

Self-Evaluation Report – Master Programme in Performing Arts

Subject area: Performing Arts

Date of adoption for the self-assessment report:

Head of Subject/Vice-Rector for Research: Gunilla Pettersson Thafvelin

Student/doctoral students' participation has taken place in the following ways: A student representative (2023-25 cohort) took part in a start-up meeting (September 2025) and a meeting to go through the template and evaluate the programme through each point. Another meeting was arranged to give the student representative the opportunity to read and comment on a final draft of the report. Their comments were integrated in the final report.

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Purpose and instructions

Educational evaluations are part of the quality system of Stockholm University of the Arts (SKH). The purpose of the evaluations is to generate regular and systematic knowledge needed to ensure and develop the quality of the university's educations. An educational evaluation consists of four steps: start-up, self-evaluation, external review and measures. All educations at first cycle, second cycle and third cycle leading to a degree must be evaluated. Educations will be evaluated on a six-year cycle, meaning that each education will be evaluated every six years. All educations will be assessed against criteria based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). Each education evaluated will be assessed against all criteria.

The student representative should be offered a place in the work on the self-evaluation report, for example by being part of the working group or by being given the opportunity to read the draft self-evaluation report and provide comments.

The Head of Subject shall approve the self-evaluation report and the overview of qualitative targets after presentation by the responsible Administrative Officer.

The Template for self-evaluation report is part of the Guidelines for educational evaluations and is mandatory to use.

- The report shall be descriptive and, where appropriate, analytical and valiative, and, where relevant, illustrated with examples. Strengths and areas for development should also be identified. See endnote.
- The report should be based on current conditions and planned developments.
- Together, the different parts of the report should provide a comprehensive picture of the education, without links to additional information.
- The criteria are numbered. It is therefore possible to refer between different criteria.
- The report should not exceed 20-30 pages, including 'template text'. The number of pages per criterion may vary depending on the education to which the self-evaluation relates.
- "Template text" and criteria may not be removed, except those that apply specifically to third cycle studies when the self-evaluation is for first cycle or second cycle courses. New subheadings may be added.
- Mandatory appendices to the self-evaluation report are the general study plan (third cycle), the programme syllabus (first cycle and second cycle) and the overview of qualitative targets.

Executive summary

- Summary of the self-assessment in terms of the strengths and development areas identified.

Areas of strength

- The programme's blended learning format and dual focus (artistic practice and artistic research) enables students from a wide range of backgrounds to undertake MA studies and build a strong portfolio of work and assignments.
- The programme facilitates and supports different future trajectories and career paths: professional performance practice and artistic research.
- There is a good mix of staff expertise and content, with guest lecturers and artists bringing their professional experience to the programme.
- The programme and study environment have a high level of interdisciplinarity and can facilitate different artistic investigations.
- There are good international options, e.g. internships, exchanges and work placement.
- The programme has a good progression, with varied content and attention to supporting students' individual development.

Areas of development

- Better long-term planning needs to be implemented, e.g. on-site workshops.
- Synergies and collaboration between subjects, programmes and BA and MA in Performing Arts need strengthening.
- Develop more options for on-site activities (e.g. examination) to support students' practice more.
- Develop innovative presentation and examination modalities as alternatives to writing as students need to have more choice in this regard.
- Develop Electives courses which are appropriate to the MA students and their profile.
- Introduce more formative assessments to balance out the current weighting towards summative assessment.
- Continue to consider carefully the role of writing and develop more creative modalities, incl. more inclusion of artist writings.

Introduction

About the programme

Describe the ambition/idea/purpose of the programme.

The aim of the international MA programme in Performing Arts is to offer an education where students can develop, deepen and expand their artistic methods, strategies, approach and knowledge. The programme has a dual purpose: on the one hand it facilitates the student's artistic, creative and reflective development enabling them to forge new directions for their performance practice. On the other, it prepares the students to look to future contexts for their practice, in particular artistic research and third cycle studies. This two-fold purpose converges and dovetails in the *Degree Project in Performing Arts* where they carry out an individual investigation which culminates in a written reflection supported by documentation and appropriate materials. This in turn enables them to use the programme's progression and different courses as methodological and practical lenses through which they can illuminate and further their investigation and develop particular aspects within their practice.

The subject of Performing Arts is understood as a wide and interdisciplinary field and if the subject's BA programme focuses on specialisation and collaboration, the MA in Performing Arts offers the opportunity to undertake a focused investigation within a highly interdisciplinary study environment. The programme has so far accepted students from a range of artistic fields and educational backgrounds: theatre, performance art, visual arts, circus, film, dance, opera, mime and physical theatre. This level of diversity of practices is welcomed but is not a curatorial principle on the part of the programme. Rather applicants are accepted on the strength of their individual proposal for an artistic investigation together with an interview.

Central to the programme's teaching, delivery and examination modalities is the idea that students can integrate and incorporate their ongoing (professional) artistic work commitments and practice in their studies. Pedagogically speaking it means that they can integrate their professional projects in their studies. Practically it means that they do not have to move away from their professional and geographical context as their MA studies can be done primarily remotely; 75% of the programme is taught and delivered online with additional three teacher-led workshops on campus in Stockholm every term (25%). This said, all students have equal access to resources and facilities at the Stockholm campus.

Organisation of the education and key figures

Documentation is prepared by the responsible Administrative Officer.

Language of instruction: English

Main field of study: Performing Arts and Media

Specialisations:

Admission: 10-12 students

Eligibility: General eligibility requirement: for Second-cycle (graduate) studies.

Specific entry requirement:

- degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts, or equivalent
- English 5
- A grade of “Pass” in the qualification test showing artistic ability in the performing arts

Selection: If there are more eligible applicants than places in the programme, a selection is made based on Uniarts’ selection criteria for education at the second cycle level. In the first stage, the material submitted in the application is assessed. Thereafter, there may be selection tests. The assessment is made by an admissions group.

	Course and credits	Course and credits	Course and credits
Semester 1	Methods in Artistic Research 1, 7.5 credits	Bodily and Vocal Practices in Performing Arts, 15 credits	Writing Practices in the Arts, 7.5 credits
Semester 2	Methods in Artistic Research II, 7.5 credits	Concept and Composition in Performing Arts, 15 credits	Degree Project in Performing Arts, Part I, 7.5 credits
Semester 3	Elective course*, 7.5 credits	Technology and Materiality in Performing Arts, 15 credits	Degree Project in Performing Arts, Part II, 7.5 credits
Semester 4	Site, Event, Encounter in Performing Arts, 15 credits	Degree Project in Performing Arts, Part III, 15 credits	

To obtain a degree, a grade of “Pass” is required in all courses, and all courses except those marked with * must be within the student’s main field of study.

Key figures *

	2021	2023	2025
First cycle and second cycle			
Number of applicants and students admitted (including proportion of women and men, legal gender)	27 (12 22 (10) women 10 (2) men	51 (12) 37 (8) women 14 (4) men	89 (12) 47 (8) women 42 (4) men
Number of full-year students (full-time equivalents)	5,37 HST	7,17 HST	
Number of full-time equivalents (FTEs)	6,25 HPR	5,63 HPR	
Number of degrees	7	5	N/A

* Data are taken from existing systems and the annual reports.

Commentary

The MA in Performing Arts in its current form has existed since 2021 and is now running its third cohort (2025-27 intake). Unlike some other subjects within SKH, Performing Arts (Scenkonst) first began their MA provision in 2019, this programme only ran once (2019-21) and the current programme was validated in 2020 with the first intake 2021-23. Since then applications and expressions of interest have been steadily growing with applicants from a wide range of arts-related backgrounds and nationalities. In terms of (legal) gender the ratio between men and women applicants has balanced out considerably. 12 students were accepted to the programme for the 2025-27 cohort with all 12 having enrolled.

The *number of degrees* reflects the number of students who have 'taken out their exam' and the data somewhat skews the fact that more students have completed their Master degree during the past four years. Some students have yet to complete individual courses or examination points, and some will submit their Degree project later. In those cases we are able to re-enroll the student with a view to completing their examination. Students have the right to submit at any time and have the work assessed (a rolling deadline), but as their school email expires at the end of the final term, students will need to contact us if they want their work examined.

Self-assessment

1. **the education fulfils the requirements of the Higher Education Act and of the degree descriptions in the ordinances related to the Act, i.e. the intended learning outcomes correspond to the qualitative targets and they are examined in a legally secure manner**

Describe, analyse and value, preferably with examples. Relate to the completed overview of qualitative targets.

Commentary

The two-year programme consists mainly of three parts: four *thematic courses* which introduce students to practical artistic strategies as well as theoretical and historical examples and perspectives on – and from within - performing arts practice. Two *method artistic research courses* (henceforth *MAR*) cover a range of methodological artistic research approaches and documentation strategies to help prepare students for artistic research. Thirdly, there's the student-driven *Degree Project in Performing Arts* (henceforth *DPPA*) where an individual investigation is sustained over three terms. In addition, students will take an SKH-wide *Elective course* with a view to broadening their knowledge base and competencies as well as *Writing Practices in the Arts* course in their first term.

The progression of the programme can be described as a gradual progression from the micro level to wider and outward facing macrostructures. Concisely summarised: in the first course (*Bodily and Vocal Practices*) students establish their situated knowledge and practice for them to move through dramaturgical and conceptual awareness (*Concept and Composition*), shifting the focus to technical and audiovisual aspects of the performing arts (*Technology and Materiality*) to finally open up to wider contexts, publics and cross-art practices in *Site, Event, Encounter*. Alongside these core courses students develop their *DPPA* which is completed in the final term.

The programme can be said to consist of the following strands which are underpinned by different objectives, however practically they are taught in an integrated manner:

- 1) Teaching and examinations which cultivate and build awareness of *methods, conceptual and compositional approaches*, e.g. developing methods for artistic creation and devising; facilitation of creative processes and rehearsals, and conceiving and planning an artistic research project.
- 2) Courses and teaching which give the student a broader understanding and knowledge of the interdisciplinary and contemporary performing arts field. This includes teacher-led workshops where practical artistic strategies are taught to enable the development of performance work.
- 3) Skills development: artistic and technical skills as well as research-related skills such as reflective and creative writing, presentation skills, collating,

gathering and processing relevant materials and introduction to different project and research documentation, dissemination and publication modalities.

Every course has a set of 'Study Guidelines' with information about aim, content, examination and assignment, teaching staff and guests, deadlines, learning outcomes, reading list, course leader contact info and weekly schedule with details about teaching focus for each session. The Study Guidelines are emailed to students and published on the learning platform Canvas two weeks prior to the course launch, at the very latest.

Knowledge and understanding

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the performing arts and media (the main field of study), including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in areas of the field, as well as specialised insight into current research and development work, and
- demonstrate familiarity with methods and processes for dealing with complex phenomena, issues and situations in the field.

Comments

The programme's thematic courses *Bodily and Vocal Practices in Performing Arts*; *Concept and Composition in Performing Arts*; *Technology and Materiality in Performing Arts* and *Site, Event, Encounter* have their genesis in the school's four research profile areas and have been appropriated to fit the MA delivery, requirements and aims. The themes and headings act as 'holding forms' or 'containers' for introducing students to a diverse set of practices, approaches and content within their field of study, Performing Arts. As well as giving students a broad overview, lectures, seminars and workshops serve to demonstrate - through example - how to underpin with relevant examples while also maintaining the particularity and integrity of exploration *through* practical experimentation and discovery. All four thematic courses provide a broader historical contextualisation using critical theory together with artists' writing and examples of artistic work.

The focus on body and voice in the first term begins with the performer's perspective and opens up questions relating to embodiment, situated knowledge and phenomenological approaches. Throughout their studies the students will address various forms of knowledge creation which involve people and bodies, either their own, those of others, audiences and publics, hence questions relating to representation, ethics as well as the politics of collaboration and critical feedback are also addressed in this first course.

Building on this, *Concept and Composition* in the second term addresses dramaturgical, conceptual and compositional perspectives, introducing students to histories and practices and also teaching a dramaturgical and reflective language with which to discuss their own work and process and those of others. For example

when attending on-site workshops students may visit exhibitions, live performances and events as part of the teaching, and here *Concept and Composition* introduces a dramaturgical and reflective approach.

The third term's *Technology and Materiality* shifts the focus to the audiovisual field bringing together specific skills, perspectives, artistic strategies and methods relating to scenography, sound, lighting, costume, new materialism, material thinking and visual performance practices. Here the teaching of specific skills such as QLab, lighting, sound design and editing skills could be included.

Finally the fourth term's *Site, Event, Encounter* broadens the perspective by shifting attention to wider contexts, publics, audiences and society at large as well as specific communities. Students will meet an audience or public as they create public events or present performance works, workshops or performance lectures. The student chooses whether this is directly connected with their *DPPA*, or if they want to make a new piece or event. In this final event the examination also requires them to make choices about how best to frame their work and engage publics in a conversation about the work.

As will become clear throughout this evaluation many of the learning outcomes converge in *DPPA, parts 1-3* which in turn exemplifies the high degree of specialised knowledge students obtain as they undertake their investigation. Here they articulate a specific focus and area of investigation, invent practical strategies, choose and try out methods and create documentation modalities which are specific and appropriate to their project. Special attention is also paid to ethics, participation agreements and consent forms as students' investigations may involve participants ('informants' if they are research participants), workshop participants, collaborators, interviewees. Their work itself may also be audience participatory, interactive or immersive and here too ethics needs to be considered. Unlike other fields of research, artistic research is exempt from ethics clearance in Sweden (although this may be changing in the future), but an awareness is needed that appropriate and sound ethics protocols should be implemented. Special attention is given to this throughout *DPPA*.

Competence and skills

- demonstrate the ability to independently and creatively formulate new questions and contribute to the formation of knowledge, to solve more advanced problems and develop new forms of personal expression, as well as to reflect critically on their artistic approach and that of others in the main field of study,
- demonstrate the ability to create and execute their own ideas with their own personal expression, to independently identify, formulate and solve artistic and creative problems, and to plan and undertake advanced artistic tasks using appropriate methods within predetermined time frames,

- demonstrate the ability to present and discuss their works and artistic issues in speech, writing or in other ways, both nationally and internationally and in dialogue with different audiences, and
- demonstrate the competence and knowledge required to work independently in a professional capacity.

Comments

All examination tasks are specifically designed to allow students to reflect on their practice giving them the opportunity to view their work *through the prism and lens* of a given course's content and methodology. For example, one task in *Concept and Composition* has been to illuminate an aspect of their practice through a specific concept with a view to exploring how said concept may inspire, illuminate, shape, expand and challenge their approach. For example, the students are first asked to extrapolate ideas from a given concept which should then be used as a lens through which they view or develop their work. Or they reverse the process and extrapolate a concept from their work and embody it in a presentation or creative writing. The assignments are generally designed to enable students to make decisions about approach, focus, organisation and implementation and thus demand an often complex level of problem-solving on their part.

Students integrate and draw on their professional and ongoing practice which supports their continued independent work in a professional capacity. Whilst all courses demand different kinds of problem-solving, *DPPA* constitutes a more substantial investigation: with the support of an individual supervisor students learn how to articulate, plan, budget for, implement, present and document an artistic research project. In the first stage of *DPPA* students submit a project plan and feasibility study with projected time line, mile stones, deadlines and a plan for supervision support. The exercise supports their ability to develop a research and process design as they identify the kinds of skills or knowledge which are needed to undertake and document and disseminate the project appropriately. A requirement is to upload the written reflection with documentation in DIVA (the portal for student work). Dissemination, publication and publishing strategies are also included in the *MAR* delivery.

Peer-to-peer response and feedback now figure more prominently throughout. It is first introduced on *MAR 1* where the 'study group' is also first introduced and in the final term of the *DPPA* students become each other's readers in an examined peer-feedback session. When presenting live workshops or presentations, as has been the case on *Site, Event, Encounter* and *Concept and Composition* and recently on *Bodily and Vocal Practices*, students do longer staff-led feedback sessions. Here the peer group also becomes a first audience and can continue to feedback and comment on each other's progress.

Students meet local and international artists and guest speakers on the courses, and the on-site workshop weeks in Stockholm also offer students an opportunity to visit

local events, e.g. performances, talks, exhibitions, research seminars as well as the SKH's own Research Week during January.

Judgment and approach

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the programme's main field of study which are informed by relevant artistic, social and ethical aspects,
- demonstrate insight into the role of art in society, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify her/his need for further knowledge and to take responsibility for their knowledge development

The majority of the assignments include attention to wider societal and ethical structures, for example students are asked to situate their exploration or argument within a context by referring to relevant practices and macrostructures surrounding the particular investigation. *The Bodily and Vocal Practices* course introduces politics in relation to the body and voice, and when appropriate, the *Site, Event, Encounter* course and the freestanding course *Political Strategies in the Arts* have had co-delivered sessions to give the opportunity to meet artists working with political performance and content. In the autumn 2024 students attended a three-day event in Stockholm with the Italian company Motus which opened up conversations about representation, the politics of aesthetics and politically engaged performance-making.

The *Elective* in the third term is an example of students identifying their need for further knowledge or skills development as they are invited to choose from a list of SKH-wide courses, or if they prefer they can apply for freestanding courses within SKH or other HE institutions which can best further their development and trajectory. The *Elective* also brings the student into contact with students and other subjects across the school (opera, dance, circus, film&media, acting).

Another example of students making active choices about skills and knowledge development is the exchange, residency and internship option: *The Elective* opens for the option to do short internships or residencies which the students organise and negotiate themselves. This has directly resulted in one student doing two short internships abroad and another doing a residency at a theatre in Sweden where they could develop performance material for their *DPPA*.

Analysis

As has been described, students work towards the learning outcomes and are examined in accordance with these. The structure and content of the programme, as well as the individual courses and examination, cohere and work towards ensuring that students are supported in this. This being said, there is room for development in a number of areas and we need to consider more carefully how we work with certain questions and challenges.

The dual ambition of the programme, to facilitate students' artistic development and prepare them for artistic research, is threaded through the teaching and examination modalities in different forms. It ensures a dynamic integration of

theory and practice and knowledge exchange between the professional practice field and research contexts. Yet the dual focus is also one of the programme's challenges as it negotiates critical distinctions between artistic development and research and how best to support and teach these in an integrated manner.

There is a fair bit of writing throughout the programme, and the approach to writing straddles four different areas and pedagogical objectives and modalities: 1) assessment of the student's grasp of context and knowledge and 2) supporting their understanding of writing as a working tool in their artistic process and work 3) supporting students' creative writing and 4) supporting their critical and reflective writing skills.

And one of the programme's future tasks is to consider more carefully how much writing should be included and to clarify the reason for the amount of writing. More could be done to include artists' writing and embodied writing practices, from the professional and artistic research field, and is already underway in this regard, for example *Writing Practices in the Arts* was introduced to support students' writing proficiency and introduce a wider range of writing modalities. *DPPA* (and other courses) has profited immensely from the introduction of the course as students seem less worried about writing but also more keen to experiment with different styles of writing. And so far the responses have been immense as they comment that the course had made them excited about (creative) writing and have also found new ways to integrate text in performance. There is also a greater understanding for how best to integrate it as a reflective tool: students have commented that writing helps them digest, clarify and synthesise their thoughts. As one commented, writing can be helpful when processing, organising, connecting and 'figuring out' complex ideas.

And students who are already used to writing have been able to develop their skills even further which is useful for third cycle studies, writing applications (e.g. project funding), or publishing.

Linked to this is what one could call an inbuilt contradiction and paradox: the students do a lot of writing and reading yet the entry requirement is English 5. Most literature in the field requires English 6 and in order to not disadvantage students ways around this have had to be found. It is proposed to change the entry requirement to English 6 which would also bring the programme in line with other MAs within the school.

The programme's central examination modality is online and in person work-sharing through student presentations. Work has been done to 'diversify' examination formats, e.g. in some courses students can opt for online presentation or do the assignment live on campus. This enables a greater use of the blended format, gives them more options and does not favour one set of presentation skills. More is now also being done to introduce other forms of creative presentation formats, e.g. video essay, performance lecture and multi-media presentation programmes.

Special attention is given to ethics throughout and taught more specifically on the *MAR* courses and *DPPA*, and as pointed out earlier discussions about ethics are naturally part of sharing practice in the workshops. But more can be done here to ensure that students understand ethics in relation to workshop-practice, sharing work with peers and participatory performances.

Value/evaluation

The programme and the education as a whole fulfils the requirements of the Higher Education Act and the degree descriptions in the ordinances related to the Act. The individual learning outcomes are examined and assessed in a robust manner throughout the education. Through continuous monitoring and attention to students' feedback active initiatives have been taken to address areas where students need more support, e.g. the introduction of a course in writing.

The education provides students with a well-balanced content and is mindful of its responsibility to prepare students for further research (incl. third cycle education) whilst giving them the opportunity to develop their artistic practice. Areas of development have been identified, these include diversification of examination modalities and continued monitoring of the balance between writing and other formats. It is also recommended to change the entry requirement to English 6 and to strengthen the delivery of ethics with more focus on creative processes and audiences.

2. that the teaching supports students' learning

Describe, analyse and value, preferably with examples.

Comments

The student's artistic development and individual artistic investigation is at the centre of the education, and the teaching is organised in such a manner that students' practice and individual investigation is supported through the courses and the examinations. The range of students' individual investigations and projects is, however, wide; examples of students' investigations are: how to create a play using strategies from dance and movement, how to re-situate a visual arts practice to the theatre space, how to develop a directing and staging concept around ecology, how to adapt a novel to the stage using neurodiversity strategies, or how to self-direct a performance based on autobiographical material. These are different kinds of projects and the input and teaching therefore endeavour to facilitate specific content whilst also introducing more general principles and strategies which could be useful to all – or more - types of artistic investigation. There is therefore often an emphasis on introducing students to strategies, tools, processes and conceptual frameworks with a view to making the teaching relevant for all. This also applies to

the choice of guests and guests teachers who are all practising artists, producers, dramaturgs who are able to reflect on and present (in a coherent manner) their own process and work.

Analysis

The programme's interdisciplinarity is often evident in the teaching itself in two ways: first, students are often taught by teachers with an interdisciplinary background and second, given the diversity of the student group they will have to 'translate' teaching input which may not directly concern their own specialism to their own project. Students are exposed to a wide range of practices and teaching styles, and it may first become clear towards the end of their education how these apply to their own work. The positive effect of the diversity of inputs and teaching styles seems clear enough but there is also a challenge in how to bridge said diversity through the curriculum. As has been mentioned elsewhere in this report, students can also at times feel a bit isolated because of the diversity and differences of the art and process languages which are in circulation. As mentioned elsewhere in this report the *DPPA* is here critical because the individual student is directly supported through the allocation of a supervisor who follows their project through to the end of their degree.

The introduction of formalised verbal feedback (following most examinations) has been a big step towards supporting students more in their learning, an initiative which has been welcomed. It is critical to build in more feedback on their work (written and practical) as we have discovered how important it is to students' individual learning and progression.

Valuate/Evaluate

The teaching supports the students' learning, theoretically as well as practically. It is however recommended that we look more at how we can support the students individually, given the diversity of their investigations. Feedback has proven critical for students' development and we need to continue develop models and practices which will support this.

3. the content and form of the teaching are based on artistic and/or scientific grounds and proven experience

Describe, analyse and value, preferably with examples.

Comments

The MA programme in Performing Arts is based on artistic principles as well as research-preparatory principles supported by the contextualisation and theory needed to navigate as an artist in the field. The blended learning format means that the programme combines independent studying (reading, viewing, preparation of task,

individual supervision, study groups, group discussions and supervision) and collective exploration (practical workshops and work sharing sessions).

The dual purpose ensures that whilst practice is the starting point and all assignments relate to, implicate and draw on students' ongoing artistic practice, it is done so with artistic research in mind. There is currently a mix of theoretical lectures followed by seminars with practical problem-solving tasks. Individual assignments also vary, from more traditional forms of reading, writing and viewing to creative tasks shared in the seminars. The aim, even when exploring theoretical, compositional or conceptual ideas, is always to explore *through* practice, or *alongside* practice.

The student's artistic development and individual artistic investigation is at the centre of the education. Examples of students' investigations: how to create a play using strategies from dance and movement, how to re-situate a visual arts practice to the theatre space, how to develop a directing and staging concept around ecology, how to adapt a novel to the stage using neurodiversity strategies, or how to self-direct a performance based on autobiographical material. Central to the education is students' own artistic wherefore theory and contextualisation are not taught in isolation from arts practice. This also applies to the choice of guests and guest teachers who are all practising artists, producers, dramaturgs or in one way or another anchored in artistic work and process.

Analysis

The content and form of the teaching is based on artistic grounds but as students' projects vary enormously it has increasingly become necessary to distinguish more clearly between artistic development and artistic research, and to understand how best to adapt the pedagogy to the needs of the students.

The dual focus of the course leads to the question whether or not clearer distinctions could be made between, on the one hand, artistic development where research supports the making of work and on the other, artistic research where one researches through performance. The MA straddles these two approaches as students apply to the programme with different motivations and objectives in mind. More work can be done to discuss how the subject's lecturers understand these distinctions and how theory and practice are integrated in our own work and teaching. The subject's pedagogical seminars which are held thrice every term is one way to address these questions and create a stronger sense, coherency and overview of the teacher group's pedagogical approaches.

When it comes to artistic research in Sweden, the discourse on artistic research has been influenced by fields such as fine art, dance and choreography. This can lead to a degree of abstraction that is difficult to reconcile with the some of the artistic processes that students engage with. We therefore see that performing arts as a field needs to develop its own research discourse in a way that clearly links to concrete processes in the field. This would benefit the opportunity to further develop the research connection in education programmes. With this said, given

the fact that the MA in Performing Arts is interdisciplinary some students respond well to more abstractly anchored artistic research.

Valuate/Evaluation

The programme and education adequately fulfil its responsibility and balances theory and practice as it facilitates students' individual investigations. The aim, even when exploring theoretical, compositional or conceptual ideas, is to explore *through* practice, or *alongside* practice, yet areas of development have been identified, such as creating a more cohesive approach, also amongst staff, to discussing distinctions between artistic research and artistic development. This is particularly critical on the MA as it facilitates both trajectories and approaches and students will understandably be looking for guidance and case studies to understand the distinction.

4. that the education is useful for the students/doctoral students and their future careers

Describe, analyse and value, preferably with examples.

Comments

The programme does not prepare students for a specialised job description or defined career trajectory, instead it creates a framework for developing and expanding on their existing practice with a view to moving in a new direction, consolidate an artistic research practice, or re-think how their skills and competencies could be deployed in - and transferred to - other fields or contexts.

It is an international Master with the participation of students from different practices, cultures, backgrounds and countries, and students are already working within an international context where they negotiate complex realities of sustaining an arts practice. The blended learning format makes the MA accessible to a wide range of applicants (including non-European) as students – whenever appropriate – can 'tie in' their course work with artistic projects taking place outside the programme's framework. For some students this dovetailing of their professional commitments and studies is what makes it possible for them to do the Master programme in the first place because they 1) do not have to pause or suspend their professional activities and 2) can anchor their investigation in concrete 'real-life' and practical processes. Their close relationship with the professional field may in turn give their research greater reach as they are in contact with a range of communities, audiences and non-university contexts. There are also examples of students using assignments to develop ideas which they later use in arts funding applications, or the MA has supported their preparation for doctoral research applications.

When it comes to international exchanges, students are informed of the opportunity at the start of their education and there are also examples of students undertaking the Erasmus+ Student Mobility for Traineeships in Belgium and Finland. This option is available to students once they have graduated from the programme and can last up till nine months.

Analysis

The dual purpose of supporting students in their artistic practice and preparing them for an artistic research contexts can lead to a degree of tension. These two things need not be mutually exclusive but they call upon different teaching styles and emphasis as students will have different needs. Even the language one uses to describe tasks, examinations, the role of theory or methods will differ slightly depending on which of the two directions the students want to pursue. The tension has been evident when they primarily want to create performance works and feel that the programme is too 'theoretical'. Students have commented that the emphasis on writing can make the practical work seem less important. Also, the downside to the highly interdisciplinary group is that students can feel somewhat isolated as they miss having peers who speak the 'same artistic language', a point which corroborates the need for more cross-subject and MA collaboration within the school as a whole.

The nature of the programme where 75% takes place online has great advantages as some students would not have been able to do an MA had it not been for this format. But the blended learning format also tends to benefit the student who already has a body of work and a project which they can more easily integrate in their studies. They will typically be interested in the MA opening up new perspectives and strategies which they can use in - and apply to - their professional practice. It is more difficult for students who want to kickstart their practice or need collaborators to implement their project or simply work best within a group or collective. Work is now underway to facilitate more on-site activities for those who for example prefer to do their examinations live in a studio, a model which has already been introduced in *Concept and Composition* and *Site, Event, Encounter* to great effect. The challenge with this diversification of examination is to ensure that the examination task is formulated in such a way that neither the online nor live presentation is disadvantaged.

Linked to this is the question about overly instrumentalised forms of teaching and examination: The courses and examinations are planned with the specific course theme and learning outcomes in mind but one has to be mindful that content and examinations are not instrumentalised to demonstrate the learning outcomes. This is not an uncommon challenge within HE and the intention is to keep developing modalities which support the students' development. This does, however, call upon teachers and staff to (also) develop a language with which to discuss how learning outcomes may be identified in artistic work. In other words, the challenge is to articulate the many ways in which artistic work embody and propose critical thought and exploration. This is as relevant at doctoral level and professional

artistic practice as it is at MA level. Moreover, more can be done to incorporate formative examination to balance out the bias towards summative as this would allow for a better sense of progression and development. This would also respond to students' request that they are able to 'build' on the summative feedback they receive.

As for international exchange, in practice, planning an international exchange is a big undertaking for a student. SKH has many agreements, but we need to first ascertain which places might be relevant. Here, SKH and the Performing Arts subject could work to develop fewer but more established collaborations in order to prepare exchange opportunities for students. This work is now underway through the newly established 'network mapping' exercise and we now inform more systematically about options for exchanges, e.g. the international officer is in direct contact with the MA students much earlier in their education.

Another challenge is to develop elective courses across SKH that meet the interests, needs and future career trajectories of many different students across subjects within SKH. There is an ongoing dialogue about the purpose and structure of the courses, with a dedicated SKH-wide working group.

One challenge we encounter in planning the education is that working life is constantly changing. This means that higher education institutions must keep pace with these developments and ensure that provision and course content are kept updated and relevant. This also applies to skills development and a greater understanding of artistic research within the school and society at large. In addition, SKH's technical team is also working on updating technical resources. There has been a recent re-structuring and re-organisation of the technical support department and technicians are now more involved at the early planning stage. One upshot is that students' request for specific skills training (video editing, Qlab (sound and lighting) can now be met and integrated in the teaching more easily.

This being said, questions relating to career development and how to have a sustainable arts practice are recurring. Work is underway to strengthen this for the next delivery and iteration.

Valuate/Evaluation

The education is useful for students and one should be mindful that students take away often very different things from their education. There is no 'standard student' and with working life constantly changing, the programme and staff need to keep pace with this. This includes constant monitoring of the appropriateness of content, technical provision and international options. It is recommended that more input in regard to sustainable careers and practice should be incorporated to respond more to students' needs and requests for closer mentoring and career support. It also include overseeing the *Elective* courses portfolio and to ensure that teaching and examination are organically connected with their development and not instrumentalised too much.

5. that those working in the education have up-to-date subject and higher education pedagogical/subject didactic skills

Describe, analyse and value, preferably with examples.

Comments

The programme is staffed by lectures and professors from the Performing Arts subject, with contribution from visiting artists and the school's doctoral candidates. For some students the connection with the third cycle education is particularly important as they want to apply for a doctoral artistic research post, at the school or elsewhere. It also allows for more direct exchange between postgraduate students and doctoral candidates.

In addition to this, three of the school's Profile professors have taught on the programme. *MAR* is staffed almost exclusively with professors and staff from across SKH making sure that students get expert input on artistic research from an interdisciplinary perspective.

SKH routinely organises Higher Education seminars to ensure that staff are engaging with pedagogical issues, and the Performing Arts team has regular pedagogical seminars to discuss learning and teaching-related issues.

The lecturers on the MA programme are employed through SKH's recruitment process, and they should have high artistic and pedagogical competence in their field. This is reviewed by both external assessors and SKH's recruitment group, and they have so far been allocated research time in their contract (lecturers have 10% and professors have 20% for their own research and 20% for supporting the research environment). There is an expectation that professor and lecturers' research are integrated in - and in parts underpin - their teaching. Generally speaking all lecturers draw on their professional experience (and network) in the teaching and when appropriate share their research. Courses are always anchored in knowledge of existing research, and the teaching takes the form of research-based processes. There is also an expectation that staff teaching on the programme are well-informed about the field, nationally and internationally. Visiting artists teach on most courses, the exception being *DPPA* which has so far been staffed 'in house'.

This year a profile professor was able to bring their extensive research and professional experience on vocal and music composition into *Bodily and Vocal Practice*. And SKH-internally funded artistic research projects have directly informed the delivery on *Bodily and Vocal Practices* and *Concept and Composition* and the planning of the upcoming *Technology and Materiality*. *Writing Practices in the Arts* also draw very directly on lecturers' research.

If a teacher has not already completed a higher education teaching programme, SKH offers a higher education teaching programme, equivalent to 7.5 credits,

which is factored into the teacher's work plan. In addition, there are opportunities for professional development.

Analysis

Guest lecturers, usually artists, producers and dramaturgs, bring their professional expertise to the programme, and it has been instrumental for the students to hear how current artists work and how an artists's personal exploration inadvertently may intersect with political and societal issues. Students have commented that it has been fruitful to have the course leader as a continuity and synthesising 'head teacher' as it then allows for great diversity of guests. Students also remark that guest artists who are able to articulate and share their process, practice and strategies are particularly helpful for them in their education.

The challenge, however, will be to maintain this mix of core staff and visiting artist within economical tough times and straining budgets. But here too the MA programmes within SKH have found a way to collaborate more with a view to sharings costs but also to create meeting places and synnergies between the programmes. There is now more information exchange between heads of programmes, and the 'co-creative' working group for MA programmes meet regularly to figure out collaboration and co-delivery between Performing Arts, MA in Circus, New Performative Practices, Film&Media, MA in Choreography and the upcoming MA in Acting.

Up until this point it has been surprisingly difficult to move staff across subjects but the co-creative working group could potentially ensure better staff exchange, and more recently staff exchanges between Dance and Performing Arts have been implemented. A next step could be to look at the extent to which supervisors could be distributed across subjects and departments. In some cases students have asked specifically for a supervisor from another subject (e.g. an expert on movement, choreography, circus, queer strategies in the arts or neurodiversity or other) and similarly other programmes have asked for dramaturgy, lighting, costume or scenography expertise from the Performing Arts programme.

Valuate/Evaluation

The MA in Performing Arts is based on current and relevant subject-specific and higher education teaching expertise, and its strength lies in the breadth of professional and academic expertise and experience. However, it is a complex task to make the most appropriate priorities possible with regard to planning, staffing and optimise resources and teaching time. SKH, however, needs to continue developing the structural conditions for continuity, deepening, development and synergies between subjects with a view to supporting a more interdisciplinary study environment. More can be done to ensure that the existing expertise and needed compentencies are safeguarded and maintained.

Moreover, in more recent job adverts for lecture positions within the school there is no mentioning of allocated research time, meaning that lecturers may no longer be

guaranteed 10% research. Going forward it is unclear how SKH intends to deliver on the expectation and requirement that teaching on the programmes should be research informed.

6. students/doctoral students can exert influence over the planning, implementation and follow-up of the education

Describe, analyse and valuate, preferably with examples

Comments

Students have considerable influence through the ongoing dialogue with teachers and head of programme. Through course evaluations, students have the opportunity to influence future iterations of the course and hence ensure the continued quality and health of the programme for themselves and other students.

Students are regularly consulted on how to improve and develop the course, one example is when students, prior to the final workshop on *Site, Event, Encounter*, were consulted about the type of input they were missing. As the majority asked for a workshop on queer performance and queering strategies, guest lecturers were able to devise a workshop accordingly ('Queer Encounters') which was naturally in line with the learning outcomes.

At the end of the two years an 'exit meeting' is organised where the student group reflects on the two years and share their experiences in offer their constructive feedback. As the MA is a relatively new programme, the students' feedback, at any stage of the education, is incredibly valuable and it directly informs the next delivery of courses and the programme itself. It enables us to understand the progression and education from the students' point of view and whilst they will not be in total agreement, all comments inform the ongoing development of the education.

Students are invited to join the student union (studentkåren) and at SKH, there is an opportunity for student representation in central bodies and processes, such as the Board for Education and Research and student representatives are involved in the school's admission and recruitment processes.

Analysis

One of the challenges with the blended learning format is that the student group is more spread out, geographically, but also in terms of their study rhythm. Students will naturally have different needs at different times and it's important that more is done to create a forum for 'cohort gatherings'. One solution is to introduce scheduled cohort meetings to discuss ongoing issues but also to give and receive information. Email and Canvas are frequently used channels for information but the face-to-face, even online, has proved more effective.

Students have commented that teachers generally are open to feedback, criticism and practical suggestions and here the cohort meetings will also allow for a more continual and systematic canvassing of opinions and suggestions.

We need to continue the dialogue with students about how to improve and develop; one of the strengths of the international interdisciplinary student body is that they are in contact with different practices and communities. They bring valuable experiences, such as culturally and geographically specific knowledge to the programme which widens the outlook for all. The school, subject and teachers needless to say take responsibility for delivering and facilitating a high quality education, but we need to look for opportunities to bring students' specialised and situated knowledge into the planning. This is already happening to some extent, but more could be done to explore questions relating to macro structures, culture, institutional practices, the performing arts market, creative industries and contemporary artists' working conditions. The BA programme has a course in sustainable arts practice and one suggestion is to integrate similar types of content in the MA. This is already meant to be happening on *Technique and Materiality* and *Site, Event, Encounter*, but it could be more systematic. Conditions are changing dramatically for emerging and established performing arts practitioners, and the programme needs to consider more carefully how it intends to prepare the students for new and changing realities. This may also include attention to the kinds of skills and competency development that would be helpful.

Valuate/Evaluation

Students have ongoing influence on the planning, implementation, and follow-up of the programme through recurring quality processes, but also through close dialogue with teachers. More systematic thinking through how to practically incorporate students' feedback is recommended: one thing is that they give feedback on what worked and what did not, another thing is how we implement bigger suggestions, e.g. as mentioned earlier there is the request for more mentoring when it comes to future careers. It is recommended to bring BA and MA delivery closer together when it comes to a course such as the sustainable arts practice course (BA).

7. that a study environment that is accessible and appropriate for all students/doctoral students exists

Describe, analyse and value, preferably with examples.

Comments

SKH has the facilities and technical resources necessary to provide education in performing arts. The department has access to four black-box studios, one large theater, and a number of classrooms in various formats. If necessary, facilities used

by other departments can also be used if they are available. From 2025 the MA students have also been given a cohort office, and there is a dedicated fully-equipped student kitchen which doubles as a communal room for all students.

The campus at Valhallavägen (D-huset) has been prepared for wheelchair access and all floors and levels in the building are accessible through lifts and stairs. The building can be accessed in the evening and weekends also.

Over many years, SKH has built up a stock of technical equipment for sound, lighting, and other stage technology, which is constantly updated and renovated. In collaboration with the Technology Center and the Film and Media department, we review which licenses are needed for different software. Students have access to certain types of technical equipment and this can be booked out for a certain period.

At the beginning of the programme, students are introduced to the safety procedures in place at SKH's studios which also enables them to book studios and rooms for weekend and evening rehearsals.

For the online teaching and studying students have access to a wide range of online and remote learning facilities through the library's comprehensive website. The online resources include performance archives like Digital Theatre+, Drama Online, OntheBoards, other databases with filmed and recorded performances, films, sound and article databases). Alumnis' *DPPA* can be downloaded via the database DIVA. All mandatory learning resources are made available through the the learning platform Canvas, ensuring that students are not disadvantaged if they are unable to come to Stockholm. The library is continuously reviewing the need for an ebook stock but so far the stock is minimal.

Since 2024 we have set up and implemented a system for informing about special needs support and study support, however the student has to declare the need for support in order for us to take action. When granted they may be entitled to alternative assignments, e.g. a written assignment could be replaced by an oral presentation or other.

Analysis

The MA students have since the first MA programme was launched (2019) asked for more inclusion in the subject Performing Arts activities and community. Where the BA students, due to their full-time presence at the school, are more naturally integrated, the MA students who may only be present for three weeks during the term, have felt less included. Initiatives and work are underway to secure that the Master students feel welcome and integrated, and the situation has improved vastly. Now students frequently book rooms, studios and equipment to develop their work on-site. Some travel to the school from abroad outside workshop weeks to use the facilities and for face-to-face supervision. But more can be done and a next step would be to have work sharings and possibly even collaborations between BA and MA students. In the last exit meeting some students remarked that they

would like to meet an audience earlier in their studies, and whilst there is no requirement for them to meet an audience until the final term, work is underway to make this possible for those who find it helpful. This may also help the international students on the programme connect more with the local context, outside the school.

Most of the school's documents and information (including the website) is in Swedish and English, but it should be said that MA students have remarked that information from the student union is often in Swedish only. We need to be consistent that information going out to all Performing Arts students is in Swedish and English.

There is an inbuilt challenge for teachers and students in that the on site workshops are contingent on whether or not students can travel to Stockholm and participate. This means that the number of students can vary considerably from workshop to workshop, and it makes planning difficult for both teachers and students. More can be done to schedule and plan all workshops two-years in advance to give students a chance to factor in attendance. Especially the weeks where students have the option to show and present work on-site (e.g. *Site*, *Event*, *Encounter* and *Concept and Composition*) need earlier and careful planning to ensure that students are adequately supported. Work is currently underway to address this and to ensure that a sustainable learning environment for attending students, teachers and technical staff can be created.

Valuate/Evaluate

The study environment is supportive of the students' education and their online and on-site activities are supported in a number of ways. More forward and long-term planning is recommended, especially because the students have complex professional schedules, and it will create a more sustainable structure if teachers and students can plan more in advance.

Thought needs to be given to how best to support and integrate the MA students who are not on-site full-time, this also includes being mindful of communication which should be in Swedish and English to not exclude students. It is recommended that one keeps looking for meeting points and moments of sharing between BA and MA but also MAs across SKH, Research students and SKH's research activities as this would also strengthen the students' relationship with the institution.

8. continuous monitoring and development of the education, supported by course evaluations and, for doctoral students, individual study plans

Describe, analyse and value, preferably with examples.

Comments

The programme conducts course evaluations in accordance with the guidelines in SKH's quality evaluation system. A digital course evaluation system where students respond anonymously has been implemented together with oral evaluations after each course. The results of the evaluations are summarised by the course leader and submitted in a report which also contains recommendations for future improvements and changes. Once a year, the head of subject, collates and synthesises all course evaluations and submits an annual monitoring report.

The MA programme leader has regular meetings with the head of subject and programme leader for the BA programme as well as regular meetings in the MA co-creative group. This ensures that there is a flow and circulation of information, including ongoing monitoring and exchange about students' feedback.

An example of continuous monitoring leading to amendments to the programme is the introduction of the course 'Writing Practices in the Arts'. Given the fact that most courses on the MA programme involve - and are examined through - reflective and creative writing, it was considered vital to support the students actively in this regard. The decision came about due to the teachers' own assessment of what was needed, and the students' feedback confirmed that more support, e.g. through the introduction to a range of writing styles within artistic practice was needed.

Analysis

SKH's electronic course evaluation system provides a systematic approach over time, but students have called for a clearer opportunity to express opinions that do not directly correspond to the standardised questions. Although teachers can add questions, it is of course not a given that these questions are adequate. A free-text response with an open question such as: "Do you have any other comments you would like to express?" has been created. The return rate on the online evaluation is usually not high, and it has been proven that the oral feedback and conversation with the students offer the best and most precise way to canvas opinions and feedback.

Finally, as more staff from the Performing Arts subject are getting involved with the MA programme there's more conversation amongst colleagues about how best to develop the Master. This is critical to the continued health and sustainability of the programme as it will be possible to create more continuity in the delivery, monitoring and evaluation. It will create more staff and student movement across the BA and MA and support a more robust integration of the MA within the daily routines, staff discussions and teaching and learning environment.

Valuate/evaluation

A number of feedback and evaluation mechanisms are in place, including the big Alumni survey. Whilst the electronic system is not comprehensive and entirely effective it does give students a chance to respond anonymously which is

important. It is recommended to always build in time in the schedule for longer evaluation sessions with students as the oral feedback is the most helpful. But again, not all students will want to speak and here the electronic system is very helpful.

As more Performing Arts staff are teaching on the programme it is also possible to create more consistency and throughlines as staff can have more conversations about planning and evaluation. It is recommended that this continues.

9. applies only to third cycle studies:

- **doctoral students have access to an active research environment with adequate subject depth, breadth and scope**
- **doctoral students have the opportunity to collaborate with national and international researchers and with the surrounding community**

Describe, analyse and value, preferably with examples.

Not applicable.

10. Other

Any descriptions, analyses and values regarding, for example, internationalisation, widening participation, sustainable development and gender equality.

SKH works to broaden the recruitment of employees and students. This work has been ongoing for many years and needs to be developed further.

The applicant numbers have risen considerably in the five to six years the programme has existed, and it has come to our attention that students widely recommend it to their colleagues, peers, friends and own students (if they teach). This is positive and good, and we now need to think about how we can reach all kinds of potential applicants and students. We need to keep thinking about the best way to ensure gender equality and greater diversity on the programme. The gender equality in regard to applicants has balanced out considerably yet the gender balance on the programme itself has stayed the same. And whilst the admission process adequately represents the programme, it is worth thinking about how we promote and inform about the programme (e.g. website). This and the question about widening participation will need to be addressed before next admission.

Another important issue is the need to keep track of, document and safeguard information, e.g. how courses have been delivered, tweaked, changed, why and how. It is a new programme and it needs time to establish itself and so far

programme leadership has changed hands a number of times. How do we ensure that the trail of changes is transparent and evident?

The subject Performing Arts has been working with questions and processes relating to sustainability in the performing arts, e.g. 2022-2024 a joint staff research project was carried out, with the participation of Performing Arts lecturers. The programme has earlier accepted students with sustainability as their area of investigation and more expertise in this area is very likely to be needed in the future.

Finally, SKH is currently implementing a strategy for greater internationalisation within the school, and the MA in Performing Arts is in a good position to contribute to this. Many of our students are involved in international collaborations, their experience and collaboration with international communities will be critical to the school, and at the same token we need to support their learning and teaching through incorporating even more international perspectives in the teaching and support them in building international contacts and networks within arts practice and artistic research.

Mandatory annexes

Annex 1: Programme syllabus

Annex 2: Overview of qualitative targets