



MASTER OF ARTS IN DANCE

ARTESIS PLANTIJN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

INITIAL ACCREDITATION • PANEL REPORT

8 October 2018





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1 Executive summary

The master programme in Dance allows artists to research and develop a sustainable artistic practice in the field of contemporary Dance and directly related disciplines. The programme's design is based on three areas of competence: embodiment, artistic practice and research. These are closely related to the academic orientation 'embodied artistic research' which fits the programme really well. The programme provides a response to developments within the art scene and more specifically the field of Dance, in which possible job roles for graduates have changed. Students develop a set of competencies which the programme positions in relation to three contexts: the artist, the artistic field and society. The committee is very positive about the level at which the competencies are formulated: the learning outcomes of the programme clearly exceed a bachelor's level.

Students who are eligible for the programme are students with an embodied artistic practice and a focused curiosity, both leading to a research question. The committee believes there is some room for improvement regarding the intake-procedure and pre-master's programme, but in general is very positive about the teaching and learning environment. During the various courses which are spread out over two years, students learn how to strengthen their artistic and professional identity in the context of the artistic field and society, by engaging in research. To this end, the modules, staff and organization of the programme provide rich sources and have been developed thoughtfully. The institution provides a fantastic environment and is situated in the heart of an artistic hotspot. Academic partners as well as partners from the professional field are involved in the programme, in order to bring the best of both of these worlds together to help students develop themselves.

Assessment is a crucial element which supports the focus of the programme on the development of the individual artists and his/her relation to various contexts. By means of assessment, a student gets a clear indication of his/her development. The programme provides ample feedback moments during which various stakeholders will help students develop by means of their formative feedback. Summative assessment is also part of the programme and finds its climax in the master project, which can take a variety of forms. The committee discussed this and is positive about the choice made by the programme. It allows students to document and disseminate their research (results) in a variety of ways. The assessment criteria which have been developed from the learning outcomes, provide a clear framework for all staff members and external mentors, contributors and jury members. During the site visit, the committee got convinced that the assessment system consists of a sophisticated set of instruments with which the staff members are familiar. This guarantees that assessment of students is being done in a rewarding manner to both staff, students and external jury members and contributors to the programme.

The Hague, 8 October 2018

On behalf of the expert panel convened to assess the master programme in Dance

Dr. Falk Hubner
(panel chair)

Jetse Siebenga Msc.
(secretary)

2 Description of the programme

2.1 Overview

Country	Flanders (Belgium)
Institution	Artesis Plantijn University College
Programme	MA in Dance
Language of instruction	English
Level and orientation	MA
Number of credits	60 EC
Location	Antwerp
Study mode	Part-time
Domain of study	Arts

2.2 Profile of the institution

The institution's 11.000 students, 24 vocational educations and 8 art programmes, are clustered into 4 faculties and 2 schools of arts. Its schools of arts have a long history: The Royal Conservatoire Antwerp (RCA) was founded in 1898, and the Royal Academy of Fine arts is 350 years old. RCA aims to educate enthusiastic and talented people to become creative, professional musicians and performing artists with great autonomy and personality, able to slot into the contemporary socio-cultural and artistic frame of reference. The conservatoire offers bachelor's and master's programmes in Dance, Music, Drama and teachers training programmes.

2.3 Profile of the programme

The proposed programme in dance is an initial master's programme, selecting students with an applicable bachelor's degree and an embodied practice to enter the programme. AP University College intends to offer the programme for the first time in 2020.

The proposed programme is a new programme for the institution and is the first Master of Arts in Dance offered in Flanders. The programme intends to provide a home for dance artists to enrich their education, cultivate their embodied artistic practice, develop their professional trajectory and subsequently return to the field with a deeper level of knowledge and understanding.

The macro-efficiency test for a new master's programme was approved in 2017 and a first TNO application was submitted. A commission visited the RCA in February 2018 after which substantial advice and recommendations for development were provided from the NVAO. On 4 July 2018 AP University College sent in a new application.

The curriculum of the programme is depicted on the next page. The programme is a part-time programme that consists of four modules, spread out over the course of two years:

Competence Domain	Modules and context with number of credits							
	Module 1: Artist		Module 2: Artistic Field		Module 3: Society		Module 4	
Embodiment	Embodiment 1	5	Embodiment 2	5	Embodiment 3	5	Master Project	15
Artistic Practice	Artistic Practice 1	5	Artistic Practice 2	5	Artistic Practice 3	5		
Research	Research 1	5	Research 2	5	Research 3	5		

Figure 1: structure of the programme

3 Assessment per generic quality guarantee

This chapter presents the evaluation by the assessment panel of the three generic quality guarantees, which the NVAO Assessment Framework is comprised of. The panel has reproduced the criteria for each generic quality guarantee. For each generic quality guarantee the panel presents (1) a brief outline of its findings based on the programme documents, documents provided by the institution and the site visit, (2) the considerations the panel has taken into account and (3) the conclusion of the panel. The panel presents a conclusion for each of the three generic quality guarantees.

3.1 Intended exit level (generic quality guarantee 1)

With respect to level, orientation and content, the intended exit level reflects the current requirements that have been set for the programme by the professional field and/or discipline from an international perspective.

Outline of findings

Aims of the programme

Belgium hosts a significant and impactful base in contemporary dance internationally. To maintain this significance, a focus on the sustainability of the dance artist is important. One pathway that currently exists, is dancers training and performing, and simultaneously or consecutively moving into other supporting roles within their profession such as making, teaching, curating and producing without necessarily having had an education in these fields. However, this pattern is changing and the educational context supporting this needs to adapt to meet the requirements of the field. In addition, the programme envisions that its graduates will be representing the Field of Dance at the policy making level and grow into job roles for which a master's education is a prerequisite.

The programme aims to enhance the development of artists with a background in dance or strongly related to the field of dance. Graduates of the programme will be able to substantiate their specialism and artistic practice by means of researching artistic practices. On top of their bachelor's education, master students will develop knowledge as well as research skills and skills that allow them to document and disseminate research results to a broader public. The combination of these skills will lead to artists who are able to effectively position artistic practices within the artistic field and within society.

Academic orientation and workfield developments

The kind of research the programme refers to as its academic foundation is focused on subjects such as artistic practice, tacit knowledge, embodied knowledge and experiential knowledge. With reference to dance, epistemological and aesthetic questions concerning the moving body are central. This strand of research is often intertwined with practice, in the sense that research focused on movement, from within the practice of dance itself, has led to diverse practice based but theoretically sustained views on artistic identity and embodied aesthetics. In an annex to the application file, the programme elaborates in a short paper on its vision with regard to research.

The profile of the programme emerged from several developments within the field of Dance such as eroding institutional structures and a tendency towards more interdisciplinary performative arts. As a result, job roles within the field of Dance are much more diverse nowadays and therefore is the development of a sustainable artistic practice of importance. The field needs future artists who are able to define a position within the artistic field of Dance and develop an individual specialty of which the relevance to society can be documented and addressed by the artist.

During the site visit, representatives from the professional field applauded the extent to which the programme emancipates the field of Dance in society (in contrast to other artistic branches, dance does not yet have an master's educational programme in Flanders). They were also very positive about the extent to which developments in the field of Dance are reflected in the programme's profile.

Exit level

The programme defines nine learning outcomes and relates these learning outcomes to the thirteen discipline-specific learning outcomes. In comparison, the discipline-specific learning outcomes reflect a less integrated approach between embodied knowledge, the development of critical thinking, development of an artistic practice, documentation and dissemination skills, organizational and collaborative skills and craftsmanship. In the learning outcomes of the programme, these elements are part of almost each and every learning outcome, each with a different emphasis. The programme defines three areas of competences (depicted in figure 2) to which the learning outcomes relate: embodiment, the artistic practice and research. Students are expected to develop these competences in relation to three different contexts: the individual artist, the artistic field and society.

The area of **'embodiment'** refers to the embodiment of experience-based knowledge and skills, **'artistic practice'** consists of the definition and exercise of art practice and **'research'** is research in and through artistic practice. By applying each field of competence to the three different contexts, the training programme will focus on the cross-sectional use of competences within the performing arts scene, and by extension, on other fields. The complexity of the various contexts add up to the master's level of the programme. Students will develop a rigid set of skills that allows them to conduct research into artistic practice and obtain an autonomous position in this practice. In addition, students who want to continue their career in academia, have entrance to PhD-programmes. The committee discussed the open approach of the programme with regard to dissemination and documentation of research results. Such can take many forms within an artistic context, and should not be limited to written documentation but could also be performances, exhibitions and documentation for which new media are used.

	Artist	Art scene	Society
Embodiment	develops and articulates his/her bodily craftsmanship through acquired tools and techniques	shares the embodied craftsmanship within the artistic field	engages his/her craftsmanship and embodied knowledge in other settings
Artistic practice	organizes a sustainable artistic practice to expand the embodied practice	builds, through dialogue and transmission, a sustainable practice in an artistic environment	constructs, through translation to and interaction with society, a developing practice
Research	reflects and investigates on questions and experiential knowledge in order to deepen their artistic practice	is able to research the artistic field to feed his/her practice and position him/herself accordingly	invests, through resonating within the socio-political and economic climate, in the reciprocal relationship between his/ her artistic practice and society

Figure 2: Learning outcomes, competences and contexts

International benchmark

The programme has discussed its vision and learning outcomes with representatives from Dance Schools in Northern Europe and with representatives of the field. It also made a comparison between several programmes in Europe and presented a table in an annex to the application file, listing the various comparative and different elements. During the site visit, the representatives of the programme could lively explain how the vision of the programme on developments within the field and the necessities of young artists were recognized in the discussions with programme directors from other institutes. In addition, the committee was told that the importance of a strong focus on support of the individual artist was an important outcome of the consultations. In addition, those who were consulted strongly emphasized the need of a master's programme in Dance in Flanders. Last but not least, the programme management was inspired by educational practices abroad of which some are incorporated in the proposal for the new programme in Dance at RCA.

Considerations

The committee is positive about the learning outcomes. In the first place they are relevant, clearly defined and complete in terms of their relation to the domain-specific frame of reference. Secondly, they relate to international developments in the world of contemporary dance and artistic research. Thirdly, they reflect a master's level and fourthly they fit the design of the programme as a flexible, student-oriented curriculum.

The clarification of the academic orientation ensured the committee of a well-thought and justified vision on the level at which students from an academic master's programme in Dance should graduate. The intended level builds on what students have accomplished during earlier, more practical oriented studies and career. Alumni, representatives and prospective students applaud the profile and the focus of the programme. The committee is very positive about the hybrid nature of the programme, which not only allows dance artists to improve their skills as a dancer or a researcher, but also and especially prepares students for other job roles, as mentioned earlier. With regard to the three main competence areas: embodiment, artistic practice and research, the committee advises to inform prospective students what distinguishes the three areas and why this distinction is a relevant aspect of the programme. Especially students from abroad might wonder why the distinction is made, since in a number of programmes abroad, the areas are completely interwoven. The committee has established that the programme's standards with regard to writing skills are sufficient and comparable to other master's programmes in artistic branches. The programme's holistic fashion as well as its emphasis on deep reflection are, in the eyes of the committee, very positive characteristics of the programme's profile. The committee concludes that the intended standard of artistic practice upon graduation is high and aligns with practice-led master's programmes elsewhere in Europe, for example in the UK.

Conclusion

The panel assesses the generic quality guarantee 1 *Intended exit level* as satisfactory.

3.2 Teaching-learning environment (generic quality guarantee 2)

The teaching-learning environment enables the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Outline of findings

Content of the programme

The programme's design is closely related to the areas of competence and the contexts as depicted in figure 2. It contains four modules, spread over two years. The first three modules (1,5 years) consist of courses in which students develop their embodiment, artistic practice and research skills. The content of modules one and three are theme-based. In module two, students will take their artistic practice to the professional field and collaborate with other organizations/actors/stakeholders (within the professional field). Module four consists of realising the master project. The theme of the courses one and three will vary over the years and will be based on developments relevant to the professional field and in academia. The themes for the start of the programme are respectively "intersectionalism" and "collaborative processes". The course descriptions in the annexes clearly illustrate how the themes, areas of competence and contexts lead to a coherent programme. For each course, the study objectives are related to the learning outcomes of the programme. Because of the envisioned international student body, as well as the involvement of international staff members, the Education and Examination Regulations state that the programme can be taught in English. Students however remain the right to be examined in Dutch. If students want to make use of this right, they should inform the programme at least ten days in advance to the examination.

From the application file and course descriptions, the committee learned that in general, the courses in Embodiment will focus on kinaesthetic awareness and embodiment in technical, performative, interpretative, expressive and improvisational environments. In these, students should engage their mind and body equally to embrace observation, embodiment, definition and interpretation. Building from the physical tools and techniques from embodiment, students redefine their artistic practice. The courses in Artistic Practice start with sharing individual embodied research with tutors and peers (in module 1) and builds towards taking the artistic practice into a societal setting (module 3). The courses in Research build from an analysis of research methodologies (module 1) to a focus on the relationship between the arts and society, addressing historical and contemporary evolutions (module 3). The research modules are aligned with the thematic modules through the themes.

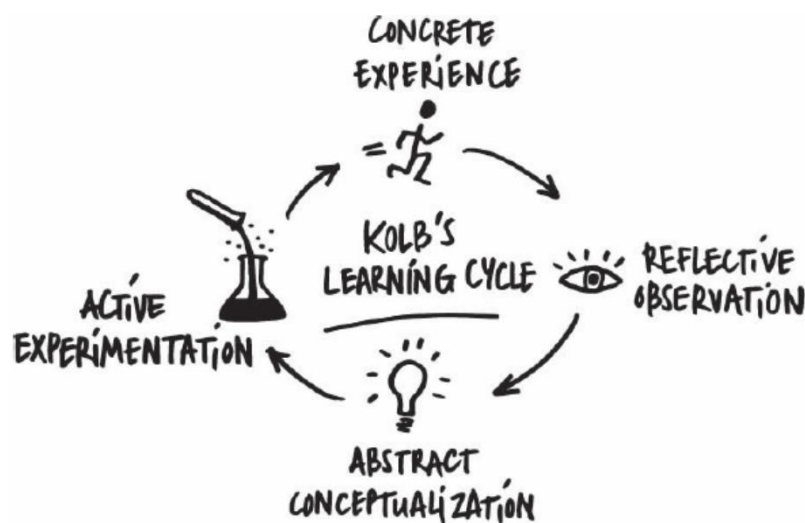


Figure 3: Kolb's Learning Cycle

Pedagogy

The committee observed that the heart of the programme's vision is the development of the individual artist, who is driven by his artistic intuition and curiosity. In order to stimulate this development and deepen students' artistic practice using research, the programme has a cyclical approach to learning. This cyclical approach can be related to Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle, depicted in figure 3. In this model, students enter the cycle of experiential learning from wherever they enter, and the learning process continues cyclically. In addition to the model, the programme embraces didactical concepts used in the bachelor's programme which are focused mainly on artistic development but also on analysis of the artistic practice and embodied knowledge. In addition, the programme draws from experience with other master's programmes within RCA.

The concept of embodied artistic research is central to the development of the individual artist. It is based on fluid transitions from artistic practice to research, through embodiment. The programme distinguishes between practice-based research and practice-led research (see figure 4). In practice-based research the artefact or output is essential for the understanding of the research, and the documentation supports the understanding of the artefact. In practice-led research the goal is to gain new knowledge about practice, and the final output does not need to perform the artefact itself, but must document how the research has led to new knowledge.

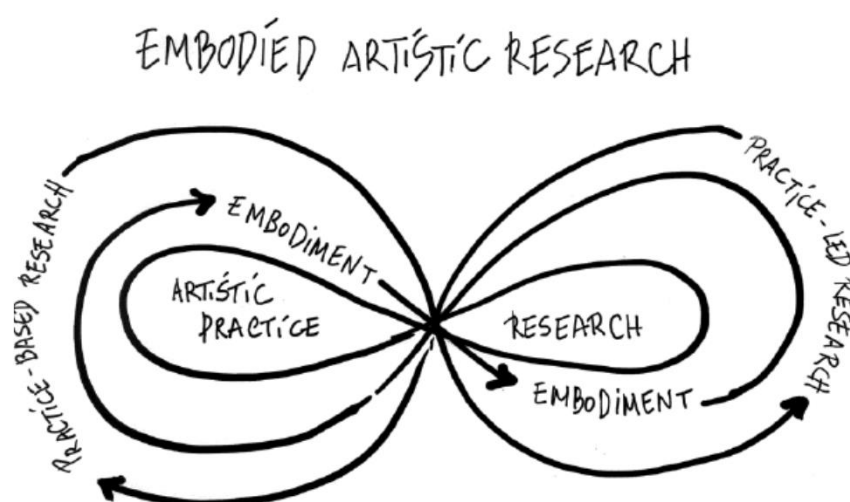


Figure 4: Embodied Artistic Research

Educational Forms

For the courses in the area of embodiment, the main learning activity will be workshop-based with contextualization of the subject through lectures, seminars, open sharing, debates and performances to encourage and challenge personal perspectives. Students' artistic praxis will require studio practice, peer discussion and self-study as integral to investigating their body knowledge to explore a sustainable movement practice. Individual course tutoring and coaching will support personal practice.

For the courses in artistic practice, studio practice and self-study will maintain a focus as students must devise a working methodology for their own artistic praxis to develop and then take their process into a residency setting for a workplace training/internship. However, within the progression of the modules, students dialogue with peers, the field and society, incorporating significant time spent in peer discussion, individual course tutoring and coaching and open sharing.

For the research competences, lectures, seminars, self-study and reading groups will initially dominate, debates and peer discussion on the other hand will enable students to discuss how to adopt and investigate new knowledge into their studio practice, providing the platform for the cyclical approach of learning to continue. In Portfolio, individual course tutoring and coaching and peer discussion will be the main focus throughout the two years. However, because of the integrated approach to experiential learning, studio practice and self-study will be continuous reference points.

Organization of the programme and staff

The programme develops in interaction with the professional field. The programme will receive advice from an advisory council which also advises the bachelor's programme. In addition, a Curatorial Board will be established. This Board will gather at least three times a year. Members of the Curatorial Board will be asked to advise the programme on developments within the professional field, to give advice on the artistic direction of the master's programme and to advise on the themes in modules 1 and 3 and to use their network on behalf of the programme and its students (especially with regard to module 2). Course tutors, contributors and guest lecturers are directed by the artistic coordinator who is responsible for the overall coordination and artistic direction of the programme. The committee learned that students will have to find a mentor during the programme. This mentor can be part of the regular staff but can also reside outside the programme.

The quantity of staff is described as 1.5 full time lecturer and a 0.3 full-time artistic coordinator. This figure includes the use of external curators. The artistic coordinator of the programme (vacancy) contributes to the artistic and pedagogical direction of the programme, prepares its implementation and is the students' and (visiting) lecturers' first contact. The application file contains an appendix with CV's of (visiting) lecturers. Almost all CV's illustrate a rich practical experience as dancer, choreographer and teacher. Lecturers appear to come from all over the world. A number of lecturers have ample experience in research. The committee met an enthusiastic and considerate staff team.

Selection and pre-master's programme

The Master in Dance focuses on a wide influx of students. It is designed for 10-12 students in each cohort. Both the holders of a bachelor's diploma in Dance, and by extension, the wider performing arts are welcome. In addition, the training programme expects to attract graduates and performing artists who are already professionally active and wish to explore more career options. Similar to the bachelor's programme, the master's programme will attract students from various nationalities. All applicants need to have an embodied artistic practice.

The artistic entrance exam (audition) will address the programme-specific fields of competence of embodiment, artistic practice and research. The possibilities of bodily expression will be assessed as well as the extent to which students reflect on the way tools and techniques are being applied to their own embodied practice. For the assessment of artistic practice, the artistic personality, performance skills, the possibility of formulating an artistic concept, reflection on own practice and a rudimentary understanding of frameworks will be taken into consideration. For the assessment of research skills candidates will submit a short Portfolio that proposes a research question. A discussion with the candidate will examine his understanding of concepts related to embodied artistic research and the extent of his current active research trajectory.

A pre-master's programme will be obliged for students with a professional bachelor's degree as opposed to an academic bachelor's degree. The pre-master's programme takes account of any exemptions individually available. The content of the pre-master's programme provides students with additional academic skills focussed on research on and in the arts. The courses will encourage students to get a better understanding of current artistic research, exploring methodologies and frameworks with a reflective and investigative approach.

Through modules such as Art Philosophy, Performance Analysis, Research Methodologies and Arts and Humanities, students will gain an insight into new perspectives beyond their own world and vision, and develop skills in academic research, documentation and reflection. The modules of the pre-master's programme will be offered in conjunction with other courses within programmes of RCA such as the drama, music or the fine art master's programmes, or with other institutions such as University of Antwerp or KU Leuven. The committee discussed the rather flexible approach of the pre-master's programme. The programme consists of 45 EC and is scheduled over the course of one semester. Which courses will have to be taken by which students remained rather unclear. Although many students will not have to follow the complete pre-master's programme, for those who do, the programme explores possibilities to run pre-master's courses during the first semester of the master's programme. This would result in students already starting the Master of Arts in Dance who, at the same time follow courses of the pre-master's programme.

Environment

All master's programmes within RCA are nurtured by several research initiatives such as the Antwerp Research Institute for the Arts (ARIA) which was founded in 2014. ARIA operates as a recognized research group of the University of Antwerp as a reception institution and faculty for research in the arts, more specifically for doctorates in the arts. Another initiative is Creation and Uitvoeringspraktijk in Perspectief (CORPoREAL) and the Visual Poetics research group of the University of Antwerp. Research from and with the dance programme is fully included in the research policy of RCA. The committee observed that Dance research is included in the research regulations of the school, all staff members of the programme can promote and submit research proposals in the context of the annual call for project proposals. Cooperation with the University of Antwerp and the KU Leuven has been established. At the moment of the site visit, the programme is in close collaboration with the University of Antwerp, developing a course for the pre-master's programme. During the site visit, the committee established that partners from research initiatives are incorporated in decisions (to be) made about the content of the programme, allowing the programme to confront students with recent developments and insights.

In addition, the programme offers a wide range of facilities and the possibility of international and interdisciplinary exchange. Moreover, the art campus of deSingel, at which other art departments (music, theatre) of the AP University College are housed, guarantees the direct presence of international artists and offers possibilities of joint workshops and master classes. The programme will use dance studios and can make use of other (production) locations such as the Yellow Hall and the Black Hall (conservatoire). The Theatre and Dance Studio (deSingel) are used for rehearsals and public performances and can be used by the programme as well. The building contains two libraries that offer extensive literature about performative arts and specific catalogues, encyclopaedias, reference books, dictionaries, magazines and collected works. Using the public computers students also have access to online magazines, digital databases and the extensive in-house archives and the archives of the University of Antwerp. The programme will make use of the digital infrastructure provided by AP University College which contains various means of communication between the programme, its lecturers and the students.

Budget

Both the Royal Conservatoire of Antwerp and AP University College commit themselves to provide the required staff for organizing this new training programme. Based on an estimate of 10 enrolled students (for 30 ECTS) during the first academic year (2019-2020) and subsequently 20 students in each following year (in other words, 10 students per training path) additional investments will be required during the first 3 years. These means will come, in part, from the reserves the School of Arts has and, in part, from the means in the project fund training programmes that AP University College is permitted to apply for. A detailed budget is presented in the appendix of the application file.

From discussions during the site visit it became clear that the presented budget only addresses the costs of the programme in terms of staff. All other costs (such as facilities, services etc) are not addressed but should be seen as an investment of the AP University College for the start of the programme.

Considerations

The committee is very positive about the programme. In the first place, the programme's backbone 'Embodied Artistic Research' provides a relevant structure, scope and direction for the development of Dance artists. The learning outcomes of the programme are translated into concrete learning goals for each module and the timing and planning of the four modules over the course of two years is convenient with regard to the student population.

Second, the content of the courses reveals a rich and innovative programme. The description of the themes for the modules one and three are very convincing. The possible artists/pedagogues that will partake in the delivery of the courses will provide thrilling inputs to the students. The circular system of the courses enables students to gradually obtain a higher level of complexity and the focus on experiential learning fits the program well. The varied learning activities seem carefully designed and sensible to their content. The progression from artist to artistic field to society through the course of the programme is logical. The distinction in practice-led and practice-based research puzzled the committee somewhat. From the discussion with alumni and representatives of the field, the committee concluded that the distinction is also not immediately recognized by those not involved in the development of the programme. Therefore the committee encourages the programme to reconsider this distinction and its relevance, and explain it in a more elaborate way.

Third, the organisation of the program seems good and transparent and seems to aim for highly qualified contributors. The adjunction of a curatorial board seems a very good idea in order to stay in line with the concerns and questions arising in the professional field. In addition, the facilities of the institution are impressive, both the material resources (spaces, access to literature) and the network of the institution in the sector of dance.

The budget is just sufficient. Since individual guidance of students is a very important aspect and will sometimes also be delivered by external mentors, the committee encourages the programme to allocate sufficient financial resources to allow students to have a paid mentor from outside the institution. In addition, it should be made more clear what academic and professional experience mentors minimally should have.

The selection-process is clearly presented by the programme but the committee believes that although the programme is open to students with a different background than Dance, it should be more concrete on the admission criteria and anticipate on how students with a non-dance background will fit in the programme. The courses in the pre-master's programme are clearly described and build on top of a bachelor's level. The committee disapproves of having students follow pre-master's courses, and at the same time follow courses of the master's programme. The institution should therefore elaborate on the scheduling of the pre-master and master program.

Although the committee has no doubt that the programme will address deficiencies of incoming students in an adequate way in the pre-master's programme, it encourages the programme to present a clear overview of which deficiencies result in the obligation to complete certain pre-master's courses.

Conclusion

The panel assesses the generic quality guarantee 2 *Teaching-learning environment* as satisfactory.

3.3 Exit level to be achieved (generic quality guarantee 3)

The programme has an adequate assessment, testing and examination system in place to ascertain whether the intended learning outcomes are being achieved.

Outline of findings

The information in the application file did not provide the committee with sufficient evidence that the system of assessment sufficiently guards a transparent and objective assessment to all students. During the site visit, the committee received more information about the system of assessment. The programme explained that the learning goals of each course have been translated in assessment criteria, which are listed in an excel file. This file is used by all assessors in order for them to assess students according to the same criteria. In other programmes at RCA, the experiences with the system are quite positive. In addition, the committee learned that the programme indicated which learning goals are to be obtained by all students, and which depend on the choices students make during the programme.

The committee observed that the assessment methods recognise both process (formative) and product (summative) assessment methods. Assessment is considered a part of the students' learning process and of the development process in education and is therefore a very crucial part of the programme. Assessments will take place at the end of each module, or where reflection assignments are required at the beginning of the following module. The coordinator and course tutors provide feedback during the modules, and the guest lecturers and external jury provide summative assessments. Self-reflection and peer-to-peer reflection are a recurrent part of testing within the training programme. In doing so, students monitor their own learning process, their own competences, their own learning objectives and/or their own actions in practice. To enable students to provide feedback to one another and as a self-reflection tool, a terminology and observational system support a broad range of perspectives to be addressed. In the bachelor's programme, a common language and practice is established to sustain peer-feedback and peer evaluation. During the site visit, bachelor programme's alumni expressed their appreciation for the well-developed feedback culture and practices in the bachelor's programme.

During the programme, most course units will be assessed by various actors, in order to limit the subjective character of the assessments. The master project, being the final piece of the training, will be assessed by taking all training competences of the Master of Arts in Dance into account. The form of this final result will be determined by the students themselves and may take the shape of a performance, a realized practice, a workshop, an installation, a performative lecture, or a publication. To assess this project, external assessors will be invited in addition to the lecturers-in-charge and the visiting lecturers. Given the broad scope of the training, the presence of a sufficient number of external persons will be essential for the final assessment of the master project.

Considerations

Based on the information in the application file and the information provided during the site visit, the committee concludes that the programme uses assessment as a systematic process and reference for the achievement of the learning outcomes. The committee is confident that students receive ample feedback in order to facilitate the learning process. The system of assessment is sophisticated and could only have evolved from experience. Staff members of the programme are familiar with the system and the possibilities that feedback moments offer to direct and guide students. The criteria that will be used in the master 's programme are clearly distinguished from the criteria used in the bachelor's programme.

The various assessment forms relate very well to the course content, so that each competence is tested in an appropriate, reliable manner. The committee suggests that the faculty encourages written outputs for students intending to pursue a PhD. The committee is positive about the knowledge and experience present among core staff members as well as the instruments that the programme developed to instruct those from outside the programme who are involved in student assessment. The involvement of outsiders in the assessment is highly valued.

The committee believes that the explanation of the assessment system in the application file could have been better. It therefore encourages the programme to ensure that the system of assessment and the explanations thereof are written down in a manual to be used by external assessors.

Conclusion

The panel assesses the generic quality guarantee 3 *Exit level to be achieved* as satisfactory.

4 Programme-specific learning outcomes

The Discipline-specific Learning outcomes (DLR) have been defined by VHLORA (Vlaamse Hogescholenraad - Flemish University Colleges Council) on a Flemish governmental level and were presented for the macro-efficiency test alongside RCA's Master in Dance Programme Specific Learning outcomes (OLR).

The DLR enables any Master in Dance programme to have a focus on the embodied knowledge, that is developed with a sustained artistic practice, to explore the roles required for this to take place and uses research and critical thinking to challenge choices made.

The OLR develops from this generic training to a more specific trajectory that focusses on the embodied practice as the heart of the concept that is built into a sustainable artistic practice and translates and interacts within both artistic environments and society in order to develop one's practice.

The programme management drafted the programme-specific learning outcomes for this programme. These learning outcomes have been drawn up especially for this programme, since no discipline-specific learning outcomes for programmes like this one were available in Flanders.

As the committee has established, the programme-specific learning outcomes of the intended Master of Arts in Dance are in line with the Flanders qualifications structure (Vlaamse Kwalificatiestructuur; VKS). The discipline-specific learning outcomes conform to the level 7 descriptors of this qualifications structure (VKS) and, therefore, meet the requirements of master's programmes.

The committee accepts the programme-specific learning outcomes of this programme and regards these as being a sound representation of the programme's objectives. The panel advises NVAO to validate the programme's discipline-specific learning outcomes.

5 Assessment procedure

5.1 The procedure

NVAO received a request for an initial accreditation procedure regarding the proposed Master of Arts in Dance. The request was submitted by Artesis Plantijn University College on 4 July 2018.

NVAO has convened a panel of experts. The panel consisted of:

- dr. Falk Hübner (chair member), kernteam lectoraat Performatieve Maakprocessen – kerndocent onderzoek – HKU Utrechts Conservatorium – Nederland;
- dr. Hetty Blades, Research Fellow, Faculty of Arts & Humanities, Faculty Research Centre for Dance Research; (CDaRE) – Coventry University – UK;
- Ms. Agnès Quackels, MA, Artistic Director of the Arts Centre BUDA, Courtrai, Belgium;
- Ms. Jade Brouns, MA, Master in Pedagogical Sciences (option: Onderwijs- en Opleidingskunde), BA: 2013-2016, MA: 2016-2018, KU Leuven, Belgium.

On behalf of the NVAO, Dr. Dagmar Provijn and Roxanne Figueroa Arriagada Msc., NVAO policy advisors, were responsible for the process-coordination. Jetse Siebenga MSc., secretary, drafted the experts' report.

The panel's composition reflects the expertise deemed necessary by NVAO (please refer to Annex 3: Composition of the panel). All the panel members as well as the secretary have signed a statement of independence and confidentiality.

The panel based their assessment on the generic quality guarantees and criteria described in the NVAO Assessment framework for the initial accreditation of higher education programmes in Flanders 2015-2021, dated 28 May 2015.

The following procedure has been undertaken. The panel members studied the documents (please refer to Annex 5: Documents reviewed) with regard to the proposed programme. Their first impressions were sent to the secretary of NVAO, who listed these remarks and questions, to be clarified during the site visit.

Based on their preliminary findings, the panel held a preparatory meeting on 3 September. During this meeting, the panel discussed their findings and listed a number of questions to be put to the programme's representatives during the site visit. The site visit took place on 4 September at the AP University College campus (Schedule of the site visit). The discussions during the site visit were, in the panel's opinion, more informative than the application file, presented before the site visit. These discussions allowed the panel to obtain a somewhat more in-depth view of the programme's main characteristics and the programme's dominant features.

Immediately after the site visit, the panel shared their assessments for the generic quality guarantees of the NVAO Assessment framework. These assessments were based on the findings during the site visit, building upon the review of the programme documents.

Following the visit, the secretary drew up a draft report and sent this to the panel members. The panel members forwarded their comments and amendments. These comments have been included in the text by the secretary, and the report was finalised on 8 October 2018.

5.2 Panel report

The first chapter of this report is the executive summary of the report.

The second chapter gives a brief description of the programme including its position within AP University College and within the Flanders higher education system.

The panel presented its assessments in the third chapter. The programme has been assessed using the generic quality guarantees in the NVAO Assessment framework for the initial accreditation of higher education programmes in Flanders. For each of the generic quality guarantees the panel presented an outline of their findings, considerations and a conclusion.

The *outline of the findings* are the objective facts as found by the panel in the programme documents, in the additional documents and during the site visit. The panel's *considerations* are the panel's evaluations with regards to these findings. The *considerations* presented by the panel logically lead to a concluding assessment.

The panel concludes the report with a table containing an overview of their assessments per generic quality guarantee.

6 Overview of the assessments

The panel presents their assessments per generic quality guarantee, as outlined in chapter 3, in the following table.

Generic quality guarantee	Assessment
1 Intended exit level	Satisfactory
2 Teaching-learning environment	Satisfactory
3 Exit level to be achieved	Satisfactory
Programme as a whole	Satisfactory

Annex 1: General information institution and programme

Name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, website institution	Artesis Plantijn Hogeschool Antwerpen Lange Nieuwstraat 101 B - 2000 ANTWERPEN
Status institution	Ambtshalve geregistreerd
Name association	Associatie Universiteit en Hogescholen Antwerpen
Name, function, telephone, e-mail address of contact person	Pascale De Groote – Vice-kanselier +32 3 220 58 30 pascale.degroote@ap.be
Name programme (degree, qualifications of the degree, specification of the degree)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of Arts in Dans • Master of Arts in Dance
Level and orientation	Master
Title that holders of the degree earned from this programme can place with their name	Master in de dans / meester
(Part of a) Field of study, fields of study in which the programme is classified	Muziek en podiumkunsten (onderwijsbevoegdheid door samenwerking met Koninklijk Conservatorium)
The ISCED name of the field of study in which the programme is classified	02 Arts and humanities 021 Arts 0215 Music and Performing Arts
Corresponding programme(s) (Flanders if any, or neighbouring countries)	Geen
Languages used to teach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nederlands • Engels
Location in which the programme is offered	Antwerpen
Length of the programme expressed in credits	60
New programme in Flanders	Ja
The post-graduate study opportunities and the possible post-graduate courses (bachelor)/ The required previous qualifications and admission requirements (master)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionele Bachelor Dans (mits succesvol voltooiën schakelprogramma) • Academische Bacheloropleidingen in de podiumkunsten (mits succesvol voltooiën artistieke toelatingsproef en voorbereidingsprogramma) • Artistiek toegangsexamen

Annex 2: Discipline-specific and Programme-specific learning outcomes

Domain-specific learning outcomes

1. Defines and redefines embodied knowledge
2. Develops and articulates an artistic language
3. Can apply embodied knowledge in unpredictable, complex and specialized contexts
4. Organizes a sustainable artistic practice
5. Explores collaborative processes
6. Defines and engages in different roles required
7. Uses research and reflection to deepen his/her artistic knowledge
8. Situates, articulates and questions one's practice in relation to the current discourse of dance
9. Makes use of critical thinking in order to take up an active role in a broader context
10. Deepens and specifies his/her artistic vision in a process
11. Translates his/ her vision in an artistic outcome
12. Organizes a sharing of his/her output
13. Realizes crossovers between the different competences

Programme-specific learning outcomes

1. Develops and articulates his/her bodily craftsmanship through acquired tools and techniques
2. Organizes a sustainable artistic practice to expand the embodied practice
3. Reflects and investigates on questions and experiential knowledge in order to deepen their artistic practice
4. Shares the embodied craftsmanship within the artistic field
5. Builds, through dialogue and transmission, a sustainable practice in an artistic environment
6. Is able to research the artistic field to feed his/her practice and position him/herself accordingly
7. Engages his/her craftsmanship and embodied knowledge in other settings
8. Constructs, through translation to and interaction with society, a developing practice
9. Invests, through resonating within the socio-political and economic climate, in the reciprocal relationship between his/ her artistic practice and society

Annex 3: Composition of the panel

The composition of the panel that assessed the quality of the MA Dance of AP University College was as follows:

- dr. Falk Hübner (chair member), kernteam lectoraat Performatieve Maakprocessen – kerndocent onderzoek – HKU Utrechts Conservatorium – Nederland;
- dr. Hetty Blades, Research Fellow, Faculty of Arts & Humanities, Faculty Research Centre for Dance Research; (CDaRE) – Coventry University – UK;
- Ms. Agnès Quackels, MA, Artistic Director of the Arts Centre BUDA, Courtrai, Belgium;
- Ms. Jade Brouns, MA, Master in Pedagogical Sciences (option: Onderwijs- en Opleidingskunde), BA: 2013-2016, MA: 2016-2018, KU Leuven, Belgium.

Falk Hübner, PhD, is a composer, theatre maker, researcher and educator. He creates experimental stage works that fall between concert, installation and performance as conceptualist, composer and director. As a composer he is active in a huge diversity of collaboration within and outside of the arts.

His present research focuses on artistic research methodologies, artistic research as integrated practice, and the relation between musicians, the arts in general and current music education in relation to the society of the 21st Century. In 2018-2020 Falk will lead a major research project at HKU University of the Arts on research methodology, with the focus on developing and implementing a clear yet flexible design model, in a multi-layered and interdisciplinary educational context of a contemporary university of the arts.

Falk is core teacher for research at HKU University of the Arts and head of the research group music and performativity at the HKU Professorship Performative Processes. Next to his work at HKU he works as director for research and writing at the ArtEZ International Master Artist Educator, a master programme with a radical vision on art as conflict transformation.

Hetty Blades is a Research Fellow in the Centre for Dance Research (C-DaRE). She completed her PhD in the Centre in 2015, under the supervision of Sarah Whatley and Scott deLahunta. She holds an MA in Dance Studies from Roehampton University (2010) and a BA (Hons.) in Dance Theatre from Trinity Laban (2007). Hetty has worked as a Visiting Lecturer in Dance Studies at a range of institutions including, Roehampton University, Kingston University, University of East London and Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance. Hetty's PhD considered the ontological implications of digital scoring practices for dance.

Between 2015-17 Hetty worked as a Research Assistant in the Centre, contributing to projects including Europeana Space (EU), InVisible Difference: Dance, Disability and Law (AHRC) and Resilience and Inclusion: Dancers as Agents of Change (AHRC). She is Editorial Assistant for the Journal of Dance and Somatic Practices and was Researcher in Residence at the Digital Catapult in 2016. She has undertaken consultancy work for Digital Theatre and conducted evaluations of arts projects. She is currently Co-investigator on the AHRC/ESRC funded project Performing Empowerment: Disability, Dance and Inclusive Development in Post-War Sri Lanka.

Agnès Quackels is since July 2011 the artistic Director of the Art Centre BUDA in Kortrijk, Belgium – see www.budakortrijk.be – for which she develops a residency program for 60 to 70 companies per year, various type of festivals as www.nextfestival.eu, Budavista festivals or thematic festival (about Money, Cooperation, School, ...). From 2003 till June 2011 she was the co-founder and co-director of the alternative management office for the performing arts, Margarita Production (now Hiros) in Brussels, Belgium – see www.hiros.be/en/archive. Before that she was responsible for the production, selling and general administration for composer and video artist Thierry De Mey and the production, promotion, and dramaturgy for choreographer Michèle Anne De Mey.

Jade Brouns is trained student panel member NVAO – cohort 2017.

Annex 4: Schedule of the site visit

The site visit by the panel to the programme was conducted on 8 February as part of the external assessment procedure regarding the MA Dance of AP University College.

09:00-09:30	Welcome + closed meeting of the committee
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09:30-10:00	Meeting with the Board of the Institution
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- Stefaan De Ruyck, Dean RCA
- Nadia Franck, Head Administration & Organisation RCA
- Liese Stuer, Head of Performing Arts
- Sonja Spee, Quality Advisor Arts Programme AP
- Kevin Voets

10:00-12:00	Meeting with programme coordination/development team and intended teaching staff
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- Liese Stuer, Head of Performing Arts
- Nienke Reehorst, Artistic coordination, Inclusive dance and Solo BA dance
- Natalie Gordon, Artistic coordination and Choreography BA dance
- Sonja Spee, Quality Advisor Arts Programme AP
- Pieter Depessemier, Head Education & Innovation, AP
- Tuur Marinus, Portfolio, Choreography and mentoring BA Dance
- Katleen van Langendonck, Portfolio BA Dance
- Caroline D'Haese, Improvisation and Composition, BA Dance
- Timmy de Laet, University of Antwerp, Research Centre for Visual Poetics

12:00-13:00	Lunch + closed meeting of the committee
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13:00-13:30	Meeting with students and recent BA-graduates
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- Jasmine Norton, student BA 2
- John-William Watson, student BA 2
- Pierre Bastin, student BA 1
- Margot Masquiller, student BA 1

13:15-14:00	Meeting with alumni and representatives of the professional field
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- Dan Musset, alumnus
- Kerlien Meganck, theatre and dance program deSingel, artistic advisor and Jurymember Solo Ba Dance
- Steven Savelkoels, alumnus
- Timmy de Laet, University of Antwerp, Research Centre for Visual Poetics
 - Laurent Delom de Mezérac, alumnus
 - Mohamed Boujarra, alumnus
 - Magali Casters, alumnus

14:00-16:00	Closed meeting of the committee
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Annex 5: Documents reviewed

The programme management presented the following documents in an annex to the application file:

1. Embodied artistic knowledge – a statement from the point of research
2. Research context at RCA & dance
3. Comparative research of existing master programmes in dance
4. Domain specific learning outcomes and the interrelationship with the programme specific learning outcomes & the learning objectives
5. Pre-master's programme
6. Time line
7. Description of the modules and courses
8. Organisational structure
9. Biographies of potential contributors
10. Investment plan
11. The interrelationship between assessment methods, modules and competences
12. Decision of the commission for higher education (Flemish community)

Annex 6: List of abbreviations

AP	Artesis Plantijn
ARIA	Antwerp Research Institute for the Arts
CORPoREAL	Creation and uitvoeringspraktijk in Perspectief
EC	credits according to the European Credit Transfer System
BA	Bachelor of Arts
MA	Master of Arts
RCA	Royal Conservatoire Antwerp
NVAO	Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organization (Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie)

