legal requirements for the BA study programme are met.

The qualification of the teachers of the Painting study programme meets the requirements indicated in the documents mentioned above.

As stated in the SER there are in total 34 teachers working in the Bachelor study programme of Painting: 7 Professors (including 1 with a Doctoral degree), 18 Associate Professors (including 10 with a Doctoral degree), and 9 lecturers. For 2012-13 there are currently 8 teachers in the Painting studio, including 2 Professors and 4 Associate Professors and 2 lecturers. 30% of the teachers have a Doctoral degree; 20.5% are Professors and 52.5% are Associate Professors; 27% are lecturers. In total, 83% of the teachers of compulsory study field subjects are researchers and/or recognised artists.

The Team think there are is a generous number of teaching staff delivering the BA programme with the range of skills and attributes for the students to attain the learning outcomes.

The studio teaching staff are supported by other teachers from the Departments of Architecture, Textile, Graphics, and Humanities who deliver theoretical and practical classes.

The Team found that the teaching staff are very much appreciated by the students and alumni, who all felt they are very dedicated to and highly motivated by the programme.

The Team concur with this view, but also agree with the students' and alumni view that a more varied teaching input is necessary through visiting tutors (national and international) to increase the contemporary content of the programme.

Over the past 5 years, there has been little turnover in the staff of the Painting Studio, other than in 2009-2010 when two experienced teachers of pedagogy and creative practice left. The teaching experience ranges from the minimum of five years to a maximum of 32 years for pedagogical and 43 years for creative practice teachers.

Professional development of teachers is regulated and carried out by periodic teacher assessment. Annually teachers have to write reports presenting their artistic and scientific activity, which is then made public in a report by the Rector and discussed in the meetings of the Department. The Team were informed that qualifications are gained and improved through participation in seminars and courses organised by VAA as well as in engagement in activities of various associations and unions and through professional internships.

In the SER (p.23) it states *“The major weakness of the staff area is the lack of academic mobility of the teachers. The teachers of the Painting Studio do not go to teach at foreign schools due to several reasons: the Painting Studio does not get information from VAA about the possibilities of teaching at foreign art universities; the head of the Painting Studio has a great administrative workload and at the same time conducts intensive creative activity”*. The Team recommends VAA and the Faculty actively support their programme teaching staff to participate in international exchanges/visits to develop their awareness of other learning and teaching practices as well as help develop their creative practice and research.

All the painting studio staff are active artists exhibiting nationally and internationally and have strong research/artistic practice profiles as illustrated in the list of exhibitions participated in and competitions won.

*“Visits of teachers of foreign higher education schools and painters from abroad are rare in VAA KF Painting Studio. With limited resources in possession, it is extremely difficult to invite good teachers-painters from foreign schools to teach a small number of students;.... Since 2010, no visiting teachers from foreign countries delivered classes in the Department”*. SER (p.36). This is very limiting for the development of teacher/artists and reduces the learning experience of the students. The Team recommends the Faculty finds ways to support teaching staff to engage in international activities.

#### **4. Facilities and learning resources**

Through discussions with Senior Management and as stated in the SER *“Kaunas Faculty is undergoing major renovation to their premises. In order to renovate and adapt for the studies the building where main studies of the Painting study programme are conducted and all the other buildings of Kaunas Faculty according to contemporary requirements, three investment projects were presented in 2010: two of them to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania and one to the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Lithuania. Unfortunately, the tenders were not approved. In 2013, another investment project was presented to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania; however, no decision related to this project has yet been obtained”*. In the last accreditation review in 2011 the Team observed the conditions and were positive with the proposals to develop the campus. Although two years later there has been considerable development to the major new building, especially with the new library which is expected to be completed around Easter 2014, the remainder of the building is in a primitive state.

The Bachelor students expressed their satisfaction with the studio spaces they occupied, but through direct observation and comments made by the teachers the Team is concerned about the need for greater consideration to health and safety issues especially if they are to remain and occupy these spaces for a considerable time to come. The Faculty has a duty of care for their students and the current premises are totally inadequate in terms of fire precautions, heating, ventilation, toilets and hot water supply. The Team strongly recommends the Faculty takes immediate action to ensure the premises meet the legal health and safety measures required. Currently the arrangements for students’ practice is barely adequate both in terms of the studio provision and the library. *“The work conditions and technical equipment in a few classes do not fully meet the needs of the programmes; however, the problem is being gradually solved”*. SER (p.24)

The Team believes the teaching and learning equipment including laboratories and computer equipment are adequate both in size and quality, and commends the Faculty on the new workshops and equipment recently purchased and installed.

*“Unfortunately, the current environment of the library and work conditions there are very poor”* SER (p.25). *“One of the biggest drawbacks of this area is the library which does not meet contemporary requirements”* SER (p.29). The Team agree that the current library space is very poor in terms of size and quality of space, the IT and book provision. The new library at Muitinès str. 2, which the Team hopes will open early next year will greatly enhance the provision and provide a national learning resource.

There is a good system of inter-library loans in place which goes some way to overcome the shortage in stock.

*“There are also no possibilities to fully supply materials necessary for painting studies to students; however, resources are being sought as well as social partners who sometimes provide*

*paint for free*” SER (p.29). But the Team also commends the programme for providing some painting materials and offering a 20% discount for additional materials to students. When meeting the students the Team was informed that this service was not well known by them, therefore the Team recommends the programme improves the dissemination of information to ensure all students are made aware of all the services (discounts, scholarships etc.) the programme and Faculty offers/provides.

### **5. Study process and student assessment**

The Team fully supports the BA teaching team’s concern regarding the negative impact the National Admissions System is having on recruitment of the best and most appropriate students for this programme. It makes it very difficult for courses run outside the capital to compete at the same level and promotes a centralised strategy, which is not supportive for developing inclusive cultural strategies throughout the country. It is difficult for the Faculty but it must be competitive at a national and international level.

The impact of the introduction of this National System was clearly evident in 2010 when the programme had zero admissions after having by far the highest number of candidates since 2008.

This National policy is extremely damaging and threatening to the programme with only 3 students recruited in 2011-12 and 6 students in 2012-13, which must question its future viability. The impact is not only financial but also for the study process as the level of peer learning is also critically diminished and offers little to show possible levels of achievement.

The Team recommends the Faculty and the programme team continue to lobby the Minister for Education for change to the admission process and welcomes the programme recording the Team’s support for this change in the lobbying process.

The Team recognises and supports the unique feature of the programme at Kaunas that first-year students of Painting and Sculpture study in one group and attend the same subjects of Painting and Sculpture study field. This provides them with a broader knowledge and skill-base to enable to be better informed to decide which study field they choose to specialise in and equip them to have a wider visual ‘vocabulary’ to make work from their second year. From the meeting with Bachelor students the Team has learned that the necessity to study broader variety of Fine Art practices (e.g. Sculpture) has to be better communicated to the students.

The Team commends the programme on the good quality of the BA painting practise.

The Team recommends the programme introduces more formal written elements into the BA to improve the intellectual capacity of students and help them formulate their ideas.

The Team supports grading and accrediting of non-formal education and self-education.

Students are encouraged to engage in external projects, competitions and exhibitions and they do so, but the teaching team do not accredit their engagement nor their output, which is not the best way to encourage such activities. *“The fact that knowledge acquired by way of non-formal education and self-education is not evaluated by grades is one of the weaknesses of the study programme although such education is encouraged and the results are reflected in the course and degree projects. However, it is a general provision of Vilnius Academy of Arts and a single department cannot perform otherwise”* (SER).

The Team notes this issue has been raised by previous accreditation teams and recommends the programme team should find ways to resolving this and build these activities into the curriculum and accredit them.

The programme acknowledges the value of students studying abroad, but the actual opportunity for them to study on the Erasmus programme is minimal with on average one student participating each year since 2008. The students expressed their desire for more opportunities to participate in international visits/exchanges. The Team recommends the programme finds ways to expand these opportunities.

Information about the study programme and its changes is spread using the following media: on the information stands, through student representatives senior students, student union, Internet websites ([www.vda.lt](http://www.vda.lt) and [www.vdakf.lt](http://www.vdakf.lt)), in the Dean's office, in the Department through consultations with the Head and teachers. The informative publication of VAA KF 'Studento atmintinė' is annually renewed and distributed to students.

The Team commends the programme's use of social media, where students have a specially created e-mail ([tapybosstudija@gmail.com](mailto:tapybosstudija@gmail.com)) where they regularly get information related to lectures or art activity (local and international exhibition-competitions). There is also a page created on Facebook *Tapybos studija VDA KF (Painting Studio VAA KF)*, which brings together Painting Studio students and graduates of different generations.

The Faculty and programme also provides: career guidance; links to professional organisations and galleries; transport support; practice and leisure facilities of the Academy in Nida; free access for physical activity in the sports club 'Daugirdas Gym'; and discounted access to museums and art galleries. The provision of a dormitory at Aleksandras Stulginskis University for students is expedient and the students' needs are fully met. All students of VAA KF have the possibility to get social and incentive scholarships as well as single social grants.

The Team commends the Academy for providing this broad range of support, which the students were generally happy with.

The study subjects of the programme are assessed with the evaluation of student's knowledge and abilities using a ten-grade system. After the assessments the results are announced and students have a right to appeal to the Appellation Committee of the faculty.

Intermediate and final reviews in the programme are public, and the students and teachers of the Painting Studio as well as invited teachers (often including social partners) participate.

The students met by the Team stated their satisfaction with the assessment process; they understood the assessment criteria and the level of their achievements, both their strengths and their weaknesses.

The Team was only able to meet a small number of graduates. The SER claims that it is difficult to formally track the alumni and that the choice of extending ties beyond the programme is generally left to the alumni; the interviews show that a number of alumni provide significant support by participating in extra-curriculum activities, critiques and public presentations thus expressing their support and advise, thus indirectly proving their further achievements to the programme.

The interviews with SER group, teachers and staff showed that the aims of the programme and their image of a graduate correlate.

## 6. Programme management

In discussion with the Senior Management Group and from the SER the Team learnt that the Head of Department is responsible for the administration and coordination of the study programme. Within the study programme there are student groups, which have senior students elected, who moderate the group when decisions are taken, obtain and spread information to the Student Union, administrate and organise various activities.

The highest decision making body in the Department is the General Meeting of its members doing pedagogical and research work. At these meetings, decisions of Senate, the Board of the Faculty and key quality assurance and enhancement issues are discussed. The Team think this process works.

The Study Programme Committee is the main body responsible for quality and renewal of that programme. The programme is using questionnaires and seeking more active involvement of social stakeholders into evaluation of study quality (surveys, discussions, common meetings), and co-operation with other higher education schools. The SER (p.50) states *“The weaknesses of management of the Painting programme are the following: external social stakeholders, especially employers, social partners are little interested in the preparation process of young artists; attempts to establish and develop the activity of the Alumni club have not yet produced desirable results; due to a small number of the teachers in the Department.”* This view regarding the need to increase the engagement with the stakeholders was endorsed by the Senior Management at our meeting with them. The Team recommends the Faculty and programme works hard to engage with these stakeholders to be involved in the ongoing evaluation of the programme.

Analysis of the SER and meetings with Senior Management and teachers indicate that the participation of external social stakeholders also affects the study quality; but in the SER (p.11) it also states *“However, involvement of social stakeholders into the determination of the aim and learning outcomes of the study programme remains rather passive.”* As the Team recommended earlier the programme should increase its engagement with the stakeholders, but also strive to expand the range of their stakeholders (see also paragraph two of the chapter “The programme aims and learning outcomes” in this document).

The Team found there are means in place to assure the quality of the programme. The Team recognises the tensions rising due to the programme’s dependence on the headquarters of Vilnius Academy of Arts and the existence of its counterpart Painting programme in Vilnius, and encourages the programme team to use this parallel structure for their mutual advantage. It is to the programme’s and students’ advantage to encourage exchange and cooperation between different arts programmes across country while at the same time striving to achieve the Faculty’s aim to become one of the most significant centres of art studies in the central region of Lithuania (mission explained in SER p.7).

In the SER (p.46) it states *“The study quality is ensured through the selection of the best teachers and practicing specialists, their assessment procedure, self-evaluation of art activity, art and scientific research and studies, through continual perfection of programmes taking into consideration conclusions of self-evaluation and external evaluation as well as student achievements in the context of the programme, institution, and state and in the international context, through surveys about the study quality and meetings with social stakeholders, during which feedback is gained, through renewal of facilities and, if possible, their application for high-quality studies”.* The Team supports the quality management strategy and believes the Faculty is moving in the right direction regarding Quality Assurance and Enhancement but recommends more clearly defined criteria and metrics/targets (e.g. pedagogic and research;

programme: recruitment numbers and qualifications, progression, drop-out, achievement and employment targets; internal and external annual programme evaluation reports) be introduced to 'measure' the programme's success/failings.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Team recommends:

1. the Faculty takes immediate action to ensure the premises meet the legal health and safety measures required. Arrangements for students' practice are barely adequate both in terms of the studio provision and the library.
2. collecting feedback from the social stakeholders regarding the priorities of the programme should be better considered to reach relevant respondents.
3. the programme team continue to lobby the Minister for Education for change to the admission process.
4. the proposed Dissertation Writing Guidelines is produced as soon as possible and the programme introduces more formal written elements into the BA to improve the intellectual capacity of students and help them formulate their ideas.
5. a more considered and rigorous process to gain appropriate data for the evaluation process.
6. the programme consider introducing more 'space' for independent practice and contemporary theory.as students should take more responsibility for their learning, and elements for independent learning and risk taking should happen earlier in the programme with increasing credit value.
7. a better alignment between the programme aims, curriculum content and timetable, in relationship to the balance between traditional classic and contemporary interdisciplinary postmodern.
8. to introduce more training in digital software to enable students to engage more in interdisciplinary practice and manipulate digital images and produce and edit video.
9. VAA and the Faculty actively support their programme teaching staff to participate in international exchanges/visits.
10. the programme improves the dissemination of information to ensure all students are made aware of all the services (discounts, scholarships etc.)
11. the programme team should find ways to build students engagement in external projects, competitions and exhibitions into the curriculum and accredit them.
12. the programme finds ways to expand and support students opportunities to study on the Erasmus programme and other international projects.
13. the Faculty and programme works hard to engage with these stakeholders to be involved in the ongoing evaluation of the programme.
14. to expand the range of expertise of their social stakeholders.
15. the programme carries out a more systematic self-evaluation through closer consideration of its strengths (including distinctive features), weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This exercise should include introducing more clearly defined criteria and metrics/targets (e.g. pedagogic and research outcomes; programme: recruitment numbers and qualifications, progression, drop-out, achievement and employment targets to 'measure' the programme's success/failings).

## **IV. SUMMARY**

### ***1. Programme aims and learning outcomes***

The aims are well articulated, appropriate for the study level, realisable and show no tendency of exaggeration. The Learning Outcomes (LO) are well defined and aligned to the programme's aims and the level of qualification offered. The name of programme 'Painting' clearly reflects its content.

There is a considerable way to go to facilitate multidisciplinary arts practice. The teachers have to engage more with digital technology. Students need to improve their communication skills. Feedback from the social stakeholders regarding the priorities of the programme should be better considered to reach relevant respondents. The design of the evaluation of the study programme should be more rigorous. More experience of specialists of other professional spheres to be engaged with.

### ***2. Curriculum design***

The programme curriculum complies with national legal acts and regulations and the general requirements for undergraduate study programmes. The study subjects and modules are equitably spread across the years giving the students a balanced workload. Students were very positive about the study subjects. The range of elective modules available to the students is widening. Success in developing students' practical painting and observational skills. There is good collaboration between the Humanities and Painting Departments. The theoretical and art-historical courses fit well into the curriculum as well as those on art market and cultural management. The focus on practice is based around the development of traditional painting skills. There is an interdisciplinary module Creative Laboratory and Art and Science.

The Team recommends the programme to reconsider the timetabling of theoretical and independent study subjects to ensure they are delivered at the right moment. The programme should look at the greater use of e-learning strategies as a learning and teaching tool, as there is a notable difference between the use by theory staff and practitioners and studio staff. Students should take more responsibility for their learning earlier in the course. The independent learning and risk taking should be increased. The introduction of more contemporary practice, discourse and theory is late in the programme. Performance Art could be introduced into the curriculum and teachers from other disciplines such as Video Art could contribute. There should be more training in digital software to enable them to engage more in interdisciplinary practice.

### ***3. Staff***

Staffing legal requirements for the BA study programme are met. The qualification of the teachers of the Painting study programme meets the statutory and institutional requirements. A generous number of teaching staff deliver the BA programme with the range of skills and attributes for the students to attain the learning outcomes, supported by other teachers from the Departments of Architecture, Textile, Graphics, and Humanities who deliver theoretical and practical classes. The teaching staff are dedicated and highly motivated, much appreciated by the students and alumni. Professional development of teachers is regulated and carried out by periodic teacher assessment. All the painting studio staff are active artists exhibiting nationally and internationally. Teachers qualifications are gained and improved through participation in seminars and courses.

The Team recommends a more varied teaching input is necessary through visiting tutors (national and international) to increase the contemporary content of the programme. There is little turnover in the staff. It is difficult to invite good teachers-painters from foreign schools to teach.

#### ***4. Facilities and learning resources***

There have been proposals to develop the campus, especially with the new library. Students are satisfied with the studio spaces. Teaching and learning equipment including laboratories and computer equipment are adequate both in size and quality. The new workshops and equipment have been recently purchased and installed. There is a good system of inter-library loans in place which goes some way to overcome the shortage in stock. The Department provides some painting materials and offers a 20% discount for additional materials to students.

The remainder of the building to be renovated is in a primitive state. There is a need for greater consideration to health and safety issues of the building, the premises are totally inadequate in terms of fire precautions, heating, ventilation, toilets and hot water supply. There are no possibilities to fully supply materials necessary for painting studies to students.

#### ***5. Study process and student assessment***

The number of applicants is high. First-year students of Painting and Sculpture study in one group and attend the same subjects of Painting and Sculpture study field. The quality of the BA painting practise is good. There is engagement in external projects, competitions and exhibitions. The programme uses social media including a page created on Facebook, which brings together Painting Studio students and graduates. The programme provides: career guidance; links to professional organisations and galleries; transport support; practice; leisure facilities and social and incentive scholarships as well as single social grants. Students are satisfied with the assessment process.

The National Admissions System has a negative impact on recruitment of the best and most appropriate students for this programme. Peer learning is critically diminished. The teaching team do not accredit their engagement nor their output for external projects, competitions and exhibitions. Opportunity for students to study on the Erasmus programme is minimal.

#### ***6. Programme management***

The programme management successfully ensures decision making, responsibilities for the monitoring, evaluation and implementation of the programme are carried out. There are means in place to assure the quality of the programme.

There is need to increase the engagement with the social stakeholders. There is little critical self-valuation without clear measures of success and weaknesses.

## V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Painting* (state code – 612W10009) at the Vilnius Academy of Fine Arts, Kaunas Faculty is given **positive** evaluation.

*Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.*

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation Area in Points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Staff	4
4.	Material resources	3
5.	Study process and assessment (student admission, study process student support, achievement assessment)	3
6.	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	3
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>19</b>

Grupės vadovas:  
Team leader:

Prof. dr. h.c. John Butler

Grupės nariai:  
Team members:

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