



Report

Development Dialogue

in the context of the limited programme review of the
Bachelor of Dance
University of Arts The Hague – Royal Conservatoire
(The Hague, The Netherlands)

3 December 2025

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Introduction

The present report results from the Development Dialogue which took place in the context of the assessment of the Bachelor of Dance degree programme offered by the Royal Conservatoire The Hague (below: KC) of the University of Arts The Hague. The Development Dialogue was organised online on 3 December 2025 to allow representatives of the programmes to discuss both strengths and potential improvements from a development perspective with members of the review team. In this report, the main elements discussed during the development dialogue are presented.

Present on behalf of the visitation panel: Pascale De Groote (chair of the audit panel), Catherine Allard (panel member)

Present on behalf of the programme and institution: Lies Colman (Royal Conservatoire Principal), Martin Prchal (Royal Conservatoire Vice-principal), Jan Linkens (KC Dance Director), Catharina Boon (KC Dance Assistant director), Katie Schreiber (Head Quality Culture), Frederique Luijten (Quality Culture officer), Daan Soare (chair of the Conservatoire Council), Yvonne Smeets (Chair of the Exam Committee), Marijn Abbink (Policy advisor educational development)

Present on behalf of the MusiQuE office: Basia Kowalcuk (Review & Communication Coordinator)

Context of the review procedure

The assessment was conducted in accordance with the Assessment Framework for the Higher Education Accreditation System of the Netherlands. Given the institution's positive institutional audit decision in 2020, the evaluation was carried out using the limited framework, focusing specifically on the four applicable standards.

The review focused on the Bachelor of Dance programme at the Royal Conservatoire The Hague and was coordinated by MusiQuE (Music Quality Enhancement) evaluation agency. The assessment was based on the MusiQuE Standards for Programme Review, which align with the NVAO Standards for Limited Programme Assessment.

The international review panel was appointed by MusiQuE and formally approved by NVAO. The panel members were:

- Pascale De Groote (Chair), Vice-Chancellor of Artesis Plantijn University College Antwerp, Belgium
- Artemis Gordon, Artistic Director of the Arts Umbrella Dance Program, Vancouver, Canada

- Catherine Allard, Artistic Director of IT Dansa Jove Companya, Institut del Teatre de Barcelona, Spain
- Gerwin Pol (student member), Recent graduate of the Master Climate Studies programme at Wageningen University & Research, The Netherlands

The panel was supported by Yulia Krijthe M.Ed., who acted as NVAO-certified secretary.

The site visit to the Royal Conservatoire took place on 12-13 June 2025.

Organisation and structure of the Development Dialogue

The session started with an opening in which the purpose, aims, and overall context of the Development Dialogue were introduced. This provided all participants with a shared understanding of the intention behind the meeting and how it connects to the broader quality enhancement process of the programme.

Following the introduction, chair of the audit panel presented the panel's review of the findings and recommendations. In a concise overview, the chair highlighted the key observations from the report, structured per standard. Both strengths and areas requiring further development were briefly outlined, offering a clear summary of the programme's current position and the opportunities identified for improvement.

After the presentation, the floor was opened for questions and reflections from programme stakeholders. This exchange allowed participants to respond to the panel's comments, seek clarification where needed, and share their own perspectives on the findings. The discussion created space for a constructive dialogue about the programme's direction, priorities, and practical steps for future development.

To conclude, the institutional representatives provided closing reflections. They responded to the points raised during the meeting, acknowledged the insights offered by the panel, and expressed their commitment to taking the recommendations forward in the next stages of the programme's development.

Overview of the elements discussed

The following topics were addressed:

1. **Reflections on programme development and achievements:** The discussion began with an acknowledgement of the substantial effort invested in reshaping and strengthening the programme in recent years. Participants expressed pride in the progress achieved and appreciation for the collective work carried out by the teaching team and support offices. Although some of the panel's recommendations

may take some time, they will guide the next phase of development under future leadership. It was emphasised that continuous improvement is a natural part of the dance profession, and the programme intends to take the advice forward while maintaining an appropriate balance between artistic ambitions, available teaching hours and financial resources. The recommendations presented by the panel were described as well substantiated and aligned with areas that the programme had already identified for improvement. The institution noted that while significant steps have been taken, there is still clear room for further enhancement.

2. **The internship framework and its further refinement:** The conversation also focused on the current structure of internships. There was a shared understanding that the system requires clearer articulation and a more thoroughly considered balance between artistic growth and administrative requirements. A more carefully designed approach could strengthen both sides, offering students an environment in which their artistic development can thrive while ensuring a transparent and well-functioning procedure. It was observed that achieving this balance is a challenge at many institutions, and that creating a system that is both formally sound and respectful of artistic freedom remains complex.
3. **Collaboration across departments and external partnerships:** Another central theme concerned collaboration with other departments and external partners. Participants highlighted efforts to strengthen interdisciplinary work, particularly with the music department. Although such collaboration is artistically enriching and valuable for students, it also comes with practical challenges, such as planning, scheduling constraints and logistical limitations. To make collaboration effective, it is important to clearly define both common and different goals. Early discussions are essential to identify common ground and ensure smooth cooperation. While the programme remains open to various forms of cooperation, it must also ensure that sufficient time and rehearsal hours are available to achieve the desired professional standards.

The need to further structure and embed partnerships, both within the institution and externally, was emphasised. Formalising these networks can support their long-term sustainability and may also create opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration. Sustained connections with external partners offer multiple benefits, including peer learning, network development, and internship opportunities for students.

4. **Documentation, curriculum transparency and clarity of course descriptions:** The discussion also touched on documentation practices, including the curriculum

handbook and course descriptions. It was noted that documentation must serve two goals: being clear and useful for students and teachers, and meeting compliance expectations for external review. Achieving the right balance between these purposes, or potentially developing separate formats for internal and external audiences, may be necessary. Considerations about the balance between classical and contemporary components were also raised, acknowledging that while much progress has been made in articulating both strands, some unevenness in emphasis and detail remains.

5. **Transition in leadership:** Another topic discussed was the transition in leadership, as the programme directors are leaving after 12 years of leading the programme, during which they made significant contributions to the development of the programme. The review team emphasised that its recommendations are intended to provide flexibility for the successor, allowing them to adapt these as needed. The team recognised the importance of not setting priorities on behalf of the successor, but rather of providing a solid foundation for future development.

Closing

The programme expressed gratitude to the review team for creating a safe environment where they could honestly share both strengths and vulnerabilities. The words of gratitude were expressed towards two programme leaders who are retiring this year, acknowledging their contributions in building a strong foundation and assured them that the institution would continue building on their legacy. The meeting concluded with mutual appreciation and recognition of the program's significant progress over the years