



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Vilniaus dailės akademijos (Vilniaus fakulteto)  
**STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS „TAPYBA“** (*valstybinis kodas - 612W10009*)  
**VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

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**EVALUATION REPORT**  
**OF "PAINTING" (state code - 612W10009)**  
**STUDY PROGRAMME**  
at Vilnius Art Academy (Vilnius Faculty)

**Review' team:**

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba  
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Vilnius  
2017

## DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<b>Tapyba</b>
Valstybinis kodas	612W10009
Studijų sritis	Menai
Studijų kryptis	Dailė
Studijų programos rūšis	Universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	Pirmoji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	Nuolatinė, 4 metai
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	240 ECTS
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Dailės bakalauras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	1997 gegužės 19d. Įsak. Nr. 565

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## INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<b>Painting</b>
State code	612W10009
Study area	Art
Study field	Fine Arts
Type of the study programme	University studies
Study cycle	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (4 years)
Volume of the study programme in credits	240 ECTS
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Bachelor of Fine Art
Date of registration of the study programme	1997 May 19 <sup>th</sup> Order No. 565

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the evaluation process

The evaluation of on-going study programmes is based on the Methodology for evaluation of Higher Education study programmes, approved by Order No 1-01-162 of 20 December 2010 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC).

The evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions to constantly improve their study programmes and to inform the public about the quality of studies.

The evaluation process consists of the main following stages: 1) *self-evaluation and self-evaluation report prepared by Higher Education Institution (hereafter – HEI)*; 2) *visit of the review team at the higher education institution*; 3) *production of the evaluation report by the review team and its publication*; 4) *follow-up activities*.

On the basis of external evaluation report of the study programme SKVC takes a decision to accredit study programme either for 6 years or for 3 years. If the programme evaluation is negative such a programme is not accredited.

The programme is **accredited for 6 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as “very good” (4 points) or “good” (3 points).

The programme is **accredited for 3 years** if none of the areas was evaluated as “unsatisfactory” (1 point) and at least one evaluation area was evaluated as “satisfactory” (2 points).

The programme is **not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas was evaluated as “unsatisfactory” (1 point).

### 1.2. General

The Application documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by the SKVC. Along with the self-evaluation report and annexes, the following additional documents have been provided by the HEI before, during and/or after the site-visit:

No.	Name of the document
1.	• Strategic Plan
2.	• Diploma Supplement
3.	• Student Handbook
4.	• Organizational Charter
5.	• Minutes of the Study Programme Committee
6.	• Licence and Master Thesis

### ***1.3. Background of the HEI/Faculty/Study field/ Additional information***

Vilnius Academy of Arts (hereinafter – Academy, VAA) is a state institution of higher education of arts organising university first-cycle, master's, special vocational, integrated, third-cycle, doctoral studies, performing research and developing high-level professional artistic activities. The Academy was established by the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania and is an autonomous institution carrying out independent academic, administrative, economic and financial management activities based on the principle of self-government, academic freedom, and defined in the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, the Law on Higher Education and the Statute of the Academy.

The Academy consists of the following structural departments: the Council of VAA, the Rector's Office, the Senate of the Academy (Senate), Faculty of Postgraduate Studies (FPS), Vilnius, Kaunas, Telšiai, Klaipėda Faculties, science and arts departments, administrative units, internship and recreational bases, cultural and sports centres, Open School of Arts, Design and Architecture (OSADA) of VAA, Design Innovation Centre, etc.

Previous International accreditation carried out in 2008 and 2011 awarded the Painting BA Programme with 6 years accreditation. The requirements and recommendations of previous visit were taken into account and improvements are visible, including more choice of critical theory subjects e.g. Introduction to contemporary art and theory, Modern aesthetics and philosophy of art has been added; more women recruited onto the staff; more contact (through the doctoral seminar programme) with lecturers and practitioners from other countries.

The SER claimed (p. 7: 'artists contribute to the country's national cultural values and economic development') that the BA Painting study programme also corresponds to the priorities of the State, which places great importance on culture and creativity as a national resource.

The visit to the Academy and Faculty involved meetings with the following groups:

1. Senior Management,
2. SER preparatory team,
3. Teaching team,
4. Students,
5. Graduates group,
6. Employers and social partners group.

Site visits to the physical resources were conducted during the course of the day and the works and final works of the students were seen.

All the people involved in the accreditation process were very co-operative and engaged fully in the process. The Review Team were provided with a professional and hospitable welcome.

The Review Team tried to encourage an open discussion with all concerned, the level of involvement by those they encountered during the visit greatly enhanced the efficiency of the work that was carried out.

The structure, contents and attitude of the Self Evaluation Report were much more competent and in respect to the requirements for producing such documents that previous one 2008 and 2011.

#### ***1.4. The Review Team***

The review team was completed according *Description of experts' recruitment*, approved by order No. V-41 of Acting Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. The Review Visit to HEI was conducted by the team on 24/April/2017.

- 1. Robert Baker (team leader)**, Limerick School of Art & Design, Head of Fine Art Ireland. (until 2009) Chair of the Board of EQ-Arts, quality Enhancement Agency, Amsterdam
- 2. Prof. Radu Andrei Pulbere**, PhD. Professor in University of Art and Design in Cluj-Napoca, Coordinator of the Master specialization in Textile Design UAD Cluj-Napoca, Romania.
- 3. Prof. Lylian Meister**, Freelance artist and designer, Board member of Tori, Jaam MTÜ (Non-profit organization), Estonia.
- 4. Jeffrey Dennis**, Senior Lecturer (0.5) Fine Art Programme, Chelsea College of Arts, University of the Arts London, United Kingdom.
- 5. Prof. Jelka Geršak**, Professor at University of Maribor, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Department of Textile Materials and Design, Slovenia.
- 6. Assoc. Prof. Dr Rimantas Plungė** The Head of Contemporary Art Department Faculty of Arts at Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania.
- 7. Aneta Bačianskaitė**, student of the Šiauliai University study programme *Applied art and business, Lithuania*.

## II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

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

A clear sense of the course's objectives is expressed (e.g. from the SER p7: 'to educate versatile artists – painters, who have obtained the relevant professional painting and interdisciplinary fields of expression competencies that allow them to independently work in the field of painting and join the contemporary art scene'). However the declared allegiance (in the SER, p.8) to the legacy of the 'colourist', or 'School of Paris' tradition (these are terms associated with late nineteenth and early twentieth century avant-garde art such as Post-impressionism and Fauvism, seeking expression through the heightened use of colour in painting, exploiting the emotional potential of exaggerated colour) seems incongruous and is not borne out by the best work being currently made by the students. This declaration may be confusing to applicants, at odds with other aspirations expressed by staff to link into more contemporary art concerns.

The course is carefully aligned to the relevant legislative guidelines for higher education (SER p15: university first-cycle (BA) studies, scope of the programme – 240 ECTS credits – 4 years of full-time studies), and the staffs are attentive to the prospects for their graduates to sustain themselves as artists in the commercial field as independent artists, or to be otherwise employable in related fields by virtue of transferable skills acquired on the course.

The course appears to be popular (from SER p.7: 'Painting study program graduates are in demand not only in Vilnius regions, but also throughout the country. This is evident from the last five years' employment data and feedback from employers'; from SER p.8: '...over the last five years the average number of applicants for the Painting study programme at VAA was 37. Most of those applying for the Painting study programme at VAA selected painting as the only preferred study programme in the list of preferred programmes. This serves as an evidence of rather high motivation of the students and their confidence in the Painting study programme') and is moving towards an interdisciplinary approach that would align it to international tendencies in contemporary art whilst continuing to nurture expertise and skill in painting as a specific practice with its own discourses and traditions.

The stated learning outcomes are aligned to the declared objectives of the course, with a matrix matching the aims to the learning outcomes of the modules (SER p.12, Table 3. A matrix maps the links between the objectives, the anticipated learning outcomes and subjects of the study programme).

The objectives and outcomes are appropriate for a BA level course as understood throughout Europe (i.e. a visiting BA Painting student from another European country, e.g. on Erasmus exchange, would have little problem in understanding the objectives and methodologies of the

course). The title will be widely understood, and the programme website makes clear how 'painting' in a contemporary sense is understood to have a negotiable relationship to other media and forms of art practice.

The description of the programme's 'uniqueness' in the SER (section 2.11, page 8) is slightly less helpful, risking the perception that the programme is hinged upon a precise but contentious understanding of an art-historical legacy related to 'colourist' concerns and 'The School of Paris'. While this may offer some academic, historical background, it is less helpful in defining and broadcasting the Programme's vision of what it offers to students in the twenty-first century.

## 2.2. *Curriculum design*

There have been many improvements and updates to the structure of the programme since the previous evaluation, including: more choice of critical theory subjects e.g. Introduction to contemporary art and theory, Modern aesthetics and philosophy of art have been added; more women on the staff; more contact (through the doctoral seminar programme) with lecturers and practitioners from other countries. The programme structure is aligned to all the relevant legislative requirements (from SER p.8): 'The first-cycle programme of Painting complies with the Integrated Development Strategy of VAA for 2012–2020. The programme is implemented in compliance with the provisions of the Descriptor of the Study Field of Art.' (SER p.16): 'The Study plan proportion of classroom and individual work complies with the Study Regulations of VAA as well as other relevant documents: 75–45% of the scope of the BA study programme are dedicated to the contact/classroom work (lectures, seminars, practical training and cancelling), and 25–55% – to individual work and studies. When compiling the study plan, the scope for individual work was defined in accordance with the Study Regulations of VAA and the specific characteristics of the assignment'). Staff appears to have consulted the relevant legislative descriptors for this type and level of programme.

The subjects of study are consistent and topics are clear and in line with the level of studies, supporting the objective of building up the professional profile of the contemporary art practitioner with a painting specialism. There appears (from the panel's conversations with current students) to be a clear structure to the course, clearly understood by the students. There is a wide range of elective choices of modules (e.g. European and Baltic Archaeology, The History of Philosophy, Fundamentals of Photography, Basics of Video, Jewish Art, Possibilities of digital technologies in creation, Basics of Graphical Narration, Late Modern Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art, European and Baltic Archaeology, 20th c. Applied Art and Design, Queer Images in Art and Popular Culture, Art in Public Space, Psychology of Art, Introduction to Psychology, The art of the

book, Introduction into Entrepreneurship, History of Photography, Introduction to Visual Culture Studies, Russian Avant-garde: Art and Architecture) that allow the students to have a sense of freedom and a measure of individual choice in the direction of their studies. Students value the graduated knowledge and skills taught through the first two years, moving towards more independently developed work. It is positive that some small modules have been merged, prioritizing a holistic sense of the convergence of modules towards the overall objectives.

The level, content and objectives of subjects reflect the type and cycle of studies, providing a general introduction to art as well as to conceptual, technical and theoretical aspects. The curriculum is not overcomplicated. The subjects offered are matched to assessment criteria. There has been progress towards the inclusion of more contemporary content, and a measure of critical theory and philosophy relevant to contemporary art practice, but these aspects may need to be embraced more thoroughly in order that students develop a practice and discourse that will enable '...students to orient themselves in the field of contemporary art...[from webpage course intro]'.

The course modules are structured so that students acquire skills first and then move towards more independent study. The SER (p.12) offered a grid presenting specific learning outcomes against study subjects. The subject/ modules and study disciplines are followed by useful short descriptions, underpinning the consistent progress of the cycle of learning over the years of study. There is a risk that the most ambitious and experimental students will desire greater emphasis on the interdisciplinary and international field, and less on the historical and national/regional legacy of painting, but a series of ongoing adjustments to the modules offered would ensure the course maintains a balance, and is adaptable to students' needs and meets the stated objective of allowing them to 'join the contemporary art scene'. A desire for the further integration of the theory and practice elements of the course was noted.

The programme is structured in ways that are aligned to achieving the aims of the course as stated, but may soon need reinforcing in terms of critical theory and emphasis on experimentation and collaborative practice, in order to meet the aspiration of the programme to encourage 'attitudes of experimental search and critical thinking'. There is student/graduate demand for more professional practice training, and this might be addressed by the engagement of more curatorial teaching staff as well as art practitioners, as well as the development of a more flexible schedule of employability and enterprise related course modules and short programmes of workshops and training sessions.

The course is producing artists who can create, compete and communicate with confidence and competence in the contemporary art field. It is positive that the undergraduate students have access to the programme of graduate and doctoral seminars with invited international artists. Future judgements may be needed as to the balance between more traditional focus on academic drawing

and painting, and the influence of new technology and new forms of art practice, in order to meet the programme's aspiration to be internationally relevant. Contemporary Art and contemporary theory and curatorial practice could replace some of the historical content of the programme and continue to strengthen the link and integration between theory and practice. Collaborative projects and more interaction with staff and students from other disciplines would increase debate and discourse in the subject area.

### **2.3. *Teaching staff***

The programme appears to be fully compliant with the legislative framework in terms of the abilities and qualifications of the staff (SER, p.18 : 'The academic staff is hired through public tender in accordance with the Republic of Lithuania Law on Higher Education and Research (No XI-242) ... and the Description of Qualification Requirements for the Positions of Teaching Scientists and Artists and the Procedure of Organizing the Certification and Competitions to Hold the Positions as well as the Procedure of Awarding Pedagogical Titles at Vilnius Academy of Arts approved by the Senate on 26 May 2010. VAA teaching positions are subject to the minimum qualification requirements applicable throughout the tenure of five years).

There is a positive mix of younger and more experienced staff. It is noted that approximately 20% of staff hold doctoral degrees. The Programme has encouraged staff to take up opportunities to gain international experience through Erasmus exchanges and similar networks, e.g. the Nordplus programme, administered by VAA by belonging to KUNO. International academic exchange programmes offer staff opportunities to explore, with examples from other countries, how to diversify their curriculum content and their own approach to/style of teaching. The staff members are active in exhibiting and researching, providing students with examples of highly relevant and current professional practice and knowledge to follow. However, their participation in pedagogical training is variable, as are their language skills. Although the teachers have to be certified every 5 years and are encouraged to participate in the 'Lecturers' Club' (as specified in the SER p.20, and stated by Senior Administrative staff), in compliance with Implementation Plan for the VAA Lifelong Learning Strategy for 2016–2020, it emerged from the Question and Answer session with the Teachers and the Senior Administration team, that take-up amongst the staff is uneven and informal. It was clear from the teachers' Q and A session that many of the team lacks the confidence to use English language that would be desirable for the Programme's teaching staff.

There is, by international standards, a relatively generous 'staff to student' ratio (e.g. the student: staff ratio in many European art HEIs may typically be 15: 1; in this VAA programme it appears to be nearer 4:1), sufficient to ensure that all students can access staff on a daily basis. Steps

have been taken since the last revalidation visit to address the previous gender imbalance within the faculty but the continued recruitment of more female staff would be a welcome priority.

It is positive that younger staff and more female staff are working on the team. Consideration is needed about how students might gain more contact with international staff, and ‘fresh voices’. The enabling of more international visitors, perhaps to work for short intense periods with the students would be energizing and welcomed by the students. It was noted that possibly useful examples of this kind of ‘visiting artist practical seminar’ are already in action on the Textiles course.

Under the *Implementation Plan for the VAA Lifelong Learning Strategy for 2016–2020* teachers are encouraged to take up pedagogical training, supported by the establishment of the VAA Educational Art Centre in 2016. Steps have been made to support the staff and encourage pedagogical training and development, through the establishment of the ‘Teachers’ Club’ and the use of online resources e.g. Lynda.com. However, staff development provision appears to be informal and uneven, and reliant on individual initiatives. There was sometimes confusion between ‘research’ opportunities (e.g. exhibition projects, visiting foreign museums and art fairs etc) and support to develop pedagogy (e.g. visiting other courses, attending conferences or training sessions etc). While these areas may overlap, there needs to be clarity about support offered specifically to nurture positive teaching skills. A more formalized programme of staff appraisal/development may allow the HEI to record and disseminate examples of individual good practice to other staff. More should be done to encourage higher skills in English Language in order to make the programme more internationally competitive.

EU funding has assisted, in the past, with pedagogic training, but the HEI may now need to discuss how to replace ‘one-off’ project funding from other sources.

#### **2.4. *Facilities and learning resources***

The studios for the painting students feel generous, flexible and relaxed as working spaces and adaptable to individual students’ practice. It appears that many refurbishments have been achieved since the last validation inspection. The students should be encouraged (more than they appear to be) to feel a sense of ownership over their workspaces. Given the size of the studios, one might expect to find more evidence of longer-term, settled, individual use, e.g. with source material displayed on walls, sketches and preparatory work pinned up etc. There may be ongoing issues about the use of solvents in insufficiently ventilated spaces; these might be addressed by a combination of training on the safe use of such materials or substituting more ecological options, and by upgrading of ventilation when possible. There is clearly only limited disabled access in the

historic buildings, which do not lend themselves to adaptation in those terms. But this should be a priority for consideration if the prospect of any new premises arises.

It is a welcome and rational development that the students now have access to the entire faculty's 'art labs' and well-appointed workshops in a range of media. The HEI faces a familiar challenge of upgrading and/or repairing and maintaining or replacing expensive equipment, but it appears to be achieving a reasonable balance.

The studios and other facilities appear to be accessible to students on a daily basis, for sufficient time to be conducive to extended, in-depth study. Arrangements are in place to enable students to visit Kaunas and the NIDA art colony, which provide alternative working environments, maximize the resources of the region and build useful creative partnerships and networks.

The libraries are stocked with a wide range of relevant, up-to-date books and publications, held in comfortable spaces, conducive to study. The students also have access to other libraries in the city. Relative to the number of students on the programme, these resources are a strikingly attractive feature of VAA's intensive but comfortable study environment.

## **2.5. *Study process and student's performance assessment***

The entrance requirements have been subject to national legal regulations. It is noted that the HEI considers the unified entrance exam, with its requirement for grades in Lithuanian Language and Literature, etc. not very relevant for admission in this programme. The HEI is negotiating new entrance requirements which may be more appropriate to the requirements of the Painting course, with an emphasis on assessment by portfolio. The staff is active in promoting and explaining the nature and requirements of the course to school students through open-days and 'out-reach' programmes.

The programme's structure and schedule of units and modules is viable in terms of allowing students to achieve the learning outcomes in the working time available on the programme. Conceptual, technical/ practical and theoretical aspects of art are well balanced and the supervised by the staff team. External academic and art practitioner specialists are also invited to contribute to the programme.

There is also a balance to be achieved between offering choice, which students demand, and retaining the coherence of the modules in relation to the learning objectives. It was noted, from the Q and A session with the students, that the staff work hard to ensure viable student numbers are distributed or encouraged to sign up to all the modules offered. There is a strong emphasis on individual tutorial supervision of the students. The schedule of ongoing formative assessment,

combined with semester and end-of-year assessments, reinforce the desired progression towards the learning outcomes, and is resulting in high levels of academic achievement.

There has been an improvement in students scientific, artistic or applied science activities since the last revalidation. The students have many opportunities to participate in exhibitions and projects both in Lithuania and in international contexts: In the last five years VAA students of the Painting department participated in the following exhibitions: 'Justinas Vienožinskis' (2011), Rokiškis regional museum, Rokiškis; the exhibitions at the gallery 'Meno parkas', Kaunas (2011 – 2014); a continual project 'Juniors. Green consciousness' in the gallery 'Vartai' (2015), 'Thursday shows'; international plein-air of Lithuanian and Polish young artists in Poland and Lithuania 2014 and 2015); exhibitions of a continual project of VAA students and teachers: 'Generations do not repeat for the second time', 'Wunderkameraden', gallery 'Meno forma', Kaunas (2014 – 2016). In addition, students organize annual mini-exhibitions after their summer practice (Practice and creative project 2) in Salų manor, Salos, Rokiškis dist.; and from 2015 also in Panemunė castle (after Practice and creative project 3), e.g. in 2016 there was an exhibition 'Where are the hammering nails?' (Panemunė castle, Jurbarkas dist.).

The students value the opportunities offered to exhibit their work alongside their staff in gallery contexts, allowing them a sense of themselves as emerging professional practitioners, and to learn by following the examples of their staff. Opportunities to visit the NIDA art colony are popular and undoubtedly enhance the sense of variety of learning environments.

The course has an active exchange programme through Erasmus and other similar networks (e.g. the Nordplus programme, administered by VAA by belonging to KUNO), allowing students valuable opportunities to experience art education in other countries, and to start to create their own professional and collegiate networks amongst peer groups in other European countries.

It is positive that the Academy can offer students accommodation, access to sports facilities and free museum access. Ease of communication between the students and staff ensures that support can be given on a personal, one-to-one basis. But it may be more transparent if set 'consultation' times for painting students, with staff, particularly staff from other disciplines, were regularized and publicized. Students are directed to psychological support and other forms of advice from various agencies in Vilnius. Senior Administration should consider whether students may be more speedily directed to appropriate support – in terms of disability support, counselling or financial/housing advice – by a 'one-stop shop', a dedicated student services 'gateway', with trained, expert staff onsite.

The assessment process is clear and public, based on criteria for assessment regulated by national recommendation and regulation (i.e. by the Lithuanian Ministry of Science and Education and VAA Regulations of Studies, SER p.32). The final project assessment is based on the

guidelines of VAA Study Regulations. Subject/ discipline descriptors mirrored the expected learning outcomes targeted. Students appear to understand how they are assessed, and the ease of communications between staff and students ensures there are many opportunities for verbal feedback. But the programme should consider whether criteria for assessment should always be communicated in written form as well as verbally, before each unit, and if assessments should also be followed by written feedback that corresponds more directly to publicized assessment criteria, broken down into categories so that student may understand (and, if they forget, re-read, later) in which specific areas (for example: ‘research’, ‘experimentation’, ‘presentation’ etc.) they are doing better or less well. It is positive that students are encouraged to self-evaluate as part of the assessment process. The Programme may also wish consider inviting staff from other disciplines to participate in students’ assessments, to ensure moderation and parity. Standard formats for written work, to include an abstract in English and references in English, should be established.

The SER (p.34) cites surveys of graduates that indicate a significant proportion of graduates find work in the related field\* and some even rapidly enter into contractual arrangements with commercial galleries, due in part to the programme’s close ties with a range of galleries\*\*.

Students and graduates have appreciated the ‘transferable skills’ acquired on the course, which are adaptable to a range of employment opportunities. However there is student and graduate demand for more focus on the acquisition of entrepreneurial and business skills, and this might be assisted by being able to track graduate destinations more closely, and to record and respond more actively to the requirements of trusted stakeholders and employers.

\*It is appropriate that the SER (p.34) mentions the internationally accepted situation that, in contrast to many other disciplines, a large proportion of Fine Art graduates may choose unrelated employment in order to fund their continuing art practice for some years after graduation. This can appear negative in raw ‘graduate employment’ data, so it is important to ensure that applicants, and the state authorities for Higher Education understand that these may still be very successful graduates in the longer term, that will eventually bring cultural capital to their country.

\*\*The programme is now embracing a wider range of critical discourse about contemporary art practice, and this may also, importantly, highlight to students the possibility of a critical stance in relation to the ‘art market’.

The programme team is knowledgeable about the general local and regional factors and state imperatives, and the future economic pressures on the course and their students. But it is recommended that Senior Administration and the teaching team seek more specific feedback from potential employers and professionals in the field, as part of a strategic plan to predict future

demand and requirements for their graduates. The continued internationalization of the course and teaching, and an enhanced emphasis on contemporary discourse, and the input of more international visiting staff may assist student recruitment from other countries.

Because the affiliation of students to professors is informal and personal, based on the professors' own practice and interests, there is a risk that some students, with whose work the professors have more empathy with, receive more attention and feedback. This might be addressed by ensuring a more frequent circulation of staff, and/or a more formalized structure of student groups.

The ease of verbal communication between staff and students means that complaints would tend to be handled through informal channels. It may be prudent to publish, in a student handbook, a simple flow diagram, outlining to students their options to lodge appeals. A Code of Ethics was adopted in 2015, defining responsibilities and facilitating a rapid response to issues arising.

## **2.6. *Programme management***

There is a clear management structure and chain of decision-making outlined in the SER (p. 35). With regard to the relatively small student cohort, the structure of staff responsibilities seems to be effective for the day-to-day running of the course, with the Study Programme Committee playing a major role in discussion, evaluation of procedures and planning. It is recommended that this be given more institutional weight, by the adoption of a protocol of having every Committee meeting minuted, with any necessary 'action points' identified, delegated to specific individuals and given a time-frame for review at a future meeting.

The Study Programme Committee gives a voice to students' views, but is underpinned by regular surveys and questionnaires to ensure students can offer anonymous feedback. However the relatively small student cohort means that the statistics collected should be treated with caution.

There is ample evidence (listed systematically throughout the SER under each area heading) that the programme has earnestly responded to the findings of the last external revalidation visit, and brought about really positive changes (e.g. evidence of more critical theory, more female staff, more international visiting staff and a more international focus of lectures and modules and an effort towards providing more pedagogical training for staff) even in the currently less than positive economic and demographic circumstances. The views expressed in the Study Programme Committee and collected through surveys are fed into planning, but it would be easier to verify the effectiveness of this if there was more formality in this procedure, with 'points for action' decided upon, recorded and delegated, with a time-frame for future review of progress.

Employers and staff maintain positive communications, and stakeholders such as gallery owners are invited to participate in the Study Programme Committee, and/or to observe and express views on the assessments.

There appears to be a measure of informality about this arrangement. Although it is very positive that employers and professionals are actively sought for advice and expertise, there should perhaps be clear guidelines set out about the limits to employers' involvement in actual assessment, to ensure academic freedom and critical rigour is maintained, independently of market pressures.

The Programme involves a representative range of the staff in oversight of Quality assurance: the Study Programme Committee includes 5 staff and also social partners, students and employers, with staff from other institutions invited to review final theses. There has been an Internal Quality Assessment system for the study programmes of VAA since 2013, and since 2015 VAA has been a member of several international study quality networks of HEIs, e.g. EDDANorden. This, underpinned by the views collected through the Study Programme Committee, ensures that the institution can be responsive and enact change where required, as is evidenced by the many improvements and adjustments since the last revalidation visit.

The Programme website gives an accessible but limited overview of the programme, its objectives and some of the student work. It could be enhanced with images of the spacious studios, well-equipped workshops, large exhibition spaces etc, and by short video interviews, (it would be an advantage, with regard to international recruitment, if some of these were in English) on the website, with staff speaking about what the course offers, and interviews with current students about their positive experiences on the course, and profiles of selected graduates. Together these might add a relatively inexpensive but powerful international recruiting tool, and create a more outward-facing image for the Programme. It is positive that staff and students engage in 'out-reach' activities at schools to introduce the course to potential applicants.

### ***2.7. Examples of Excellence***

1. Students' access to faculty-wide 'artlab' resources across all media and processes, creating a more fluid and responsive resource responding to students' evolving art practice
2. The development of interdisciplinary studies; an increased integration of various materials, media and processes into students works would be a very valuable outcome and reflect a contemporary approach to the potential of painting.
3. Energetic support from the Programme management and staff for the Erasmus+ programme, resulting in students taking up opportunities to study and exhibit internationally through Erasmus+ and other networks, and using this student-to-student contact as a way of

informing and refreshing the programme, and aligning it with the positive European tendencies
4. Above average studio accommodation (By international standards, in relation to the number of students), offering a capacious and inspiring studio environment for students to plan ambitious work.
5. There is ease of communication between staff and students, and there are generous opportunities for students to exhibit work alongside staff in professional contexts, inspiring ambition and giving students the confidence to think of themselves as emerging professional artists
6. Holistic oversight of design of the theory and practice modules resulting in a positive integration of practice and theory within the programme, in line with progressive ideas about how theoretical and scholarly research may be aligned with art practice.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Expert Team recommend a review of staff development/appraisal processes, with more formal recording, to allow the sharing of good practice and the positive individual initiatives already being explored by staff members, and a more developed system for staff pedagogic development, to enable teachers gain insights and skills in teaching and learning.
2. Greater turn-over of staff and the recruitment of staff from more diverse educational backgrounds, diversity of gender and experience is required to increase the discourse and debate in the programme and to continuously provide fresh ideas and influences. The programme should search for routes and funding to enable more international visitors to teach on the course or lead workshops for students (the programme team could look at examples of this kind of initiative already in place on the Vilnius Textiles course).
3. Collaborative projects, and more interaction with staff and students from other disciplines, would increase debate and discourse in the subject area. Contemporary practice and theory, and curatorial practice should replace some of the historical content of the programmes and continue to strengthen the integration of theory and practice.
4. The good practice established in the monitoring of study processes, students' performance and the programme management should be enhanced by an annual review of these processes (perhaps during staff development and consultation sessions), to ensure that they are resulting in real improvements as opposed to simply fulfilling a formality.
5. More detailed tracking of graduate employment destinations and employment, and more detailed consultation with potential employers in order to tailor appropriate professional practice support on the course, and to further focus their students' acquisition of appropriate skills that will be useful and in demand in the labour market, empowering graduates to travel, to earn and hopefully to return to Vilnius Art Academy to share their experience and skills with students, in a 'virtuous cycle'.

#### **IV. SUMMARY**

The progress to a more interdisciplinary concept of what Painting is in line with developments in contemporary art, and also aligned with the Programme's parallel move towards a more international art context for the students, and the staff and management team should be encouraged to continue along this trajectory.

There is a clear structure to the course, moving from the acquisition of skills towards individual research and experimentation. The students appreciate the freedom and choice of areas to study in depth, through wide range of elective modules. As noted above, the progress towards more international and contemporary content is welcome and needs accelerating, in order that students feel they are informed about the most recent developments in the art field, but must be balanced by a continued place within the curriculum for understanding of historical context, traditional skills and the value of the local, regional traditions.

The programme is taught by a highly committed team of staff, a high proportion of who are research-active, and there is very good communication between the staff and the students, both in day-to-day teaching and through shared exhibition projects. The experienced team is now more balanced by newer teachers and more female staff, and will, it is hoped, continue to be refreshed by input from new teachers from a range of backgrounds and profiles. It is hoped there will be more opportunities for student contact with international staff, and more opportunities, building on the positive initiative of the 'Teachers' Club', for the core staff team to participate in pedagogical training, and to enhance their own abilities to teach and research in an international context.

The studio and exhibition spaces seem spacious and the workshops well-equipped and the library well resourced. It is very positive that Painting students have access to all the 'artlabs' and workshops for all processes. The future focus may be on encouraging and enabling all students to have the widest flexible access to the existing resources and to enhance and develop those resources in ways which reflect the fluidity of contemporary art practice.

The ease of communications, and the healthy staff-student ratio enable plenty of formative verbal feedback to students, but more structured written feedback and structured tracking of student performance would be an improvement, and enhance a sense of fairness and transparency. More detailed tracking of graduate destinations would similarly enable the Programme to better customise the support for 'professional practice' skills training, and to equip students to face the future. It is a positive feature, greatly appreciated by the students that they are encouraged and supported to take up opportunities to exhibit and study in other countries through the Erasmus and similar networks.

There is evidence of vigorous management, driving forward positive initiatives, such as the inclusion of students in the regular Study Programme Committees. To consolidate this there may need to be a more formal system for taking minutes of the issues discussed at such meetings, with corresponding responses, points for action, time-lines for reporting back and delegation of responsibility for those actions, to ensure the Committee is as effective as it can be for enacting progressive change.

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## V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Painting* (state code – 612W10009) at Vilnius Art Academy is given **positive** evaluation.

*Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.*

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	3
4.	Facilities and learning resources	4
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	3
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>19</b>

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

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

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

4 (very good) - the field is exceptionally good.

Grupės vadovas: Team leader:	Robert Baker
Grupės nariai: Team members:	Radu Andrei Pulbere
	Lylian Meister
	Jeffrey Dennis
	Jelka Geršak
	Rimantas Plungė
	Aneta Bačianskaitė

**VILNIAUS DAILĖS AKADEMIJOS, VILNIAUS FAKULTETO PIRMOSIOS PAKOPOS  
STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS *TAPYBA* (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 612W10009) 2017-08-17  
EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-177 IŠRAŠAS**

&lt;...&gt;

**V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS**

Vilniaus dailės akademijos (Vilniaus fakulteto) studijų programa *Tapyba* (valstybinis kodas – 612W10009) vertinama **teigiamai**.

<b>Eil. Nr.</b>	<b>Vertinimo sritis</b>	<b>Srities įvertinimas, balais*</b>
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	3
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	3
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	4
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	3
	<b>Iš viso:</b>	<b>19</b>

\* 1 – Nepatenkinamai (yra esminių trūkumų, kuriuos būtina pašalinti)

2 – Patenkinamai (tenkina minimalius reikalavimus, reikia tobulinti)

3 – Gerai (sistemiškai plėtojama sritis, turi savitų bruožų)

4 – Labai gerai (sritis yra išskirtinė)

&lt;...&gt;

**IV. SANTRAUKA**

Reikia skatinti, kad studentai pereitų prie labiau tarpdalykinio tapybos suvokimo, atsižvelgiant į šiuolaikinio meno tendencijas ir kartu prisiderinant prie siekio labiau priartinti programą prie tarptautinio meno konteksto. Darbuotojai ir vadovų grupė turi būti raginami toliau judėti šia kryptimi.

Kursas turi aiškia struktūrą, pradedant įgūdžių įgijimu ir baigiant individualiais tyrinėjimais bei eksperimentais. Studentai vertina suteiktą galimybę patiems pasirinkti, į kokias plataus pasirenkamųjų modulių spektro sritis nori gilintis labiau. Kaip minėta pirmiau, pritariama siekui judėti labiau tarptautinio ir šiuolaikiško turinio link, ir vystymąsi šia kryptimi reikia paspartinti, kad studentai jaustųsi žinantys apie naujausius meno srities pokyčius, tačiau būtina išlaikyti pusiausvyrą, paliekant studijų turinyje vietos istorinio konteksto suvokimui, tradiciniams įgūdžiams ir vietos bei regioninių tradicijų vertei.

Programą dėsto labai atsidavusi dėstytojų komanda, kurios didelė dalis aktyviai dalyvauja moksliniuose tyrimuose. Akademinis personalas ir studentai puikiai bendrauja tarpusavyje tiek kasdienėse studijose, tiek dalyvaudami bendruose parodų projektuose. Patyrusi komanda tapo darnesnė, kai prie jos prisijungė nauji dėstytojai ir atsirado daugiau moteriškos lyties darbuotojų. Tikimasi, kad komanda toliau bus stiprinama, į jos gretas pritraukiant naujų įvairesnės patirties ir profilio dėstytojų. Viliamasi, kad studentai turės daugiau progų pabendrauti su dėstytojais iš užsienio ir atsiras daugiau galimybių, kurias suteikia sveikintina iniciatyva „Dėstytojų klubas“, sudaranti sąlygas pagrindinei dėstytojų grupei dalyvauti pedagoginiuose mokymuose ir gerinti savo gebėjimus mokyti bei atlikti tyrimus tarptautinėje aplinkoje.

Studija ir parodų patalpos atrodo erdvios, dirbtuvės – gerai įrengtos, biblioteka taip pat gerai aprūpinta. Labai gerai, kad tapybos programos studentai turi galimybę visuose studijų procesuose naudotis visomis meno laboratorijomis ir dirbtuvėmis. Ateityje būtų galima skirti dėmesio tam, kad visi studentai būtų skatinami naudotis ir turėtų kaip galima platesnę lanksčią prieigą prie visų akademijos išteklių, bei tobulinti ir vystyti tokius išteklius, atsižvelgiant į šiuolaikinio meno praktikos plastiškumą.

Lengvas bendravimas ir tinkamas darbuotojų ir studentų skaičiaus santykis suteikia galimybę studentams gauti pakankamai formuojančio verbalinio grįžtamojo ryšio, tačiau teisingumo ir skaidrumo pojūtį labiau padidintų geriau struktūriškai apibrėžtas rašytinis grįžtamasis ryšys, kuris, kaip ir struktūriškai apibrėžta studentų pasiekimų stebėseną, būtų teigiamas pokytis. Daugiau surinktos išsamios informacijos apie tai, kaip sekasi absolventams, taip pat padėtų programos įgyvendintojams suteikti geresnę pagalbą, ugdant profesinės praktikos įgūdžius ir ruošiant studentus ateičiai. Labai gerai, kad studentai yra skatinami, kad jiems padedama (studentai tai labai vertina) pasinaudoti galimybe eksponuoti savo darbus ir studijuoti kitose šalyse, dalyvaujant „Erasmus“ bei panašiose programose.

Juntama stipri vadyba, stumianti į priekį teigiamas iniciatyvas, pavyzdžiui, įtraukti studentus į nuolatinių studijų programos komitetų veiklą. Siekiant tai įtvirtinti, galbūt derėtų numatyti labiau formalizuotą per tokius posėdžius aptariamų klausimų protokolavimo sistemą, pažymint atitinkamus atsakymus, atskaitos taškus, terminus, per kuriuos reikia pateikti ataskaitą, ir paskirstant

atsakomybę dėl tokių veiksmų, siekiant užtikrinti, kad įgyvendindamas pažangius pokyčius komitetas veiktų kuo efektyviau.

<...>

### **III. REKOMENDACIJOS**

1. Ekspertų grupė rekomenduoja peržiūrėti personalo kvalifikacijos tobulinimo / įvertinimo procesus ir numatyti labiau formalizuotą stebėjimo sistemą, sudarant sąlygas dalytis gerąja praktika ir teigiamomis individualiomis iniciatyvomis, kuriomis jau dalijasi personalas, bei įdiegti pažangesnę darbuotojų pedagoginės kvalifikacijos tobulinimo sistemą, kad dėstytojai galėtų įgyti įžvalgų ir mokymo bei mokymosi įgūdžių.
2. Reikia didesnės darbuotojų kaitos ir samdyti įvairesnio išsilavinimo, skirtingų lyčių bei skirtingos patirties turinčius darbuotojus, siekiant paskatinti programos diskursą bei debatus ir užtikrinti nuolatinį naujų idėjų bei poveikių srautą. Programos sudarytojai turi ieškoti būdų ir lėšų, kaip pritraukti daugiau dėstytojų iš užsienio dėstyti kursą arba vesti seminarus studentams (programą įgyvendinanti komanda galėtų pasidomėti tokių iniciatyvų pavyzdžiais, kurie jau įgyvendinti Vilniaus tekstilės kurse).
3. Bendradarbiavimo projektai ir aktyvesnis bendravimas su kitų dalykų dėstytojais bei studentais paskatintų dalyko srities debatus ir diskusiją. Dalį programos istorinio turinio reikėtų pakeisti šiuolaikine praktika, teorija bei kuravimo veikla ir toliau stiprinti teorijos ir praktikos integraciją.
4. Studijų proceso stebėsenos metu nustatytą gerąją praktiką, studentų pasiekimus ir programos vadybą reikia gerinti kasmet peržiūrint (galbūt darbuotojų kvalifikacijos tobulinimo kursuose ir konsultacijų metu), siekiant užtikrinti, kad jie iš tiesų būtų tobulinami, o ne tik formaliai pildomi dokumentai.
5. Rinkti daugiau informacijos apie absolventų įsidarbinimo vietas bei įsidarbinimą ir daugiau konsultuotis su galimais darbdaviais, siekiant užtikrinti tinkamą, kursą stiprinančią profesinę praktiką. Stengtis sutelkti dėmesį į tai, kad studentai įgytų tinkamų įgūdžių, kurie būtų naudingi ir paklausūs darbo rinkoje, suteiktų galimybę absolventams keliauti, užsidirbti ir, jei pasiseks, grįžti į Vilniaus dailės akademiją pasidalyti savo patirtimi bei įgūdžiais su studentais – taip sukurti veiksmingą gerosios patirties ciklą.

<...>

Paslaugos teikėjas patvirtina, jog yra susipažinęs su Lietuvos Respublikos baudžiamojo kodekso 235 straipsnio, numatančio atsakomybę už melagingą ar žinomai neteisingai atliktą vertimą, reikalavimais.

Vertėjos rekvizitai (vardas, pavardė, parašas)