



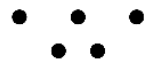
# Inter- nationalisation at the Royal Conservatoire

**Status report  
& Policy objectives  
2021–2024**

**February 2021**

**Royal  
Conservatoire  
The Hague**

**Koninklijk  
Conservatorium**



**Royal  
Conservatoire  
The Hague**

# INTERNATIONALISATION AT THE ROYAL CONSERVATOIRE

## STATUS REPORT & POLICY OBJECTIVES 2021-2024

February 2021

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# INTRODUCTION

This document describes the current status of internationalisation at the Royal Conservatoire The Hague (faculty of the University of Arts The Hague) and proposes objectives and activities for future years. The last document describing the Conservatoire's internationalisation policy and activities was published in 2016. Since then, much has changed. The number of applications and enrolments by international and ERASMUS+ students increased. Many new initiatives such as joint European programmes and new projects were launched. The University of Arts The Hague published an elaborate Institutional Plan, in which internationalisation was explicitly mentioned as one of its main focus areas. A further integration of internationalisation and quality assurance was reached, as can be read in this document and in the documentation published by the Quality Culture office of the Conservatoire<sup>1</sup>. A new 'Team International' and a new team for Marketing & Communication with a strong international focus were established. And then, in 2020, the world was hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, which had a substantial impact on internationalisation.

It is therefore timely to describe these latest developments and to consider which direction the internationalisation activities at the Royal Conservatoire should take. A strong focus on internationalisation has always been part of the Royal Conservatoire's identity. Nevertheless, in recent years the Conservatoire has expressed the ambition to coordinate its policy developments within the University of the Arts The Hague, which means that it is important to relate the international objectives at conservatoire level to those at university-level.

In the University of Arts' Institutional Plan 2019-2024, it is described how the presence of international students and teachers, and a worldwide network of partners are crucial elements of the University's educational philosophy and identity. This is based on the understanding that both faculties of the university are preparing their graduates for a highly international professional practice. In addition, internationalisation serves as an instrument for permanent benchmarking and improving the quality of education. The University believes that if an institution is serious about its international dimension, it must be able to demonstrate in which ways its objectives and activities are framed within an international context, and how these objectives are reached and assessed on an international level.

Therefore, three aspects of the University's internationalisation policy are distinguished:

1. Adherence to and use of **international qualification frameworks**.
2. The maintenance and further development of an **international learning environment**.
3. **International comparison and assessment** by international peers.

Each of these aspects will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters.

## Some further considerations on the rationale for internationalisation

For a long time, internationalisation was seen as an important tool for the **personal, academic and artistic development of the individual**. In recent years, this opinion has shifted to a discussion on and the development of international competencies. In a 2016 report of the Dutch Council for Education, it is described how being internationally competent includes three target areas: qualification, socialisation and personal development.

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<sup>1</sup> See the document 'Quality Culture at the Royal Conservatoire: 2020 and beyond'.

Becoming internationally competent has a qualifying component: when institutions equip their students with sufficient international knowledge and skills to communicate and collaborate in international contexts, they prepare them well for further education and the labour market. Furthermore, becoming internationally competent also carries aspects of socialisation. Education enables students to adopt international cultural practices, which allows them to be introduced into international environments and to give meaning to them. Socialisation includes the ability to quickly figure out what is applicable in a given environment, so that a conscious choice can be made between adapting and sticking to one's own values. Finally, becoming internationally competent has a developmental side. It is by teaching students more about and experiencing other countries, cultures and languages that enables them to reflect on (inter)national issues, and their own role in them. As a result, students develop an identity that allows them to approach these cultures autonomously and responsibly.

In addition to the growing understanding of the importance of international competencies, another underlying aspect of internationalisation in higher education developed further as well: the role that internationalisation can play in **institutional development**, i.e. in improving the quality of the education and research activities in institutions. This objective goes beyond the purpose of gaining international competencies and the mainly economic rationale for internationalisation with the recruitment of fee-paying international students to generate income, which has been particularly present in English-speaking countries. With the launch of the renewed ERASMUS+ Programme in 2014, a new paradigm for internationalisation in higher education was presented, which promoted a direct connection between international cooperation activities and the enhancement of the quality of higher education. This became evident from the requirements formulated by the European Commission for the application for a European Charter for Higher Education (ECHE), which gave higher education institutions access to the ERASMUS+ Programme and explicitly asked them to describe how the European activities would influence institutional policies with regards to curriculum development and the enhancement of quality of education. In 2015, a revised definition of internationalisation in higher education was presented in an European Parliament report on internationalisation in higher education<sup>2</sup>, which stated that internationalisation in higher education is

*the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society.*

This definition shows an interesting development in thinking about the purpose and role of internationalisation in higher education. No longer is a narrow focus on mobility sufficient. Instead, institutions are encouraged to explore ways in which they can improve their core business, i.e. teaching, learning and research, through internationalisation activities. A concrete example of this approach is the European Universities Initiative of the European Union, in which networks of universities intensively collaborate in terms of institutional governance, curriculum development, research and joint mobility activities.

As a result of (or parallel to) these developments, the principle of 'Internationalisation@Home' (IaH) became increasingly relevant, based on the understanding that internationalisation should not be limited to a happy few who are able to use mobility opportunities, but also to those unable to travel for whatever reasons, especially with regards to gaining international competencies. A key feature of 'Internationalisation@Home' is the development

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<sup>2</sup> The full report can be found at:  
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2015/540370/IPOL\\_STU\(2015\)540370\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2015/540370/IPOL_STU(2015)540370_EN.pdf)

of an international learning environment, which is achieved through an international classroom with international students and teachers, the internationalisation of the curriculum and the availability of short intensive international experiences to students.

Furthermore, another concept in relation to internationalisation emerged more recently: Internationalisation of Higher Education for Society (IHES). In line with the increased focus of higher education institutions on societal engagement (the so-called 'third mission'), Internationalisation of Higher Education for Society explicitly connects international education and research to local service and social engagement.

In the meanwhile, various societal developments have put internationalisation in higher education in a new, more negative, spotlight. In some political debates, the presence of (sometimes large numbers of) international students is being questioned because of the associated costs paid for by domestic taxpayers, decreased chances for domestic students and concerns about the position of the Dutch language with regards to the increased use of English in Dutch higher education. The new Dutch law 'Wet Taal en Toegankelijkheid' (a law on the use of language in and accessibility of higher education that is currently being discussed in parliament) is a direct consequence of such political discussions. Big political developments, such as Brexit and the increased push for more stringent visa regulations in many countries, have emerged as obstacles to international mobility. From an environmental point of view, travel (especially by air) is increasingly being seen as less attractive, and debates about environmental-friendly approaches to internationalisation have started. And finally, the COVID-19 pandemic that hit the world in 2020 has had huge implications for international cooperation, as international travel, and many international activities with it, came to an almost complete stop.

The long-term impact on internationalisation of these developments remains to be seen, but some effects are already noticeable, for example a decrease of intercontinental mobility and a renewed focus on regional (i.e. European) cooperation. Another important impact is digitalisation, which brings new opportunities for institutional cooperation. Already, it is interesting to notice that through online tools, which institutions were forced to use overnight due to the pandemic, the cooperation between institutions has in some ways been more intense and fruitful than before. These considerations are reflected in the new ERASMUS+ Programme for the period 2021-2027, which, in its programme objectives, calls for sustainable internationalisation activities, a greater focus on inclusion and accessibility, and underlines the importance of the development of digital cooperation.

It is with these considerations in mind that the Royal Conservatoire has the ambition to further deepen its approach to internationalisation and consolidate this aspect as one of its unique features. This document describes this approach in further detail, while also taking stock of what has been developed over the past few years. Its content is based on extensive consultations with heads of departments, various members of staff, the Council of Representatives of the Royal Conservatoire, as well as its Study Programme and Exam Committees.

# 1. USING AN INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK AS A BASIS FOR CURRICULA

The first objective of the University of the Arts' focus on internationalisation is the adherence to and use of international qualification frameworks. In order to support an international focus of the study programmes, it is important to establish that the programme objectives (or intended learning outcomes) of these study programmes are formulated in such a way that they refer to internationally accepted qualification frameworks describing the level and content of the three cycle programmes. In this context, the relevant assessment framework for the programmes of the Royal Conservatoire is based on the AEC Learning Outcomes<sup>3</sup>.

The Royal Conservatoire has made a strategic choice not to use the national framework of competence profiles for higher music education, but rather the European-level framework developed specifically for the higher music education sector in 2017 by the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC)<sup>4</sup>. The AEC Learning Outcomes (AEC LOs) are designed to support the music sector in implementing the Bologna Process reforms and aim to provide a shared understanding across European higher education of what graduates will have achieved at any given level. The AEC LOs make transparent to all stakeholders what each level involves and help institutions by assessing them, as part of their quality processes, if relevant goals are met. The AEC LOs are structured into three headings:

- Practical (skills-based) outcomes
- Theoretical (knowledge-based) outcomes
- Generic outcomes.

This threefold structure enables the expression of the three different aspects of the various areas of learning that are relevant to musicians (such as artistic expression, improvisation, verbal and written communication, etc.) and this structure is used in order to provide consistency between the AEC LOs and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), which forms the basis for many national and European discipline-specific qualifications frameworks. Furthermore, the AEC LOs are related to and defined by the same three levels as the Dublin Descriptors: 1<sup>st</sup> cycle (Bachelor), 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle (Master) and 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle (Doctoral). The Dublin Descriptors are a set of internationally recognised descriptors that define the level and the content of the three cycles in higher education in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

The Conservatoire has made the choice for the AEC LOs for the following reasons:

- Due to its international orientation, it sees less relevance in the use of a nationally based qualifications framework (institutions in the Netherlands are free to choose a qualifications framework, provided they can explain how and why it is being used, and that it is compatible with the Dutch National Qualifications

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<sup>3</sup> Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (2017). *AEC Learning Outcomes 2017*. To be downloaded from the AEC website: <https://www.aec-music.eu/publications/aec-learning-outcomes-2017-en>.

<sup>4</sup> The development of these AEC Learning Outcomes (AEC LOs) began in 2001, which resulted in their publication in 2010. The AEC LOs were revised in 2017 to ensure their continued fitness for purpose in defining the skills, competences and knowledge required by graduating students in Higher Music Education (HME). The revision of the AEC LOs took place in the context of the FULL SCORE project (2014-2017).

Framework). The Conservatoire rather connects to an internationally based framework so that an international context to the objectives of programmes can be achieved.

- The Royal Conservatoire fully supports the philosophy behind the AEC LOs: once many institutions across Europe will start using this framework, it will be easier to compare curricula, which will have a positive effect on cooperation, exchange and the recognition of both degree and credit mobility.
- The AEC LOs have been developed through a careful process taking many years and through several consultations with institutions throughout Europe.
- The AEC LOs are consistent with the structure of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Because of its compatibility with the EQF, the AEC LOs are also fully compatible with the Dutch National Qualifications Framework (NLQF), which is directly linked to the EQF.

The programme objectives that have been formulated by all departments keep the headings of the AEC LOs intact, although some changes may have been made to the sub-categories underneath these three main headings. This approach is consistent with the function of the European-level AEC LOs, which are meant to serve as a model and reference tool for a great variety of musical studies in Europe. At the Royal Conservatoire level they have been adapted as programme objectives for specific programmes and disciplines, resulting in a stronger articulation of and an emphasis on certain learning outcomes and reflecting the specific profile of the curriculum in question. In this way, the Conservatoire has connected its entire curriculum to an international context instead of formulating a set of isolated international or intercultural competencies, which takes into account the already existing international reality of higher music education and the music profession.



## 2. OFFERING AN INTERNATIONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The music profession has always had a strong international dimension both in the fields of performance and composition. International festivals, tours, ensembles and competitions are regular components in the careers of musicians. It is therefore important to prepare students for this international reality already during their studies by offering them an international learning environment, so that they know how to operate in an international context and how to collaborate with colleagues with different educational and cultural backgrounds.

An international learning environment implies the presence of international students and teachers: around 60% of our students are from abroad, as is a large proportion of our teaching staff. We also frequently invite international artists to give guest lectures or masterclasses. This meeting (and sometimes confrontation) of cultures makes up an important contribution to the students' development, as they experience the similarities and differences between cultures and learn to discuss and reflect on them. Such a dialogue broadens and deepens their perspective on international professional practice and their own position in it. The international learning environment is inherent to our educational concept. We do not treat international students as a separate group; our learning environment is wholly inclusive. International is the norm. As a result, almost all our courses are taught in English.

At the same time, we also encourage all our students (Dutch and international) to spend time in another country. As described already in the introduction, gaining international experience at another conservatoire or academy is extremely beneficial for our students' personal, academic and artistic development.

Nevertheless, an international learning environment cannot be based on the presence and mobility of international students and teachers alone. At the Royal Conservatoire, we want to go beyond this situation by exploring how we can improve the quality of our education by engaging in international cooperation. As already described in the previous chapter, we therefore want to place our curricula in an international context, and also see how internationalisation can have a positive impact on issues that are important for our education, such as curriculum development, assessment and the continuing professional development of our teachers and staff. In doing so, we engage with issues addressed by 'Internationalisation@Home', ensuring that those students not able to spend study periods abroad can still benefit from an international learning environment.

In this chapter, we will discuss how internationalisation connects to the different aspects of our education and life at the Conservatoire in general.

### **International learning environment: the presence of international students**

At the Royal Conservatoire, the international character of the learning environment is high due to the presence of international students and the way in which they are supported:

- The table below illustrates the number of foreign students.

#### Royal Conservatoire (inter)national student numbers 2014-2020

	NL students	International students (EER, non-EER and ERASMUS+)	EER students (excl. NL)	Non-EER students	ERASMUS+	Total
2014-2015	257	459	316	112	31	716
2015-2016	275	503	343	127	33	778
2016-2017	299	528	357	132	39	827
2017-2018	303	500	333	135	32	803
2018-2019	281	513	335	138	40	794
2019-2020	261	523	354	130	39	784
2020-2021	239	572	391	134	47	811

- Because of this international learning environment, which reflects the international character of the music profession, the Conservatoire offers all classes in its bachelor's and master's programmes in English, except for its Bachelor of Music in Education programme, which primarily targets Dutch and Dutch-speaking students. A Code of Conduct has been formulated on the language of instruction at university level<sup>5</sup>.
- The Conservatoire provides most information on education and practical issues in Dutch as well as in English. As of the academic year 2015-2016, curricular information in the Curriculum Handbooks is published in English only. As of 2019, the extensive internationalisation section on the Royal Conservatoire website is only available in English as well. Furthermore, all information and reports produced by the Conservatoire's Quality Culture office and the various formal committees are published in English.
- The Conservatoire has formed a 'Team International', consisting of an International Students Adviser with the task to provide support to foreign students who are or want to become regular students in The Hague (e.g. on matters related to residence permits, housing and insurances), an International Relations Coordinator to provide support to all students (Dutch or international) wanting to go abroad on an exchange through the ERASMUS+ or other programmes and for the support to international projects, and an ERASMUS coordinator as part of the Education Service Centre for incoming ERASMUS+ students.

When it comes to attracting international students, the Royal Conservatoire is conscious of the fact that it is operating in an international context in which qualitative levels are rising and the competition for talent is increasing. In order to attract students of high quality and diverse international backgrounds in order to sustain an international learning environment, the Conservatoire has taken several measures.

An important development was the establishment of a new Marketing & Communication team, which has increased the focus on international recruitment through targeted campaigns on social media and the Conservatoire's website. It has also developed a detailed new policy for alumni, as it is to be expected that in the future alumni may prove to be vital with regards to reaching potential new students. Another development was the start with a fully online selection and admission process in 2020, which led to higher numbers of applications from students worldwide in both 2020 and 2021. In addition to these online approaches, the Royal Conservatoire also occasionally organises auditions in other countries. Examples of these are the auditions held by the Dance Department in Japan and workshops and auditions for Portuguese students at the Escola Profissional de Artes da Covilhã (EPABI) in the Portuguese city of Covilhã.

<sup>5</sup> To be found at <https://www.hogeschoolderkunsten.nl/en/internationalisation/code-of-conduct-on-language-of-instruction>

When addressing international student recruitment, it is important to take into account a recommendation made by the assessment panel of the Institutional Review of the University of the Arts The Hague in 2019, which said: "Foreign students do not always have an accurate impression of the programme, the institution or the actual prospects in the labour market in the Netherlands and elsewhere, so it is important to improve communication in these areas." The international section of the Royal Conservatoire's website has already been greatly expanded with information on housing, costs of study and employability, but it will be further improved and updated.

Another approach to student recruitment is a strategic use of the ERASMUS+ programme. While the Royal Conservatoire is fully committed to the exchange principle of the ERASMUS+ programme and its responsibility of giving its own as well as other students in Europe the opportunity to spend a study period abroad, it is also aware that the ERASMUS+ system can be seen as an efficient tool for student recruitment. Statistics show that over the past years, almost 30% of all incoming ERASMUS students came back as regular students. This is one of the reasons why the Conservatoire welcomes quite a large contingent of incoming ERASMUS students each year. As teachers in the Netherlands are paid on an hourly basis, the Conservatoire must invest in a substantial number of extra teaching hours to be able to accept these students: in the academic year 2019-2020, this additional teaching load amounted to about 0.6FTE for the entire academic year.

This also brings the responsibility for the Conservatoire to host ERASMUS+ students the best it can. In order to collect feedback from ERASMUS+ students on their experience at the Royal Conservatoire, an exit questionnaire is given at the end of their study period. Over the past years, feedback from the satisfaction questionnaires has shown that incoming ERASMUS+ students are generally happy about their experience at the Royal Conservatoire, while also suggesting that improvements could be made with regards to the welcoming of the ERASMUS+ students at the beginning of the year and the planning of their curriculum for their studies. As a response to these comments, the Conservatoire has expanded the welcoming information and introductory sessions for ERASMUS+ students during the annual Start-Up! week that takes place in the first week of the academic year, it has sent ERASMUS+ students an earlier confirmation for their study period through a further streamlining of the application and admission systems, and, because of these earlier confirmations, it has started the confirmation process of the Learning Agreements of students much sooner.

More attention has also been given to the social needs of international students in general. An annual joint dinner is being organised for all ERASMUS+ students and a buddy system has been implemented in 2021 for all students, to which ERASMUS+ students also have access.

## **International learning environment: the presence of international teachers**

With regards to the presence of international teachers, the following can be mentioned:

- As can be seen in the teachers' biographies that are posted on the website, most of the teachers at the Royal Conservatoire are active on the international stage and many are from outside the Netherlands. Furthermore, we have many regular visiting professors who live abroad.
- The Conservatoire offers masterclasses with international experts on a regular basis. During the past few years, it welcomed around 50 visiting teachers each year. Our Institute of Sonology, for example, created the Konrad Boehmer Visiting Professorship, which invites one or more experts in the field of electronic and computer music on an annual basis to spend a period of several weeks at the Conservatoire for lessons, concerts and workshops.
- During the past few years, groups of teachers have been following English courses, and individual courses have been offered whenever needed. However, with the aim to continuously enhance the quality of its

education, the Conservatoire will start a new and more proactive policy in this field during the academic year 2021-2022. Language training of non-academic staff is also seen as important, so that high-quality services can be provided in English to international students.

## International learning environment: providing opportunities for international experiences to students

Opportunities for students to gain international experiences are offered in various ways:

- Students at the Royal Conservatoire have full access to the opportunities offered by the ERASMUS+ mobility programme. For this purpose, bilateral agreements with over a hundred institutions have been signed. However, as illustrated by the table below, the number of outgoing ERASMUS+ students is not yet in balance with the number of incoming ERASMUS+ students. For the coming academic years, the Conservatoire has therefore agreed on a minimum target number of outgoing ERASMUS+ students per department, which are expected to be reached each year<sup>6</sup>. For this purpose, active promotion has been initiated, which is meant to support the departments to reach the objectives set. The International Relations Coordinator gives presentations about the various possibilities the programme has to offer during the Start-Up! week and to students in each department throughout the first semester. She also provides individual guidance to any student interested in going abroad, and offers support to the departments throughout the whole process.

Royal Conservatoire ERASMUS+ Student Mobility 2012-2021

	Applications SMS-IN	Admitted SMS-IN	Accepted SMS-OUT
2012-2013	77	21	7
2013-2014	111	31	7
2014-2015	94	31	7
2015-2016	124	33	7
2016-2017	123	39	8
2017-2018	122	32	6
2018-2019	128	40	9
2019-2020	170	39	5
2020-2021	187	47	6 <sup>7</sup>

- Within the context of the various ERASMUS+ Strategic Partnership projects in which the Royal Conservatoire participates on an incidental basis, students are given the opportunity to participate in short intensive programmes as part of these projects, some of which take place at the Royal Conservatoire. Examples of such activities are the intensives of the METRIC project (2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020), the 'ECMA Next Step' project (2016, 2017 and 2018), the VoxEarlyMus project (2016, 2017 and 2018), the ReNEW project (2016, 2017 and 2018), the Kodály Hub project (2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019), the 'NAIP – Innovation in Higher Music Education' project (2014, 2015 and 2016) and the VIOLANET project (2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021). Under the umbrella of the Creative Europe programme of the EU, the Royal Conservatoire also participated in projects with the European Union Baroque Orchestra, the ensemble Musikfabrik (Köln) as part of the

<sup>6</sup> Please see the chapter with the Policy Objectives 2021-2014 and the appendix with the departmental plans for further information.

<sup>7</sup> In total 11 students were admitted at ERASMUS+ partner institutions for this year, but many mobilities were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Composer Collider Europe project, and currently in the 'ECMA PRO' project, giving students the possibility to participate in various intensive activities in the fields of early music, composition and chamber music.

- The creation of the Joint Master Programmes European Chamber Music Master – ECMAster and the European Master of Early Music – EMEM, and the double degree Audio Communication & Sonology provides for structural mobility opportunities.
- For students in our Early Music Department, the regular joint projects with the Early Music Department of the Juilliard School in New York are important opportunities to gain performance experience in an international context. Concerts are organised in the framework of this cooperation in both The Hague and New York.
- The Composition Department has developed a close connection to the composition class of the Janáček Academy of Performing Arts in Brno. As part of this connection, an annual exchange of students and teachers takes place, in which new works of students from both institutions are prepared and performed.
- Within the context of the ConNext Network (for more information about this network see the section on international strategic partnerships below), opportunities are created for students on an occasional basis to participate in intensive programme activities organised by the ConNext partners. Examples are the participation of The Hague's students in an early music project at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory in Singapore and in a contemporary music summer school organised by the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki.
- The Institute of Sonology has been the initiator for the creation of the website [www.electroacoustic-music-education.net](http://www.electroacoustic-music-education.net), which lists a group of institutions providing education in electroacoustic and computer music education. The list intends to provide students in electroacoustic music composition with information on institutions in this area of expertise.
- The Royal Conservatoire website has been updated in 2019 with an entirely new section dedicated to international mobility and projects ([www.koncon.nl/en/international](http://www.koncon.nl/en/international)), in addition to extensive practical information for international students. It is now more user friendly and attractive for students, providing, among others, direct links to each partner university's international pages. An important objective is to publish video testimonials of students who have studied abroad periodically on social media and on the website.

## **International learning environment: curriculum development and internationalisation**

With regards to curriculum development and its international dimension, it is not only important to establish how the programme objectives (or intended learning outcomes) of the study programmes refer to internationally accepted frameworks as described in the previous chapter, but also that the study programmes are continuously informed by the latest developments at an international level so that they meet the highest standards in terms of expertise and relevance. In this process, the Royal Conservatoire is seeking out relevant information at an international level as part of its everlasting ambition to continuously improve its study programmes, while at the same time ensuring that students not able to travel can still enjoy internationally informed education as part of 'Internationalisation@Home'.

The following curriculum development activities have been directly influenced by international cooperation:

- The participation in the METRIC Network and projects in the area of improvisation has seen a direct impact on curriculum development in various courses. Examples of this are the (obligatory) theory course 'Aural Skills and Improvisation', the Joint European Master Module 'From Score to Creation' in cooperation with the Royal Conservatoire Antwerp and the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, and the new minor Collaborative Music Creation that includes METRIC partners for regular online lectures.
- The Royal Conservatoire has been involved in the development of one of the first Joint Master Programmes

in music in Europe, the Music Master for New Audiences and Innovative Practice (NAIP), since its beginning in 2007. Even if most of the activities are taking place at master's level, there is a clear effect of this programme on curriculum development in the bachelor's programme at the Conservatoire: the educational modules for the bachelor's programmes of Sonology and Composition are based on the NAIP methodology, as are various modules in the Minor Education and the course Preparation for Professional Practice. Furthermore, the NAIP philosophy of offering a curriculum in which artistic development, research and professional integration are fully integrated has been an inspiration to recent curricular innovations in the Master of Music programme.

- The Royal Conservatoire's participation in the European Chamber Music Academy (ECMA) and its 'ECMA – the Next Step' and 'ECMA PRO' projects has supported curriculum development in the area of chamber music in the Classical Music Department, both in the core curriculum and in the creation of a Minor Chamber Music in the bachelor's and a chamber music specialisation in the master's. The Conservatoire is now also part of the European Chamber Music Master - ECMaster, a top-level joint European master's programme with seven other European conservatoires.
- The 'ReNEW' project played an important role in the development of the 'Entrepreneurial Bootcamp', which is now part of the compulsory career skills courses for Bachelor of Music students in the performance departments. It has also supported curriculum development in the master's programme, where professional integration is now a fully integrated component in the curricula.
- The 'Kodály Hub' project has supported curriculum development in the Master of Music Education according to the Kodály Concept in terms of teaching methodologies and the creation of a large online resource for educational repertoire.

In relation to digital mobility and cooperation, the COVID-19 pandemic has strongly increased the focus on the opportunities of online learning tools, especially in relation to international cooperation. Two directions can be distinguished with these tools:

- The possibility of organising online workshops, masterclasses and lessons while making use of low-latency software, such as LoLa (for sound and video), Jamulus and Sonobus (for sound). LoLa masterclasses have been set up in the context of the Conservatoire's cooperation within the ECMA and IBG networks. For example, the ECMA session in The Hague in October 2020 was done largely online through LoLa connections with teachers and ensembles at the Conservatoire de Paris and the Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Wien. The VIOLANET intensive in February 2021 was organised fully online with digital masterclasses for teachers and students in The Hague, Salzburg, Lyon, Weimar and Vigo.
- The possibility of creating joint online courses and giving students access to existing online courses. Examples are the involvement of METRIC partners in the minor Collaborative Music Creation and the exploration within the IBG network to give students access to online courses offered by the IBG partner institutions.

Connecting courses, programmes and sharing expertise through online tools brings important opportunities for the future, giving students additional features of high quality in the context of their studies. In addition, through the experience with online meetings during the pandemic, organisational meetings can be done online much more efficiently and climate-friendly.

## **International learning environment: continuing professional development and internationalisation**

The Royal Conservatoire has an proactive policy for the continuing professional development of its teachers, based on the view that it is vital for the further development of a higher education institution to continuously invest in the expertise of its teaching and support staff. This view has been confirmed by an agreement with the unions, which stipulates that a fixed percentage of the University of the Arts' budget should be used for the continuing professional development of its employees.

In order to ensure that its teachers have access to the latest expertise in the field internationally, the Royal Conservatoire has decided to give a strong international dimension to its ongoing professional development policy, either by supporting international activities of its teachers or by inviting international experts for regular professional development activities at the Conservatoire. The following activities are the result of this policy:

- The Royal Conservatoire has started a new development programme for its teaching staff, entitled 'The Artist as Teacher', in October 2015. This staff development programme, which has been largely built on the pedagogical principles of the international ICON methodology (see below), aims at helping teaching faculty with their needs in relation to continuing professional development, in particular with regards to pedagogical skills. Various issues such as one-to-one teaching, group teaching, assessment and entrepreneurship are being discussed in seminars during one academic year. Until now, around 100 teachers have participated in this course, which leads to two certificates: the 'Basiskwalificatie Didactische Bekwaamheid' or BDB (basic certificate didactic capacity) and the 'Basiskwalificatie Examinering' or BKE (basic certificate assessment).
- The Royal Conservatoire is the coordinator of Innovative Conservatoire – ICON since 2019. ICON is an international group of conservatoires, which organises intensive training sessions around certain themes for conservatoire teachers twice a year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ICON is currently not organising events. However, plans exist to reactivate ICON as a follow-up activity for teachers who have already completed the 'The Artist as Teacher' course in cooperation with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and the Norwegian Academy of Music.
- The Royal Conservatoire promotes an active participation of teachers in ERASMUS+. As the table below shows, the Royal Conservatoire boasts a high number of outgoing teachers in ERASMUS teacher mobility. The active promotion of teacher mobility is not only of importance in terms of the continuing professional development of teachers, but also connected to the recruitment policy of the Conservatoire, as statistics show a clear relationship between incoming student mobility and outgoing teaching staff mobility numbers. The large number of outgoing teachers has not yet been matched by a similar number of incoming teachers within the ERASMUS+ programme. Even with the Conservatoire having an active approach towards inviting visiting professors, the potential of using ERASMUS+ for this purpose has not yet been fully explored. The Conservatoire has therefore agreed with its departments to primarily use ERASMUS+ incoming teacher mobility for masterclasses and workshops. The departments were asked to make annual plans for this purpose, which can be found in the appendix to this document.

## Royal Conservatoire ERASMUS Teaching Staff Mobility (STA) 2010-2020

Academic year	Staff-In	Staff-Out
2010-2011	3	4
2011-2012	5	8
2012-2013	16	24
2013-2014	17	41
2014-2015	14	31
2015-2016	15	33
2016-2017	17	30
2017-2018	13	28
2018-2019	49	46
2019-2020	32	31 <sup>8</sup>

Other opportunities for teachers to gain international experience are also offered:

- The participation of teachers in international conferences is supported through the continuing professional development budget of the Conservatoire.
- The participation of teachers in international assessment panels for examinations in other institutions is supported through the connections within the network in which the Conservatoire participates. The Royal Conservatoire sees this process as a reciprocal activity, which means that it not only intends to bring in such international external examiners, but also to offer its teachers to play a similar role in other institutions. In this way, teachers are confronted with artistic standards at an international level and other assessment practices, which can be a powerful experience in terms of continuing professional development.
- The participation of teachers in working groups and intensive staff training seminars are organised by the various ERASMUS+ and Creative Europe projects in which the Royal Conservatoire frequently participates.
- One other successful opportunity for continuing professional development at the Royal Conservatoire is the possibility for teachers to upgrade their pre-Bologna 2<sup>nd</sup>-cycle diploma to an officially recognised master's degree. In order to obtain this degree, teachers can get exemptions for all performance components and professional integration of the master's programme on the basis of their 2<sup>nd</sup>-cycle diploma (usually a Performance Diploma or a 2<sup>nd</sup>-cycle Music Diploma) and their long-term musical practice, but they still need to fulfil the research component that was introduced into the 2<sup>nd</sup>-cycle programmes with the introduction of the Master of Music degree. As part of their research assignments in this programme, teachers are given the opportunity to hire international research supervisors or create their own master's electives, which are often executed in the form of international study visits.
- The Royal Conservatoire organises international conferences on a regular basis, in which its teachers and students can participate. Examples of these are the Royal Early Music Conference Series organised annually by the Early Music Department and conferences organised by the Institute of Sonology, such as '50 Years of Electronic and Computer Music Education' (2014) in which 17 international educational institutions were represented with lectures, curriculum presentations and concert performances, 'Historically Informed Performance Practice of Electroacoustic Music' (2016) comprising lectures, masterclasses and concerts organised in collaboration with the Zürcher Hochschule der Künste, and 'Transformations of the Audible'

<sup>8</sup> 22 staff mobilities were cancelled because of COVID-19



(2019) in partnership with Leiden University's Academy of Creative and Performing Arts, which gathered a large number of international experts in the field of music, the arts and the scholarly field of sound studies.

- The Royal Conservatoire is also involved in several developmental activities, which are aimed at sharing expertise with institutions in various parts of the world. Examples of these activities are small-scale teaching assignments in Cuba, annual teaching visits of the Composition Department to Ghana, and, within the context of the ERASMUS+ Capacity Building programme, the participation in the DEMUSIS project (2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021) coordinated by the Faculty of Music at the University of Arts in Belgrade, which has involved the Conservatoire's career skills teachers in various teaching activities in Serbia. Even though these activities mainly aim at capacity building in these countries with the help of expertise that is provided by the Royal Conservatoire, the Conservatoire believes these activities to be reciprocal in nature, as they should not be seen only as activities where expertise is being disseminated but also as important opportunities for Royal Conservatoire staff to get acquainted with other cultures and other musical genres and to be able to operate in (often very) different circumstances.

Finally, the Royal Conservatoire finds it vital for its management and teaching staff to stay updated about the latest developments at an international level in both the higher music education context and the music profession. At the same time it also believes that it has a collegial responsibility to be actively involved in international organisations that can further develop the higher music education and the music profession sectors in general. The Royal Conservatoire therefore has an active portfolio in terms of the participation of its staff in various international projects and organisations. Various teachers and members of the management are active in initiatives of the European Association of Conservatoires – AEC (e.g. in the Entrepreneurship Working Group of the Strengthening Music in Society – SMS project, the Pop & Jazz Platform Working Group, the VoCon Working Group and the Early Music Task Force), the International Association of Schools for Jazz – IASJ (executive leadership 2004-2018), the European Association of Music in School – EAS (presidency 2011-2015), the European Chamber Music Academy – ECMA (vice-presidency since 2020), *MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement* (reviewers and members of the reviewers training teams) and IMZ – International Music & Media Centre (presidency and vice-chairmanship since 2008). The Institute of Sonology represents the Netherlands in the International Confederation of Electroacoustic Music – ICEM and the Art of Sound department is active in the Audio Engineering Society – AES.

## **International learning environment: international strategic partnerships**

In order to support its international ambitions, the Royal Conservatoire participates in various structural international strategic partnerships, which are organised with institutions with comparable ethos, goals and objectives, or set up around a specific area of specialisation (e.g. improvisation or chamber music). The main principle of such networks is that institutions can greatly benefit from each other's resources and expertise on a non-competitive basis, and that they can assist institutions in their development. The following strategic partnerships are currently of importance.

The Royal Conservatoire is a founding member of the international network '**ConNext**', which consists of ten conservatoires worldwide of similar size, profile and artistic and educational ethos that have expressed the ambition to develop and maintain an intensive cooperation with regard to exchanges, advancement of expertise and curriculum development (Royal Conservatoire in The Hague, Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo, McGill University's Schulich School of Music in Montreal, Queensland Conservatorium in Brisbane, Yong Siew Toh Conservatory in Singapore, Haute école de musique de Genève, USC Thornton School of Music in Los Angeles and the Orpheus Institute in Ghent). 'ConNext' has formulated a 'ConNext

Charter' signed by the directors of the institutes, consisting of ten shared principles agreed upon by all participating institutions. 'ConNext' management and teaching staff are meeting for annual management trainings, seminars on specific themes, and as international external examiners in assessment panels, while opportunities are created for students to participate in activities of 'ConNext' partners.

Another network that has seen a dynamic growth of activities is the **International Benchmarking Group**, which is coordinated by the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester and includes the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, Haute école de musique de Genève, the College of Music at Mahidol University in Bangkok and the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo. Originally set up as a benchmarking group with the aim to collect and compare quantitative data on education and resources (see the next chapter for further information), the network has increased its cooperation during the COVID-19 pandemic by initiating working groups in the areas of e-learning, research and student representation. Currently it is also exploring cooperation through digital tools, both in the form of online masterclasses with the help of the LoLa system and by providing students mutual access to online courses. The leaders of the partner institutions meet on a monthly basis to exchange information on current situations and discuss plans for further cooperation.

Furthermore, the Royal Conservatoire is involved in three discipline-based international networks, the **European Chamber Music Academy (ECMA)**, the **METRIC Network** and the '**Prix de Lausanne**'. The participation in ECMA is important to gain access to high quality teaching in various European institutions in the area of chamber music, which will help to improve the quality and the reputation of chamber music education at the Conservatoire. ECMA runs its own European Joint Master Programme 'ECMAster' and is currently implementing a large Creative Europe project entitled 'ECMA PRO'. A similar role is played by the Modernizing European Higher Music Education through Improvisation – METRIC Network, which stems from the ERASMUS+ Intensives in the area of improvisation which the Royal Conservatoire organised in the period 2012-2016. METRIC intends to organise annual intensives and promote European cooperation through exchanges and joint European modules. The Dance Department of the Royal Conservatoire is a partner school of the 'Prix de Lausanne': the Fondation pour l'Art Choréographique has selected the Dance Department as one of the institutes where winners of the internationally renowned ballet competition, the 'Prix de Lausanne', can study. In total 46 partner schools from all over the world are connected with this prize.

In addition to these network-based collaborations, the Royal Conservatoire also maintains structural strategic partnerships with individual institutions. In the area of early music there are close partnerships with the early music departments of the Juilliard School in New York for regular joint concert performances and the Janáček Academy in Brno for the European Master of Early Music – EMEM. The Institute of Sonology enjoys a close cooperation with the Technische Universität Berlin for the Double Degree Master Audio Communication & Sonology.

## **International learning environment: the experiences of our students**

Evidence of the level of student satisfaction with the international learning environment can be found on the Conservatoire's student satisfaction survey and the national alumni survey 'Kunstenmonitor'.

In the Student Satisfaction Survey (STO) students were asked about the international learning environment and the access to international opportunities. In the tables below, the scores (on a scale of 1–5 from low to high satisfaction) can be found, which indicate that students are generally satisfied on these points.

General questions	2015	2017	2019
The international orientation of your study programme	3,7	3,7	3,7

Specific questions on international dimension	2015	2017	2019
The international dimension of your institution	4,2	4	4,1
The international nature of your learning environment	4,2	4,2	4,3
The information you have been given before your enrolment as an international student	3,4	3,3	3,7
The availability of information on international study opportunities (ERASMUS)	3,1	3,5	3,5
Quality of the information provided before and after your enrolment	3,3	3,2	3,6
The assistance provided by the international students adviser (international office)	3,3	3,4	3,7
The assistance provided by the Student Administration	3,4	3,5	3,7
The assistance by other support/administrative staff	3,2	3,3	3,7
The range of English-taught subjects available	4,3	4,5	4,6
The quality of English-taught subjects available	4,0	4,2	4,3
The extent to which teachers are ready and able to respond to your specific questions as an international student	3,6	3,7	3,9
The extent to which supporting staff are ready and able to your specific questions as an international student	3,3	3,4	3,7

In the nationwide 'Kunstenmonitor' (a Dutch system surveying all alumni of Dutch higher arts education programmes 1.5 year after their graduation on their experience with their education and on their current professional situation), one question focuses on international orientation: "The programme has sufficient international orientation". On this question, the Royal Conservatoire as a whole has scored consistently higher than the national average:

Royal Conservatoire		2016	2017	2018	2019	National average 2019
Programme has sufficient international orientation	% agree	59	62	65	59	54
	% disagree	24	20	11	25	26

### 3. INTERNATIONAL ASSESSMENT, COMPARISON AND REVIEW

The third aspect of our internationalisation strategy concerns benchmarking, assessment and review in an international context. This is built on the assumption that if the international dimension of the Royal Conservatoire would be limited to having students and teachers coming to the institution from other countries, then one could certainly say that such a dimension has already been a reality for some time. This reality would not distinguish the Conservatoire from many other institutions, as the presence of foreign students and teachers has been traditionally high in most conservatoires in the Netherlands and elsewhere. So when institutions claim to have a strong international profile, what does this actually mean? How do we ensure that a qualification like 'international' (or even 'world-class' – another qualification often used to highlight a strong international profile of institutions) is not just politically correct rhetoric used by institutions that in fact have a regional or even local character, but nevertheless have large numbers of international students?

It is for this reason that the Royal Conservatoire believes it can only call itself truly international when, in addition to using an international qualifications framework and the presence of an international learning environment as described in previous chapters, it finds ways to assess its activities and results at an international level. The Conservatoire therefore uses several internationally developed and internationally based tools that can provide an indication of where it stands internationally from a qualitative perspective, thus making a direct connection between internationalisation and quality assurance.

#### **Creating a connection between internationalisation and quality assurance**

During the past few years, the Royal Conservatoire has developed an approach to quality assurance, which is symbolised by the 'Lemniscate of continuous improvement'. This lemniscate connects external and internal quality assurance tools in an effective way, and also suggests how we can develop an overall quality culture in which artistic and educational quality go hand in hand and the learning experience of students will be further reinforced<sup>9</sup>. Based on this approach to quality assurance, the Royal Conservatoire is using several internationally based tools for the assessment of artistic standards and educational quality.

#### **International tools for assessment**

Since 2012, the Royal Conservatoire has been using **international external examiners** to assess artistic standards from an international point of view. These are specialists in a specific discipline (e.g. a teacher in violin, composition, voice or electroacoustic music) with the task to serve on assessment panels in formative and/or summative performance and research examinations. Even if a longstanding experience in the Netherlands with external examiners exists, these were usually experts from within the country. International experts can bring an additional external perspective to the assessment of (final) presentations, which give institutions a sense of where they stand in relation to internationally accepted artistic standards<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> See the document 'Quality Culture at the Royal Conservatoire: 2020 and beyond'.

<sup>10</sup> The subject of international external examiners was addressed extensively in the ERASMUS Network for Music 'Polifonia', a large project addressing various issues regarding higher music education. 'Polifonia' involved 55 partner institutions in 28 countries and was jointly coordinated by the Royal Conservatoire and AEC in the period 2011-2014. See <https://www.aec-music.eu/polifonia/>

## International tools for review and accreditation

At programme level, the Royal Conservatoire has started with a new tool for quality assurance with an international dimension in 2016, entitled the '**Critical Friend**'. These are external international reviewers who visit the Conservatoire for a few days to attend lessons and examinations (but not to be part of the assessment panel), sample written materials, and talk to students and teachers to get an impression of the quality of the programmes in terms of artistic standards and educational quality, which they then write up in a short report. On the basis of this report, the departments are subsequently invited to write a response with an improvement plan, which the Critical Friend will assess once again during a second visit within three years. This Critical Friend approach plays a crucial role in a pilot for the development of a new accreditation system in Dutch higher education, in which the University of Arts participates. Meanwhile, practically all departments now participate in this scheme, which has been welcomed by departments, students and teachers, and increased their involvement in quality assurance processes.

At department level, the Royal Conservatoire regularly organises **professional stakeholder meetings**. During these meetings, experts from the music profession are being invited to give their opinion on the curricula and the achieved learning outcomes of the Conservatoire. In most cases, these consultations include experts from abroad in addition to Dutch experts and are conducted in English.

In terms of **external review and accreditation**, the Royal Conservatoire supports the aims of *MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement*, an independent European organisation for the evaluation and accreditation in the higher music education sector. *MusiQuE*, which is based on a partnership including the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC), the European Music School Union (EMU), the Performing Arts League Europe (Pearle\*) and the European Association of Music in Schools (EAS), offers various external quality assurance services in the form of evaluation and review visits, and formal accreditation procedures. For this purpose it has developed a set of criteria and procedures that are subject-specific and international. In *MusiQuE* the focus on artistic standards and educational quality come together: in its procedures, attention is not only given to processes and educational quality issues, but also to artistic standards and musical content. Another important dimension of the *MusiQuE* approach is the use of international peers. This will not only increase the objectivity of the comments made by the peers, but also provide the institution with an opportunity to underpin its international claims by having undergone an evaluation using internationally accepted standards and international experts. *MusiQuE* is registered in the European Register for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (EQAR), which means that on a European level it has the same formal status as most national quality assurance and accreditation agencies, and that its criteria and procedures are internationally recognised. The Royal Conservatoire believes that for any conservatoire with claims on or ambitions for a strong international dimension, it should not suffice to be reviewed or accredited according to national standards: they should be assessed through the *MusiQuE* methodology in addition to or instead of the national procedures.

It is worth pointing out here that the Master of Music and Master of Sonology programmes received, in addition to *MusiQuE* accreditations, a NVAO Distinctive Quality Feature for internationalisation during the accreditation procedure in 2012, and the Bachelor of Music received the Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation (CeQuInt) of the European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education (ECA) in 2016.

## International tools for benchmarking

Another interesting approach to address issues on educational quality from an international perspective can be

found in the **International Benchmarking Group (IBG)**, which the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester initiated in 2011 with partners in Oslo, Graz, The Hague, Montreal, Sydney, Bangkok and Boston<sup>11</sup>. The aim of the project is to obtain a set of comparative data from similar institutions, against which they can compare themselves and which can be used for internal analysis. All partners joined the project because they were interested in finding out their strengths and weaknesses with the aim to identify areas of improvement. The experiences show that the participation in such an international benchmarking exercise can provide institutions with relevant management information, in particular with a view on educational quality issues. By making an international comparison among institutions of a similar size, structure and artistic ethos, these institutions are able to put the management information they collect through their own internal quality assurance activities on a regular basis into an international context. The IBG has currently started to collect and compare more specific curricular information: for 2020-2021, it has decided to compare information on bachelor's programmes in the area of vocal studies in all partner institutions.

## International rankings

With regards to **international rankings**, the Conservatoire has been a test institution for a pilot organised by the AEC for the European U-Multirank project during 2016-2017. U-Multirank is a multidimensional ranking system that compares higher education institutions according to 4 dimensions and 32 indicators. During the project, the Royal Conservatoire was one of 19 institutions worldwide, which participated in the collection of discipline-specific data through an institutional and a student questionnaire. The aim was to explore the possibility of setting up a multidimensional ranking system in the field of music, but in the end, this discipline-specific pilot was not finalised. Meanwhile, however, U-Multirank has continued to publish information about Dutch higher education institutions based on data collected through other means, which has led to unclear and unfavourable listings of the University of the Arts The Hague as a whole in the U-Multirank results. For the moment, therefore, the University has decided, along with other Dutch art universities, not to provide U-Multirank with data for the further elaboration of its rankings.

Nevertheless, the situation with U-Multirank cannot be an excuse for the Royal Conservatoire to avoid the issue of rankings as such. It is for example noticeable that while many of the Conservatoire's partner institutions are listed in the international QS World University Ranking, the Royal Conservatoire is not, which is a situation that will need to be addressed.

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<sup>11</sup> The activities of the International Benchmarking Group were mentioned as an example of good practice in the publication *Learning from each other. Sharing good practice through benchmarking*, published in 2014 by the AEC in the framework of the ERASMUS Network for Music 'Polifonia'.

# POLICY OBJECTIVES 2021-2024

Based on the situation and considerations described in the previous chapters, the Royal Conservatoire has formulated the following policy objectives for internationalisation for the period 2021-2024. They are described in line with the three main aspects for internationalisation as formulated in the University of the Arts The Hague's Institutional Plan 2019-2024 and in this document.

## 1. Adherence to and use of international qualification frameworks

- We will continue with the use and the further development of the AEC Learning Outcomes as the main **qualification framework** for our curricula. During the academic year 2021-2022, the programme objectives of all bachelor's programmes will be adapted to the 2017 version of the AEC Learning Outcomes. We will promote the rationale for the use of these programme objectives and their content among heads of department, teachers and students, and work with AEC to promote the AEC Learning Outcomes more widely.

## 2. The maintenance and further development of an international learning environment

- We will strengthen our **communication to prospective international students**, taking into account the recommendation of the assessment panel of the Institutional Review in 2019 to improve the information provision to this group of students. The international section of the Royal Conservatoire's website will be further improved and updated, and other forms of communication and support will be explored.
- We will strengthen the position of international students by addressing issues of **diversity and intercultural awareness**. A faculty-level working group on diversity is already in place and a university-level diversity officer being appointed, and courses for intercultural awareness will be organised during the Start-Up! week and throughout the year for students and (non)-academic staff so that services for international students can be improved. The **representation of international students** will be improved by adding international students and teachers to the Study Programme and Exam Committees, in line with the developments in the Departmental Council of Representatives. Our provision of Dutch language classes will be continued and the provision of English courses will be reactivated. We will also explore how to address the **social needs** of our international students through targeted activities and the further development of the student buddy system, which is in place since 2021.
- With regards to regular **international student recruitment**, we will:
  - Work with the departments and Marketing & Communication to explore ways on how to communicate the unique features of the Royal Conservatoire more clearly to potential students through online campaigns and documentation.
  - Keep a good balance between Dutch, European and non-European students to ensure the presence of an international learning environment, while providing sufficient space to Dutch students.
  - Further refine online application and admission processes.
  - Continue with the current level of intake of ERASMUS+ students, while at the same time improve the communication and service to potential and sitting ERASMUS+ students, in particular with regards to admission and planning.
  - Activate our network of alumni and an international recruitment approach by our Marketing & Communication Department will be further developed in cooperation with the other departments.
  - Review the recruitment activities in Portugal and explore other ways of direct recruitment.

- Explore ways on how to improve housing opportunities for international students.
- We will promote **outgoing ERASMUS+ student mobility** as a top priority. Target numbers will be agreed upon with the departments, the provision of information will be increased and possible concerns among instrumental and vocal teachers will be addressed within the departments. The possibility of top-up grants will be explored to increase accessibility to mobility activities. For Dutch students, an ERASMUS+ study period should become compulsory, in particular for students coming from the School for Young Talent.
- We will explore the opportunities offered by the **ERASMUS+ Internships**, especially for internships offered after studies. This requires building up international networks of internship providers.
- We will continue to cooperate internationally with regards to **curriculum development**, especially in the area of digital learning tools and the creation of joint modules and programmes. The active participation in ERASMUS+ and other projects will be continued, including exploring the opportunities offered by the new EU flagship 'European Universities' initiative.
- We will increase our efforts to improve the quality of teaching by not only reactivating **English courses for our (non-)academic staff**, but also further developing the other continuing professional development activities with an international dimension as described in this document.
- We will continue recruiting new **international teaching faculty** in addition to Dutch teachers with strong international profiles. In the departments of Classical Music and Jazz this has already led to the appointment of new international teachers who are attracting higher numbers of students. We will also promote the use of the ERASMUS+ programme as a tool for the organisation of incoming masterclasses and workshops.
- We will continue to work with our partners in the existing networks for **strategic partnerships** and set up new bilateral and multilateral strategic partnerships when needed in particular areas.

### 3. International comparison and assessment by international peers

- We will continue to invite **international external examiners** and have agreed with the departments on a target number per year for this purpose. At the same time, we will work with our international partners to ensure that this is seen as a reciprocal activity.
- We will intensify the cooperation for **international benchmarking** in the International Benchmarking Group (IBG) by collecting and comparing meaningful curricular information in addition to general quantitative data.
- We will work together with *MusiQuE* in the area of **external quality assurance in an international context**, especially with regards to developments in the area of accreditation in the Netherlands. If the national accreditation system will develop into the direction of institutional accreditation giving institutions the possibility to review study programmes on their own, we will further develop the Critical Friend approach into an innovative and more effective form of programme review with a strong international dimension.
- We will establish a working group that will link Quality Culture, Marketing & Communication, Team International and the educational departments in order to increase our visibility in **international rankings**.

### 4. Finally, more generally we will:

- Work consistently with the departments on **an annual departmental planning** of incoming and outgoing student and teacher mobility, including the use of international external examiners.
- Strengthen our **cooperation and coordination at University level** by working closely together with our colleagues at the Royal Academy of Art with regards to university-level policies (e.g. language policy, ERASMUS+, general internationalisation policies) and the exchange of experiences and expertise.
- Work with the **working group on sustainability** to develop a more environmental-friendly approach to internationalisation, e.g. in the form of guidelines for travel.



# CONCLUSION

The European University Association (EUA) writes the following in its 2021 document 'Universities without walls – A vision for 2030':

*The future of Europe's universities will be transnational. International cooperation will continue to provide a prerequisite for high quality research and innovation, as well as learning and teaching. Universities are showcases for peaceful and constructive European and international cooperation. They also nurture a positive and reflective attitude towards a European identity, in addition to global, national and regional ones, and will do so in the future.*

The Royal Conservatoire fully agrees with this opinion. In this document it has described the rationale, activities and future steps for its ambition to not only become a leading institution in the area of internationalisation in higher education, but also to make this one of its unique features with the ultimate aim to constantly improve the quality of its education and attract students and teachers of high quality.

Nevertheless, this document has also sought to confirm the understanding that internationalisation should never be an aim in itself, but one that serves the needs of the institution, its students and teachers, and stakeholders in a wider context of the Conservatoire. This becomes even more relevant when the Conservatoire will move to its new building 'Amare' in the city centre of The Hague in 2021. In 'Amare' the Conservatoire will be in one building with the Residentie Orkest and the Nederlands Dans Theater, offering new opportunities for artistic co-operation and curriculum development with these professional partner institutions. In addition, being an inhabitant of this building with its central location in the city, the role of the Conservatoire as a cultural and educational provider to the general public will be enforced and its societal engagement with the city strengthened. This will give interesting possibilities to explore concrete forms of the new and service-oriented concept of Internationalisation of Higher Education for Society. The main challenge will then be how the international dimension of the Conservatoire can positively influence the local dimension and vice-versa, so that a true 'glocal' dimension can emerge. As can be read in this document, the Royal Conservatoire is looking forward to this challenge by serving as a laboratory for the development of such a 'glocal' dimension as part of its mission to advance the position of music and music education in society.

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# APPENDIX: DEPARTEMENTAL PLANS

With the aim to make our internationalisation policy more goal oriented and to connect it better to the activities in departments, annual meetings with the heads of the departments have been started to discuss goals at departmental level. So far, these talks have only been conducted with the departments for Classical Music, Early Music, Voice and Jazz, but the intention is to hold these talk with all department.

The departments contacted agree that it is desirable and beneficial to increase the outgoing student mobility figures and to actively steer the outgoing flow of staff for both professional development and promotional purposes. Identifying the most suitable partner institutions for outgoing student mobility vs outgoing/incoming staff mobility, encouraging teaching staff members to go visit partners and engaging in more active promotion to students and teachers, are necessary in order to approach mobility in a more strategic and therefore beneficial way. Early planning was also identified as an important issue, which will allow for the use of the ERASMUS+ funds of the partner institutions (e.g. with regards to incoming teachers mobility and international external examiners) and will also generate a more balanced flow of mobility, fostering a stronger relation with the chosen partners.

The active promotion is a coordinated effort of the departments and the International Relations Coordinator - during the first semester the International Relations Coordinator gives informative and promotional presentations to all students, teachers and staff, giving special attention to the preferred destinations per department. And last but not least, it is important to notice, before looking at the departments' individually, that there is a clear overlap of target destinations, which brings to light the obvious benefit of drawing a coordinated strategic multi-year plan.

**The Classical Department** is already quite dynamic in terms of mobility. Nevertheless, there is room for further development with the implementation of a more strategic approach towards mobility. The department receives about 15 mobility students per year out of which some places will be reserved for applicants of ConNext partners as a way to solidify the relations with these preferred partners. The teaching staff will be encouraged and invited to go on mobility based on yearly plan which aims at 1 teacher per instrumental section per year, including 1 teacher per ConNext partner per year. The list of people to invite and the suggestions of partners to visit will be provided by the Head of Department, in coordination with a list of invitations for teachers to give master classes from the corresponding partners, as well as international external examiners. Incoming students participating in joint programmes (e.g. the ECMAster) have a guaranteed place and outgoing students in these programmes are given priority when it comes to assigning scholarships.

	Objectives Classical Department 2021-2022
Incoming Student Mobility	15 <i>On 15 March 2021 there were 95 applications to be considered</i>
Outgoing Student Mobility	10
Incoming Staff Mobility	Tbd
Outgoing Staff Mobility	1 x instrumental section
International Examiners	4

The **Early Music Department** identified the need to encourage more of its teaching staff to take advantage of the many mobility opportunities as a means not only of professional development (ConNext partners and/or other important networks), but also as a way to address some unjustified fear of losing students because of their participation in ERASMUS+. Supporting and steering a more active and targeted staff mobility will also indirectly support the goal of increasing the number of outgoing student mobility – these teacher will be more inclined to encourage their students to do the same. Outgoing students of joint programmes (e.g. the Master EMEM) also have priority in receiving a grant. With the above in mind, there will be a multi-annual plan which will reflect instruments/teachers vs partner universities to visit. The most interesting destinations that need to be further explored in a variety of ways, including inviting teaching staff for master classes (live or online) and international external examiners, are: Basel, Brno , Bucharest, Tallinn, Riga, Vilnius, Bremen, Frankfurt, Freiburg, Poland and the Baltic states in general.

	<b>Objectives Early Music Department 2021-2022</b>
<b>Incoming Student Mobility</b>	9 <i>On 15 March 2021 there were 18 applications to be considered</i>
<b>Outgoing Student Mobility</b>	4
<b>Incoming Staff Mobility</b>	Tbd
<b>Outgoing Staff Mobility</b>	4
<b>International Examiners</b>	2

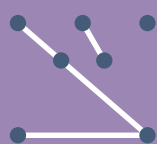
The **Vocal Department** will actively and systematically promote outgoing teaching staff mobility too, mostly for the same reasons and with the same objectives as described for Early Music. Like within the other departments, international external examiners are already being invited on a regular basis, as well as visiting teachers. It must be noted, however, that planning of these is a challenge with not having exact examination dates at an early stage. The most interesting destinations for the department, which cover the multiple objectives already mentioned above, overlap to some extent with the Early Music and Classical departments: London (Guildhall), Lyon, Vienna, Barcelona, Iceland, Oslo, Helsinki Bucharest, Riga, Bulgaria and the Baltic states in general.

	<b>Objectives Vocal Department 2021-2022</b>
<b>Incoming Student Mobility</b>	4 <i>On 15 March 2021 there were 14 applications to be considered</i>
<b>Outgoing Student Mobility</b>	2
<b>Incoming Staff Mobility</b>	Tbd
<b>Outgoing Staff Mobility</b>	2
<b>International Examiners</b>	2

Some of the teaching staff of **the Jazz Department** have been pro-active concerning outgoing mobility opportunities offered by the ERASMUS+ programme, but nonetheless the department can benefit from a more targeted approach. This could be for indirect promotional reasons, as well as for the strategic development of existing partnerships and eventually new ones, not to mention to broaden the reach of these opportunities to more teaching staff members. The department has already identified (existing) destinations with which to work more intensively and which also partly overlap with other departments: Basel, Helsinki, Oslo, Brno, Baltic states, Poland, Bergen, Berlin, Paris, Sienna, Rome, Ferrara, Parma, Köln and Antwerp. Similar to the other departments, there will be a multi-annual plan reflecting the teachers and instrument groups identified, contacted and encouraged to go on mobility, and, taking into account the destinations vs objectives of these visits, also identifying the teachers to be invited for both master classes and examinations.

	<b>Objectives Jazz Department 2021-2022</b>
<b>Incoming Student Mobility</b>	8 <i>On 15 March 2021 there were 36 applications to be considered</i>
<b>Outgoing Student Mobility</b>	4
<b>Incoming Staff Mobility</b>	Tbd
<b>Outgoing Staff Mobility</b>	6
<b>International Examiners</b>	2





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