

Self-Evaluation Report

Department of Fine Art

Submitted for subject-level review according to the Quality Enhancement Framework for Icelandic Higher Education 2017-2024

September 2018

Summary and Main Conclusions

Writing this self-evaluation report has proven to be most beneficial for the Department of Fine Art. The whole process has helped to establish a clear understanding of the structures within the Department and the institution it is part of. The input from the external expert was especially valuable, not only his reflective view of the Department's current practice, but also the number of points of good practice that he identified within the unit. The external expert also certifies that the self-evaluation review was carried out in a very positive and open manner, with a constructive willingness by the Department to this exercise as a full enhancement process. The process has shaped a clearer vision on how to develop further as a department and where improvements can be implemented both departmentally and institutionally.

Faculty Characteristics

The mission of the Department is to provide quality education in fine art. The Department's strength is its artistic diversity, high student teacher ratio, flexibility and openness in communication, and close proximity to the professional field. In his final report the external expert congratulates the Department on the high quality and standards it achieves, which are in his opinion comparable to the leading arts institutions across Europe.

Teaching and Learning

The main points that this procedure has revealed where improvement can be implemented are the following:

- The Department needs to work towards reducing workload of staff by better defining roles, and clarifying work procedures, as well as simplifying curricular structure and make students more responsible for their studies.
- The relationship between staff research and teaching should be strengthened and workshop staff can be involved more in course programming, with the aim to further intertwine studio practice, workshops and theory.
- The Department can increase student involvement in course planning and other programming.
- The Department and staff from central administration can further join forces with regards to internal quality management, student support and public communication.
- Public outreach can be more focused, and it is important to strengthen the IUA and departmental website to communicate and archive the Department's activity.

Management of Research

In terms of research it is clear that the Department has great potential for enhancing research within the field of visual art in this country, with its human resources and experience in running an international research-based MA Programme:

- Faculty research activity needs more support at all levels; national, institutional, departmental, and financial.

On the departmental level the focus will be on:

- Strengthening the relationship between research and teaching
- Establishing and nurturing a fine art research cell for faculty members
- Creating an opportunity for a collective publication of staff research
- Establishing a yearly fine art research symposium

Follow-up Processes

An action plan has been drafted based on the results of this report, for the Department to address the principle aims and objectives for the next five years in terms of teaching and learning, research, administration and public outreach. This plan will be assessed every autumn semester during Project Week and re-evaluated at the end of each spring term.

Foreword

This self-evaluation report (SER) is the result of an internal evaluation process within the Department of Fine Art at the Iceland University of the Arts. The process was conducted as part of an internal quality procedure in accordance with the Quality Enhancement Framework for Icelandic Higher Education 2017-2024.

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The evaluation process took place in the period between October 2017 – June 2018, with the report concluded in September 2018. The Committee met 15 times during the course of the evaluation process, reported to the external expert, and received feedback and comments. The five-year action plan was developed after the committee members, including the external expert, staff, students, alumni, and stakeholders, convened for two days, on the 13th and 14th of February 2018. Numerous consultation meetings were held during the review process with stakeholders, i.e. alumni, students and representatives from the external professional field. Statistics in this report refer to the school year 2016-17 unless otherwise stated.

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List of Acronyms

AC Academic Council
HEI Higher Education Institution
IUA Iceland University of the Arts
MC Management Council
MESC Ministry of Education, Science and Culture
PD Programme Director
QEF Quality Enhancement Framework
QTR Division of Quality, Teaching, and Research

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1. Lessons Learned from QEF1

The following is a list of comments put forward in the 2013 self-evaluation report, followed by a short description of reactions and the current status of tasks.

	Suggestions	Response	Result
1.	Simplification of the curricular structure	The curricular structure was simplified. Number of courses went from 91 to 76 between the years 2014 and 2015. The number has gone up to 87 in 2017.	To solely enlarge modules has proved problematic as students move through their studies in yearly cohorts and failing a large module creates unnecessary obstructions for students. Enlarging modules does not automatically reduce workload for students or staff. The BA Curriculum was, however, simplified again for 18/19 to achieve a balance in this matter. Teaching hours of part-time teachers were cut by 25% in autumn 2016, giving students more time to work individually.
2.	Clarifying the role of part-time lecturers	Part-time teachers requested closer contact with the faculty and a more clearly defined role. Faculty and part-time teachers convene at the beginning of each semester.	A significant reform in earlier scheduling of courses (up to a year in advance) and meetings regarding the departmental level with all part-time teachers and programme directors results in stronger courses and provides teachers with a better understanding of their relation to the curricular structure as whole.
3.	Formalisation of collaborative projects	The Department collaborates extensively with the professional field (institutions and individuals).	Formal agreements have been made for recent collaborative projects, such as Gerðarsafn, Sigurjónssafn and The Living Art Museum.
4.	Enhancing artistic research of staff and students	Recruitment of faculty with research competence and research experience. Public lecture series. Three faculty members now hold PhDs.	This results in a more active departmental discourse on research and an increased number of applications to national competitive funds. This also strengthens research discourse at the institutional level.
5.	Defining the correlation of the BA and MA programmes	Faculty members are assigned either to BA or MA programmes but are available for teaching on both levels. BA faculty regularly take on the role of MA project instructors and MA faculty are available for tutorials and critiques in the BA programme. Both programmes share national and international visiting lecturers. Students at both levels work together on running the student gallery space RYMD.	There are multiple synergies between the two levels. According to minutes from meetings with academic staff, students, and alumni, as part of the self-evaluation process, the difference between the two levels is distinct.
6.	Interdisciplinary courses within the IUA	We are still in the situation of institutional complications preventing the development of interdisciplinarity, i.e. the unresolved housing situation and technical problems regarding cross-departmental time tables. A new online curriculum, launching in autumn 2018, gives hope for improvements, as time-tables will be streamlined across depts.	<i>Dealing</i> and <i>Dialogue</i> are examples of cross-departmental courses, one for each cycle of study. BA and MA degree exhibitions are also an example of cross departmental activity. The new online curriculum presentation will enhance students' access and transparency on interdepartmental curricula.

2. Department Profile: Goals and Context

2.1. Institutional Context

The Iceland University of the Arts (IUA) is the only higher education institution in the field of the arts in Iceland, and thus responsible for education, research, and policy making in that sector of Icelandic society. It is at the forefront of knowledge creation in the field of the arts in Iceland, communicates knowledge and expertise in the arts to society, and promotes professionalism in the arts. It is a self-governing institution providing education in fine arts, theatre, dance, music, design, architecture, and art education. The IUA benchmarks itself against other art universities in the Nordic Countries (Norway, Sweden, and Finland) by participating in Nordic and Nordic-Baltic networks at the subject level, as well as being a member of ELIA and the annual Nordic Rectors' Conference.

The Charter for the IUA was signed by representatives from The Association of Icelandic Artists and the Ministry of Education and Science in (MESCS) in 1998, leading to its legal status as a higher arts education institution (HEI) a year later with the admission of the first student cohort.

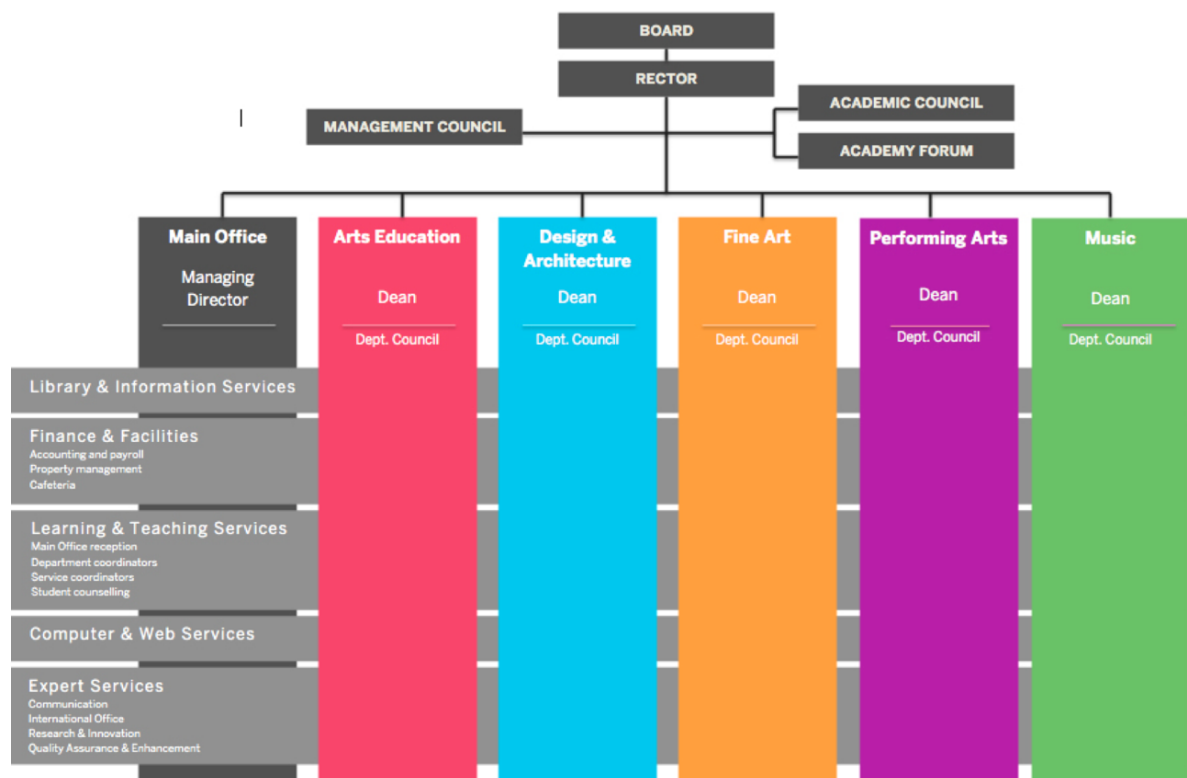


FIGURE 1 IUA ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Two decades later the University has developed into a dynamic and manifold institution, running five departments. It offers a total of 18 study programmes, of which seven are at the graduate level. In 2016-17, 463 students were enrolled, thereof 77 at the graduate level. A total of 112 permanent staff were employed, filling 85 full-time positions (thereof 56 full-time academic positions). A total of 400 part-time lecturers and guest-lecturers came to the institution during that time, equivalent of 23 full-time positions on an annual basis.

Management Council

The Management Council (MC) is the main decision-making platform within the University. The council discusses issues shared by all departments and support services, quality assurance and the general organisation of the University's operations, including teaching and research management. The MC consists of the rector (chair), the managing director and

the deans of departments. Members of support services and central administration occasionally participate in MC meetings.

Academic Council and Sub-Committees

The Academic Council (AC) is a cross-departmental information-sharing platform on academic affairs. The AC takes the initiative on formulating its agenda while also receiving cases from the rector and the MC, departmental councils or sub-committees. The AC consists of the rector, a dean, one academic faculty from each department (five in total), two part-time lecturers, and two student representatives; one from the undergraduate programme and another from the graduate programme. The council meets at least once a month throughout the academic year. Furthermore, the council supervises the operations of its two sub-committees, Teaching Committee and Research Committee. The committees have one academic faculty member from each department (five in total) and a student representative (elected by the Student Union). Each committee elects a chair, who reports to the AC once a semester.

2.2. Department Overview

The Department of Fine Art was the first to be founded as part of the first and only higher education institution in the field of the arts in 1999. The Department is located in the Laugarnes building, along with the Department of Art Education. Facilities in this former factory building provide students with ample space for workshops and studios, lecture and seminar rooms, in-house galleries and project spaces. Since its inception in 1999, the IUA has been located in temporary housing.

Today, the department offers one three-year 180 ECTS study programme, leading to a BA-degree in Fine Art, and one two-year 120 ECTS study programme, leading to an MA-degree in Fine Art (launched in 2012). During the academic year of 2016-2017, 98 students were enrolled in the two programmes, 26 people were employed as permanent staff (not all full-time), and 83 part-time teachers and visiting lecturers.

Characteristic to teaching is the generally high student-teacher ratio, or approximately ten students per academic position on average. This high student-teacher ratio should be noted as one of the characteristics that lies at the heart of all IUA practice, shaping its identity as a higher education institution in the arts.

2.3. Department Mission and Goals with Prioritisation

The Department goal is to provide opportunities for students to increase their knowledge and appreciation of art, create an environment where they can develop as artists, and teach them the techniques and working habits necessary for successful careers or further studies. The aim is to be a leading force in fine art instruction at the university level at the national level and to foster an open venue for research and debate. Students and staff are expected to take an active part in cultural life and to maintain vibrant ties with the artistic community. The Department maintains an ambitious level of student-centred learning and teaching with an emphasis on direct contact with the contemporary art scene.

The main focus points of the Department's future vision are to (laid out in more detail and prioritized in a five-year action plan):

- Encourage individual growth among students and staff.
- Nurture and expand the diversity of artistic approach within the department.
- Offer a study line in curatorial practice within the MA programme.
- Ensure active international relations of teachers and students.
- Increase and strengthen the practice of research within the faculty and actively introduce students to research practice on the BA level and in-depth on the MA level.
- Ensure that development in housing on the institutional level, short and long term, supports the Department's operations and improves the working environment.

- Improve flow of information regarding curricula and electives in order to make students more responsible for their studies
- Reduce workload through clearer mapping of roles and simplifying the curricular structure.

REFLECTIONS

- The Department wishes to further intertwine studio, workshop, and theory. Steps have been taken in this direction in recent years. Artists with theoretical knowledge are increasingly integrating theory into studio courses, and theoretical teachers are involved in studio courses. Furthermore, the workshop supervisor is now part of internal decision making and workshop staff are involved in programming and creating courses. Currently the system requires ECTS to be classified as either studio or theory, so even though courses are addressing both aspects simultaneously this is not reflected clearly in the LOs or the MySchool system. Reviewing of learning outcomes of courses and programmes will help this development.
- The planned establishment of a new study line in Curatorial Practice as of autumn 2019 will encourage creativity in forming new platforms for art and exhibition making and should reflect the mutual agenda and needs of artists and curators – the artist run space. A proposal for this study line is being developed by a working group consisting of the Dean, academic staff, student, alumni and stakeholders, following IUA working procedure on the Design and Approval of new study programmes. By offering education in curatorial practice the Department wishes to include the full scope of professions within the art field.
- The Department of Fine Art's strategic plan evolves in close connection with the overall IUA Policy expected to be completed in autumn 2018 for the period 2018-2022

3. Department Organisation and Decision-Making

The dean leads the development of strategy, vision, and action planning for the Department, is responsible to the rector, and attends weekly meetings of the IUA managing board along with other IUA Deans and the managing directors. Academic staff are members of the different IUA committees. Communication within the Department is informal, active, and unconstrained. A streamlined structure distributes responsibilities to the programme directors, workshop supervisors, and administrative staff.

3.1. Decision-making Processes

Departmental Council

Each department has a departmental council that serves as a consultative platform within the department and advises the dean on academic issues. In addition to the dean, the council consists of programme directors, workshop supervisor, departmental coordinator, and project manager, in addition to two student representatives (one BA and one MA student). The dean directs the council's activities and serves as its chair. Meetings shall be held at least twice per semester.

Departmental Meeting

Each department regularly holds departmental meetings where permanent faculty discuss the Department's daily tasks and general policy making. The dean convenes the meetings. The departmental meeting serves to nominate the representatives of the department to the Academic Council, the Teaching Committee, and the Research Committee. Twice a year, during Assignment Week, staff reviews the progress of tasks of the Departmental Action Plan for the next five years.

Rector's Meetings

The rector and the director of academic affairs meet with all students in their year groups once a year. At these meetings, educational issues of concern to students are discussed. These include the organisation and content of the study programmes, instruction received, and experiences of the courses on offer, facilities and services, social activities and interaction between students, teachers, and administration in general. Minutes from these meetings are shared with the dean and the rector before being sent to all faculty members and students of the Department. The main purpose of the meetings is to guarantee that teaching and services comply with students' needs, and to ensure students' direct access to the central administrative team.

Student Union

The Student Union in the Department of Fine Art currently consists of twelve people (including a representative for each year group). The chair has a seat on the IUA Student Council, comprised of the chairmen of all five student unions working within the IUA. Representatives of the Student Union present a list of proposals and concerns to the Department Council. The dean relays information back to the Student Union, following up on procedures and action taken due to concerns raised. Students have become quite active in past few years in The Association of Students in Higher Education in Iceland.

3.2. Internal Quality Management

Over the past few years, the IUA has been developing its internal quality system with emphasis on formalisation and enhancement. Main stepping stones include; i) formalisation of working procedures and general administration, followed by heightened transparency and accountability, ii) a higher level of student engagement and participation in academic decision making and administration, and iii) the development of a formal and all-inclusive quality management system. The quality system is being developed in alignment with the national quality framework for Icelandic higher education (QEF2), and is designed in line with external benchmarking, such as European Standards and Guidelines 2015 (ESG), and national university law. A new administrative body within the IUA was established in autumn 2016, Division of Quality, Teaching, and Research, which oversees central administration in relation to these three components of the University's workings, i.e. collecting official data and key statistics, conducting teaching evaluations, surveys among graduating students, alumni surveys, management and evaluation of research output, dissemination of curricula, monitoring of LOs and study programmes, publication of internal quality procedures (this is not yet reflected in the IUA organisational chart due to ongoing Strategy Planning, due in spring 2018). At the point of this SER, two fundamental working procedures are being implemented in accordance to ESG 1.2 Design and Approval of Programmes, and ESG 1.9 On-Going Monitoring and Period Review of Programmes (see appendices K and L).

Approval of New Programmes and Periodic Review of Existing Programmes

The design of the working procedure emphasises student and alumni participation as well as consultation with the respective professional fields, with extended consultation processes with internal decision-making bodies, such as the Division of QTR, the MC, and AC. Systematic monitoring of programmes is expected to take place every three years, with emphasis on student and alumni participation in addition to representatives from the professional field. As the Department of Fine Art has plans to develop a new study programme in Curatorial Practice, the Division of QTR is expected to work closely with the appointed working group with the aim to ensure streamlining with ESG, correlation between programme LO and course LOs, correlation between course LOs and course assessment, student-catered learning, and that the programme will respond to the professional needs of the fine art scene at the local and international level.

Teaching Evaluation

At the end of each course, students participate in electronic teaching evaluation in MySchool. The evaluation is in two parts where students are asked to answer questions about the

teaching in the course and about teacher performance. In fall 2017 56% of students in IUA participated in the evaluation, with as much as 67% participation in the Fine Art Department.

At the end of each semester, when all grades have been made accessible to students, a project manager in the Division of Quality, Teaching, and Research makes the results of these evaluations accessible to the teachers of individual courses. The project manager reviews the results for the whole University and meets with deans and programme directors from all departments. The dean takes appropriate action for resolution of problems that may arise and informs students how improvements will be made. Finally, the rector reviews the results and is informed about the meetings with the dean and programme directors.

Survey Among Graduating Students

A survey among graduating students at the IUA has been conducted annually since 2013. In this online survey students are asked about several factors of their studies in general, i.e. the programme structure, the quality of teaching, the facilities and atmosphere in the departments. In 2017 the sample size for the Department of Fine Art was below the minimum for the survey to be valid. Results from 2013-2016 show that the majority of the participants (83%-95%) were satisfied with quality of teaching, programme structure, and atmosphere in the Department. Regarding facilities, access to workshops and other specialised areas, library services, and student work facilities, students in the Department of Fine Art proved more satisfied than other students of other departments of IUA. In 2016, 90% of the participants would recommend IUA.

Alumni Survey

The IUA General Alumni Survey was conducted among the alumni community graduating in the period between 2003-2011. The survey was sent via email and 439 answered. The response rate from the Department of Fine Art was 22%. 87% of participants thought that their studies had been very or rather useful. 79% of participants said that the minority of their salary (0-20% of salary) was for work within the field of fine art. Those who graduated in Fine Art are less likely to have majority (61-100%) of their salary within their field than in any other department of the IUA.

As part of the self-evaluation process, four alumni (BA and MA) were invited to meetings with the Self-Evaluation Committee. Drawing from the dialogue and the survey, a general satisfaction is with the programmes and a sense of pride of being educated at the Department. The alumni were particularly satisfied with the positive ongoing informal relationship that is cultivated through open lectures and the workshops after graduation, and found it valuable and unique. Based on the survey results, students that graduate from the Department seem to take on paid jobs outside of the field of fine art, following their studies, but feel that their studies are useful in their job nevertheless.

Processes for Student Claims and Ethical Issues

Students have a seat on all major institutional and departmental councils and committees. Students have regular meetings with their supervisors and the programme directors that serve as canals for student claims. Second year students have individual meetings with their supervisor, dean and departmental coordinator, and can request a meeting with the student counsellor if needed. The formal channel for complaints is the Grievance Committee on Student Rights (see Appendix P). Student complaints are also reflected in the teaching evaluation. In addition, the IUA has published an ethical code, intended for students and staff that is a reference guide for all its activities. It engages with three main issues: general communication within the University, society and the environment and creativity, teaching, and research. This code is expected to be reviewed in 2018. (See Appendix O).

REFLECTIONS

- Quality assurance is enhancement-led rather than based on audits, with heavy emphasis on internal review processes. The IUA quality culture is at its first steps and needs perhaps more guidance and support at the departmental level, especially during the implementation process of QEF2. Student involvement is a concern in this regard

and it is the departments wish to further include students in decision making and programming.

4. Study Programme Descriptions

Being the only higher education institution in the field of fine art, both study programmes are vigilant in their responsibility to prepare students for a wide range of opportunities and work within the field of fine art. Academic staff seek to present a curricular structure that is reflective of the wide scope of methods, media, practices, and opportunities that exist in the field of contemporary art within and beyond the University. Over the course of three years, students move through a programme that develops from establishing a foundation of the basics in fine art and art theory and history, with a focus on independent thought and inquiry, towards a self-directed study in which the student composes his/her own track of subjects.

General Culture of Learning and Teaching

The IUA seeks to foster a culture of a critical approach to learning and teaching among students and staff. This culture of learning and teaching is manifested through a combination of single-subject study programmes each with distinct characteristics, while seeking to foster interdisciplinary approaches at the same time. The Department of Fine Art exercises practice-based approach to learning and teaching, closely connected to studio practice and with a high number of visiting lecturers of high professional quality. Students disseminate their work through the presentation of artworks, discursive presentations, written assignments, or a combination of these. Feedback on student activities is either instant and discursive or in written form. Common to both study programmes is the personal approach to students, encouraging individual growth. Personal tutoring is practiced through colloquials, crits, studio visits, lectures. The culture of learning and teaching reflects the generally high student-teacher ratio, creating personal contact between faculty and students. Faculty, part-time teachers, and support staff in the Department of Fine Art are dedicated to their responsibilities and are voluntarily available to students.

4.1. BA Programme Description

The BA Programme in Fine Art facilitates diverse artistic practices. Students emerge out of an environment that places importance on a wide range of methods and approaches, for them to realise and contextualise their ideas through artistic and theoretical knowledge, supported by a personalised set of technical skills. The programme curriculum is therefore a platform where these aspects are approached in relation to each other in order to strengthen personal vision and identify and articulate the conceptual and cultural context of the students' work. This supports students on a group- and individual basis to discover the various ways through which an education in art can be a path. Either towards further studies in fine art at the MA level, practicing as an artist, continued study in other fields, or practice within the multitude of areas in which art can be a critical and creative system of thought.

The ethos of the BA Programme is to foster openness, diversity, criticality, and creativity in approaches to art making and participation in the discourse of art, culture, and the wider socio-political environment in which we exist. At the end of their studies, students of the programme should be equipped with the necessary tools to establish independent positions and critique prevailing systems of thought, power, cultural production, and question conventions through artistic experimentation.

The Study Environment

At the core of the programme is the active link between the field of art and the academic environment. The programme is led by three full time faculty members (two persons full time, two persons who share one full time position and oscillate between semesters) in artistic practice and one full time faculty member in art theory. The core team represents a breadth of artistic approaches as well as a variety in terms of practices varying from recently emerged up to established mid-career practitioners. The faculty members' academic positions range

from assistant professors, associate professor to professor, each one also serving as programme director. The role of programme director is to co-operate in developing the programme, tend to its operations, hire visiting faculty, and ensure its quality. Given the relatively modest size of the Department, with a maximum of ca. 30 students admitted to each one year of three, the programme is an intimate learning environment. Each faculty member in artistic practice has a group of students whom she/he supervises throughout the study and meets with in groups and an individual basis throughout the course of studies. Technical staff in the Department's several workshops instruct students in regard to the various techniques and medias represented. All members of staff in the Department are practicing professionals in their field. A large part of the programme's courses is instructed by visiting artists or part-time teachers of a high professional level who become associated with the programme either for a longer period or occasional visits. The high number of qualified visitors to the Department is essential to ensuring a vivid relationship to as many and diverse contemporary practices as possible, from the local as well as the international field of art.

Collaboration with institutions, individuals, and organisations locally and internationally constitutes an important aspect of the BA programme. Student exchange through networks such as Erasmus, KUNO (the inter-Nordic art school exchange network that operates on the single-courses or reoccurring project level) provide opportunities for students to study abroad for shorter or longer periods. A large part of the programme's students pursues such exchanges, and each semester the Department hosts a considerable number of exchange students each semester. Exchanges to and from institutions from outside the European area have increased, with students being accepted and/or sent to institutions such as Parsons and Bard College in New York, La Esmeralda in Mexico City, and others. Study trips to major art events such as the Venice Biennial, Documenta, Manifesta, and the Münster Sculpture Projects are an important part of exposing students to the international environment of their chosen field of study. Collaborative projects on a unique basis or an established network basis periodically take place, ranging from longer term multilateral projects within the KUNO network to shorter, less formal platforms such as a recent two-day interaction with students of Frankfurt's Städelschule. Through Erasmus, many students now take up internships with artists abroad following graduation.

REFLECTIONS

- To map better opportunities for interdepartmental course planning, online course lists and timetables of all IUA departments can be of help in this matter.
- A need to clarify and reiterate the programme's ethos.
- It is important to ensure the hosting of KUNO workshops at the department.
- It is important to strategies on Erasmus relationships. The Department is a popular destination for exchange and we need to choose our partners carefully.
- It is important to strategies and clarify the role and importance of the programme's international aspects and collaborations, along with increasing teacher exchanges through relevant networks such as Erasmus and KUNO.
- It is important to define the relationship between the MA and BA programmes, finding where they can share resources, faculty, openness to courses/activities, etc.

Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes (LO) correspond to the National Qualification Framework, published by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. LO for the BA-degree are aligned with EQF level 6. The general learning outcomes for the BA programme are available online along with the course structure and the curriculum for the semester in question (see Appendix C, BA Learning Outcomes).

LOs are accessible in MySchool, the IUA online learning management system, in addition to syllabus, assessment and timetables for each course. At the start of each course students are introduced to the syllabus and made aware of learning outcomes. Attention is also drawn to

the learning outcomes before the end of semester assessments. LO are currently being re-evaluated with expected completion in 2018/2019.

REFLECTIONS

- Re-evaluation of course- and programme LO's needs to be completed.
- In the process of re-evaluation attention must be given to identifying what is taught but not categorised and defined in the LO's and likewise identify what appears in the LO's but may not be an actual part of the curriculum.
- In the re-evaluation we need to look critically at the development of LO's through the three years, to ensure the gradual rise in students' development.
- A virtual learning environment would benefit students and be an important supplement to teaching methods.

Curriculum and Study Structure

The BA Programme is a full-time three-year course (180 ECTS) based on a combination of required and elective courses. Courses in art practice account for two thirds and theory for one third of the programme with the resulting work crystallising in the BA Project in the final semester. Coursework in the program is a mixture of short intensive workshops, seminars, independent studio tutoring (studio visits), longer courses aimed at expanding thematic or medium specific approaches along with courses in art theory and art history offered both by the IUA Fine Art Department and in collaboration with the University of Iceland's Department of Art Theory and Art History. Inter-disciplinary work is encouraged, with some courses being taught collaboratively between departments, and some courses in other departments are open to fine art students. Electing theory courses usually work well and fine art students have a wide array of theory courses to choose from in other IUA departments. Electing studio or workshop courses is more problematic due to different timetables across departments. Though it may prove difficult to schedule in regard to timetables, the Department encourages such studies when possible. Each student is allocated a private studio which is an important feature of the programme, evident to the emphasis placed on independent artistic development. A complete overview of the study structure, curriculum, and LO is available online at <http://www.lhi.is/en/study-structure>

First Year

At the outset of the studies, the curriculum provides a foundation in various media, histories, techniques, and theoretical positions. During the first semester students also attend workshop orientations that give them access to the workshops (wood, print, photo, metal, video) and introduce the expertise available through their staff members. Courses in art history and theory lay foundations for critical understanding of the history and context of modern and contemporary art with mandatory courses and electives allowing students to specialise their scope. In the second term, a mixture of longer and shorter courses with a medium or thematic approach are available to first and second year students. An end of semester course led by two visiting artists provides space for independent work and further reflection on one's process.

Second Year

In the autumn semester of the second-year students choose between three semester-long courses, *Time*, *Space*, or *Area*, which investigate through several shorter and longer courses the concepts of time-based media, spatial approaches, and two dimensional approaches. These courses are supervised and partially taught by the three faculty members, while most tutoring is done by visiting artists and part-time teachers. A combined critique of the three courses takes place at the end of the semester, and a public presentation of the works, which in recent years has taken place in partnership with a private enterprise lending a disused industrial space to the students to exhibit in. In the theory part of the studies focus is on Icelandic art history and art theory electives, which are abundant within the Department, other departments and at the University of Iceland. Electives allow students to focus further on their area of interest with regard to their art practice. In the spring semester the second year

students overlap with first years in elective content- or medium-specific courses and complete the semester with an independent workshop supervised by a part-time teacher. “Wedges”, two-week intensive workshops are scheduled in the spring semester, offering investigation into a technique or theme, often determined by the current interest of the student body.

Students are required to select two such “wedges”. Students seeking exchange studies can do so in either semester in the second year, and incoming exchange students to the programme are placed with the second-year.

Third year

Third-year students attend graduate seminars and workshops, forming their own projects under guidance in private and group seminars. In the autumn semester students attend three *Third Year Workshops; Work Process, Text, and Exhibitions*. Each of the three courses, which aim to further develop the students’ independent practice and realize a full-scale solo-exhibition and investigate the process leading up to it and its textual/linguistic supplements, is supervised by one of the three faculty members and co-taught by visiting artists and part-time teachers. For eight weeks, three solo exhibitions open each Thursday in one of the Department’s galleries, where the group of graduates meets and gives thorough critique and feedback under the instruction of a faculty member and a part-time teacher who leads the discourse. In the autumn, work commences on the 6 ECTS credit *BA Thesis*, a 5000-word written analysis of the student’s own practice in relation to contemporary practices, history and theory. Each student is assigned a thesis supervisor who provides periodic meetings and written feedback in the writing process. Examination of the thesis is carried out by an examination committee comprised of the programme director and the thesis supervisors (different committees for different students. The thesis is handed in in January, but the project continues and includes writing texts accompanying the BA project in the group exhibition which opens in the spring. The texts focus on the work and appear in a catalogue published by the Department, which has, over the past couple of years been edited by Neptún, a Reykjavik based art magazine. Students also write wall texts displayed in the museum, and receive instruction from their supervising faculty and thesis supervisor for both writing components. At the beginning of the final semester, two residency courses are offered in different locations providing students insight into the process of working as a practicing artist. In the third year, *The Professional Environment of Contemporary Art* is offered as a mandatory course introducing students to the field and practicalities of professional practice. In the third year, students may choose from a range of theory courses available to both BA and MA students along with two courses in creative writing (which may also be available to second year students).

BA Project

In the final semester, the 16 credit *BA Project* constitutes the last chapter in the studies, an independent process with the guidance of faculty, peers, visiting artists, and part-time teachers. Students propose a project to focus on throughout the semester and meet regularly for critiques, feedback, group- and individual meetings. The subsequent work is exhibited within a group exhibition at the Reykjavík Art Museum, in collaboration with the Department of Design and Architecture. An artist/curator is sourced from outside the IUA to oversee the exhibition and work with students through the process of realizing the work in the space, though the course and project is overseen by the three faculty members. The work is supplemented by a written commentary which situates the work within the student’s practice and is accompanied with the BA Thesis and is archived in *Skemman*, the centralised online catalogue of thesis works completed in Iceland. Evaluation of the BA Project is carried out by a jury of the three faculty members and an external examiner. The external examiner, who has over the past years been an international practitioner in the field of art practice, education, or related areas, leads the review, which is comprised of a critical conversation with the student next to the work, after which the jury convenes and compares notes. The faculty’s role in the jury is to participate in the conversation and provide further insight into the work if needed. Grading on the scale from 0-10 takes place with 70% of the grade comprised of the

external examiner's grade and 30% of the faculty's grade. The assessment is in the form of written feedback and a grade.

REFLECTIONS

- In the process of simplifying and enlarging modules it needs to be clear that this does not obstruct the students' path since failing a large modules can have high impact. Also it needs to be clear that simplifying curricula and enlarging modules actually results in less workload (both for teachers and students). Simplifying and enlarging modules calls for a higher level of student independence and their responsibility for their studies needs to be enhanced simultaneously.
- Development is needed to strengthen the relationship between studio and theory courses. This requires LO's to reflect the interaction between the two.
- An introduction to MA/MFA level studies needs to be formalised better into the programme.
- The course *Professional Environment of Contemporary Art* takes place during the final semester. Students call for more training in this subject and this could be introduced earlier in the studies and stretched over the three years. The subject is addressed in many courses and this fact can be expressed clearer in LO's.

Teaching Methods

In the BA Programme the main emphasis is on the development of individual art practice and the contextualisation of that practice within an expanded field of contemporary art. A variety of teaching approaches is used to achieve this and to deliver the curriculum by a broad group of artists, theorists, and inter- and cross-disciplinary practitioners. These are conventional methods, such as one-to-one tutorials in the studio or writing setting, group tutorials, seminars, lectures, group critiques, assignments, student presentations, exhibition and studio visits. In addition to the above mentioned, other platforms for delivering the curriculum are employed, such as voluntary participation in study trips to exhibitions abroad, dialogue-oriented meetings with classes from other institutions internationally etc. Long- and short-term exchange (Erasmus, KUNO) also constitutes an important part of the learning process.

All students meet regularly with their supervising teacher in groups and individually, in a discourse-focused class where students present their work and engage in feedback and critique. This is important as a tool to build a community and to advance the ability to present one's work (in process or completed) and offer peers constructive criticism. At the end of each semester students produce a portfolio with an overview of that period and hand in to their supervising teacher accompanied with a written self-evaluating report on their progress and projects during the semester. All students must attend the Department's public lecture series and select lectures/seminars of their choice in the University's annual conference on artistic research.

In first and second year courses students receive a combination of lectures, assignments, and individual tutoring, along with group critiques that take place at the end of most courses. Third-year students participate in longer courses that are supervised and taught by the programme directors, with important contributions from part-time teachers and visiting artists. The third year is based on self-directed study, which requires students to propose their projects and partake in group and individual reviews of their proposals, seminars on writing where peer review takes place, along with longer critiques (solo exhibitions). In the *BA Project* and *Thesis* students are assigned private instructors who follow each student's progression. In the third year there is a workshop in the field, where students leave the premises of the University and work with professionals in site-context specific circumstances, developing and realizing new work for a public exhibition in an institutional setting. The momentum created by this has proven to push students to realize works of new scales and depths, a very useful energy to take into the process of the *BA Project*.

Teaching Culture

The programme is relatively small with regard to student numbers and boasts a beneficial student/teacher ratio. Combined with the sense of egalitarianism in the institution, where teachers are approachable and very visible in the institutional environment, the atmosphere surrounding teaching and learning is unstrained and open. The variety of part-time teachers and visiting artists offers students a mosaic of characters and approaches throughout the studies. The organisation of year groups, and the intensity of the curriculum, lends to a culture of intensive workload both for students and teachers. This is twofold; in one sense it pushes students to go through a drastic development artistically within the span of three years, while it can also be said that the intensity of the structure may limit their space for self-direction throughout the studies. Despite this characteristic of the programme, it systematically develops towards more independent work as the studies progress, with the third year being mostly self-directed study. 100% attendance is required in all courses, with 80% attendance being the minimum for passing. To engage part-time teachers more systematically, the programme directors host a series of meetings, in groups (where teachers for the upcoming semester meet and share the contents and their vision for their courses) and in private during the semester to review how the courses progress and to be of assistance. Part-time teachers are also assisted by the Department's project manager and departmental coordinator with questions and matters relating to the course, institution, rules or assistance with projects such as exhibitions stemming from the courses.

REFLECTIONS

- There is a need to look into whether the programme encourages over-teaching.
- With regards to self-directed study, the programme should evaluate whether an increase in elective studio courses would be feasible.
- Could a sense of dependence be a side product of the intimate environment?
- There is a need to reduce over-work within the community of staff members.
- A structured approach needs to be taken in regard to academic faculty using their research component for research.
- Students need to be encouraged to develop their analytical views regarding own work as opposed to narrating their work.

Student Numbers and Student/Teacher Ratio

Embedded in the programme is a culture of mutual respect and approachability, and as a small department there is a high level of contact between students and teachers. Each year group will be at maximum numbers at 30 students who receive instruction in courses, seminars, and private studio visits. Each student has a supervising teacher from the core academic team, who they can turn to for all matters relating to their studies and progression, in addition to other student services. Maximum student numbers for studio courses is 12 to one teacher, often not exceeding 8-10. In theory courses, the student numbers per teacher may range from 15-30.

Course Assessment

Assessments are conducted at various points in courses, through various assignments and at the end of each course by faculty, part-time teachers and/or the supervisor of the related course in the staff team. The relevant programme director reviews grades when part-time teachers complete their course assessment. Assessments procedures and requirements are written into the syllabus for each course and introduced to students in the start of the semester or the related course. For courses of 6 ECTS or lower the grade "pass" or "fail" may be used but otherwise grades are awarded according to the standard scoring rubrics (see Appendix H, Scoring Rubrics). In addition to grades, the student will get a written review by the teacher/supervisor in question offering insight into the assessment in connection to the learning outcomes.

REFLECTIONS

- There is an ongoing debate regarding the numerical grading system and a wish among the majority of academic staff to look into the possibility of implementing a pass/fail grading system as of autumn 2019. Both numerical and pass/fail systems have pros and cons, and a working group has been formed within the Department, in conversation with QTR, to map how many courses within the Department already use pass/fail (this is a substantial number), what can be learned from previous experience of pass/fail within the Department, and what would be the benefits of turning exclusively to this grading system. It should be noted that the IUA Department of Performing Arts has changed its grading system to exclusively granting pass/fail, claiming positive results.
- If it is the decision of the Department to take this step, the change would have to be discussed on the institutional level and introduced thoroughly to students, academic staff, and part-time teachers.

4.2. MA Programme Description

The Master Programme in Fine Art offers a platform for students to enhance their knowledge, increase their skills in the field of fine art, strengthen their personal vision, and to contextualise their artwork in relation to wider contemporary fine art practice and an appropriate theoretical framework. Emphasis is placed on the development of artistic practice and research, which through individual projects systematically identifies and articulates the conceptual and cultural context of their work. Students are expected to develop an understanding and a command of academic and practical parameters in relation to contemporary art as they prepare for national and international careers as artists and art-workers.

The MA Programme and student experience is predicated on an integrated approach to practice and research and so it is relevant that the core teaching team holds PhDs or equivalent degrees in art practice and/or theory. Furthermore, a cluster of regular and intermittent visiting staff is called upon, offering new experience and insights relating to the subject, curriculum, student projects and related research areas within the Department. An active and engaged contribution in local and international contemporary art is encouraged through student-led presentations in seminars and the development and exposition of independent and/or collaborative research projects. In preparation for this, during the first half of the programme, an analytical approach to artistic practice is emphasised, exploring the relationship between writing and making within a burgeoning spectrum of methods and interpretation.

At the core of the MA Programme is the development of students' artwork and the evolution of each student's art practice. Although contemporary methods in the development and execution of artworks are acknowledged and encouraged, the programme continues to value, support and nurture the role of studio practice in this process. Consequently, the Department provides each student with a studio space in an open-plan MA studio setting. The foundation is laid from the beginning with the student's study proposal, a short description of artistic intent and aims. With the support of MA staff, visiting artists/lecturers, course structuring, the students work steadily on further development of their work, their skills, methods and concepts, fine tuning their ideas in relation to their production and situating these within the context of contemporary art. The studio is a place for testing out ideas and works, a meeting place for critical and contained fine art discourse with members of staff and/or visitors whose specialisms relate to respective student's subject/s of enquiry.

Currently the Programme has 20 students. The programme can host exchange students but outgoing exchange students are few. The reason for this may be the high number of international students in the cohort and the intensity of the study structure. It is however common that MA Fine Art students enrol in various short courses on offer via KUNO and take on ERASMUS+ mobility during the summer break.

Learning Outcomes (MA)

Learning outcomes (LO) correspond to the National Qualification Framework, published by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. LO for the MA-degree are aligned with EQF level 7. The general learning outcomes for the MA Programme are available online together with the study structure and the curriculum (see Appendices F and G). LO for each course are accessible in MySchool, the IUA teaching management system, in addition to syllabus, assessment and timetable for each course. At the start of each course students are introduced to the syllabus and made aware of learning outcomes. Attention is also drawn to the learning outcomes before the end of semester assessments. A complete overview of the study structure, curriculum and LO is available online: <http://www.lhi.is/en/study-structure>

Curriculum and Study Structure (MA)

The MA Programme is a full-time two-year course (120 ECTS). The course structure is divided into independent art practice, seminars that are part theory and part practice, theory components, electives (mostly theory), and a final project. Independent art practice accounts for two thirds and theory for one third of the programme with the resulting work crystallising in the *MA Project*. As part of the *MA Project*, students must submit a thesis (6-8000 words) as a written analysis of their art practice. Most of the thesis is finished before the completion of the final project but the last chapter, a reflection on the curatorial processes, execution and presentation is written after the completion of the final artwork. The *MA Project* is presented as part of an MA Degree Exhibition, which is held in April/May in collaboration with the MA Design Programme.

A great deal is expected from students in terms of independent management and active participation in the programme and the subject field. The MA staff team share the overall responsibilities for the supervision of students' artwork, with one member of staff being responsible for academic progress in the first year and the MA programme director being responsible for the second year (in addition to having overall responsibility for the MA Programme). Group reviews involving invited guest lecturers are held at regular intervals throughout the study period. The MA theory programme director takes responsibility for the structure and delivery of theory in the MA Programme. During the course of study all students participate in compulsory theoretical courses thereby connecting their practice to specific aspects within the field of contemporary art and introducing artistic models, methods and writings as the basis for continuing practice-based research. Furthermore, first year MA students take part in two site-specific, practice-based art projects (as part of Studio I and II) that introduce them to site-specificity and the impact of different contexts on the evolution and reading of works.

To further develop their practice, MA students have an opportunity to work on an independent research project, organised in relation to each student's specific area of interest. In the Fine Art Seminar, specialist subjects in the field are discussed in order to situate appropriately students' artistic practice within the context of art history and theory. The seminar is intended to increase students' ability and knowledge in their application of critical thought; part of which includes the analysis of the special characteristics of material, visual language and visual articulation. The professional environment of contemporary art is examined, and in this context, students present and discuss their own work.

At the end of each of the first three semesters, there is an individual review (with portfolio presentation) of students' work conducted by two of the members of the MA staff together with an external guest, a specialist in the field of fine art. The MA programme director takes the role of overall moderator in the first three end-of-semester reviews and has the final say in approving MA project works to go forward for an MA degree. The MA programme director is responsible for MA degree assessments together with the MA theory leader and the external examiner. The MA Programme structure has been revised since the arrival of a new programme director in November 2016.

REFLECTION

- Plans have been put in place for moving the *MA thesis* writing forward to begin in the latter part of spring semester in MA Year One and with the completion of the first part of the thesis in mid-November in MA Year Two. This should allow students time to consider the thesis writing over the summer between MA Year One and MA Year Two. It should also create more time and space for the *MA Project*.
- Change is also underway regarding the *MA Project* and the MA degree exhibition to split the project up into solo-exhibitions and an end of the year group exhibition. This means that the MA project will be divided in three parts; 50% for the solo-exhibition, 20% for the group-exhibition, and 30% for the thesis. The plan is that incorporating solo-exhibitions will give students more autonomy for this part of the MA project and thus enable the development of important skills that are less important in a curated group exhibition. One of the requirements that comes with the solo-exhibition is a structured discourse between the student and an invited external discussant.
- The curated end of year group exhibition that will draw on work made during the MA studies. For assessment, emphasis will be on communication with curator, delivery of material for the MA catalogue, and other aspects of professional practice relating to exhibition making.

Teaching Methods (MA)

In the MA Programme the main emphasis is on the development of individual art practice and the contextualisation of that practice within an expanded field of contemporary art. A variety of teaching approaches are used to achieve this and to deliver the curriculum. These are conventional methods such as; one-to-one tutorials, group tutorials, seminars, lectures, group critiques, assignments, student presentations, exhibition and studio visits.

According to the course document each student is entitled to at least four one-on-one tutorials and one group critique during the Studio I, II, and III. These are provided by core MA staff and visiting artists. Furthermore, visiting artists are employed to join at least one of our group critiques. As a teaching method group critiques are used in mainly two contexts; in a studio setting in the process of development of artworks and specifically to critique completed artworks/projects or exhibitions. Similarly, one-to-one tutorials are structured to offer different teaching emphases within Studio I, II, and III. For the MA project, each student is assigned an individual instructor. Similarly, for the MA thesis, each student has his/her own individual supervisor.

The teaching and delivery of theoretical courses also use a mix of teaching methods including; lectures, tutorials, and seminars. Student-centred learning is emphasised in optional courses such as Research projects I and II in which an external specialist is assigned to support the individual research undertaken. Artistic Research – Practice and Theory a compulsory course in MA1 is supported by a theoretical member of staff but delivered by one of the practice-based core staff through series of seminar sessions to include student presentations, written and practice-based assignments.

MA students also have the opportunity to elect an assistant teaching course in which they gain an insight into the academic teaching environment by working under the supervision of an academic staff member on a BA level.

REFLECTION

- The MA student cohort is small (eight to ten admitted each year) and there is cultural diversity within the group that opens up opportunities for a challenging teaching environment. Part of the challenge is the nurturing of a critical, discursive culture where students challenge ideas both in relation to the study curriculum and the wider context of contemporary art, nationally and internationally. The variety of teaching

methods (see above) are carefully utilised in order to build a group dynamic, which again allows for engaged student-centred learning.

- This academic year 2017-2018, we tested the blurring of boundaries between theory and practice. The theory teacher has conducted individual studio visits in both MA Year One and Year Two and the practice-based staff have delivered theory-based courses in artistic research and in seminars I and III. Students responded positively, which is encouraging.

Student Numbers and Student/Teacher Ratio (MA)

The number of core staff in 2017 is 2.2 positions (will increase to 2.5 as of 2018). This is split between practice and theory with the theory teacher being full-time but also teaching certain courses in the BA Programme, in cross-disciplinary electives and in the IUA Open University. The 1.2 staff are divided between the programme director 0.7 (to increase to 1.0 in 2018) and a 0.5 associate professor position. Visiting staff in the MA Programme for the year 2018 are equivalent to approximately 0.5 member of staff or 800G hours. The average student/teacher ratio the Department 1/10, (but is likely to more like 1/7 in the MA Programme.)

Course Assessment (MA)

Assessments are conducted at the end of each course by those teaching the course and/or the supervisor of the related course in the staff team. Assessment procedures and requirements are written into the syllabus for each course and presented to students at the start of the semester or the related course. For courses of six ECTS or less the grade pass or fail is in most cases used but otherwise grades are awarded according to the standard scoring rubrics (see Appendix H, Scoring Rubrics). Along with grades, the student receives a written report by the relevant teacher/supervisor, offering insight into the assessment in connection to the learning outcomes. In advance of the end of semester assessment in Studio I, II, and III, the students get a self-reflective analysis form in which they reflect on studio visits and/or group crits conducted during the course. Similarly, the students reflect on their own progress in writing. This is made available for the assessment committee, which consists of the course supervisor, the theory teacher, and an external visiting artist. For the assessment, the students also make a presentation and engage in dialogue resulting from their presentation and self-reflective analysis report with the committee. During this procedure notes are taken that form the basis of the written report along with learning outcomes. The report is written into the student's self-reflective analysis form, which is then handed back to the student with the grade given. Grades and reports are also available in MySchool (See Appendix I).

Graduation Project (MA)

For the MA project the external examiner is usually a prominent professional in academia and the field of fine art. He/she is introduced to the work through the reading of an abstract from each student's thesis and the viewing of artwork on site. A dialogue/discourse takes place in front of the work in which the student is questioned by the examiner about the work and related context. At the end of the discourse/dialogue individual instructors may contribute. A written report is made, and a grade is awarded by the examination committee. The external examiner receives all the reports and grades proposed for comments and approval before being awarded.

There is a separate external examiner for the thesis. The external examiner for the thesis will read all the thesis writings and the report given by supervisors and grades suggested. This is to evaluate the grade given and to make sure there is a comparative grading among students.

Differences Between the BA and MA Study Programmes

Whereas the BA Programme aims to introduce a variety of methods and means for students' artistic practice, the MA Programme seeks to deepen and strengthen students' prior understanding of their work and its context, allowing flexibility and specialisation through an open structure of studies (i.e. interdisciplinary collaboration) with ample space and opportunity for shared discourse and critique. To this end, the programme aims to utilise its unique features to the fullest, namely the proximity and exchange between other art disciplines within

the University, the strategically small and internationally constituted student cohort and the accessibility to local cultural characteristics, including other specialisms within the University, in respect of nature and society in all their variance. Further to this, the respective programmes fosters close collaborations with art institutions in Iceland, as well as other domestic and foreign academies.

REFLECTIONS

- There are various possibilities in which the MA and BA Programmes could intersect better. Currently there are opportunities for MA students to take a course in Assistant Teaching that places them with a BA member of staff supporting their teaching and related students. There are certain complications related to language with the BA Programme being mostly conducted in Icelandic while the majority of MA students tend to be non-Icelandic speaking, a number of BA theory courses and short studio courses are taught in English and are open as electives to MA students. Some MA courses are also open as electives for BA3. Still we could organise better invitations to BA3 students to take part in MA group discussions and crits. MA students could also engage in selected BA activities such as group crits, as long as it was clear to MA students in which language the crit will be conducted. Seminar sessions related to Talk Series visitors are also open to both BA3 and MA students. These visits, in addition to follow up seminars, could be organised to allow for more student engagement at the talk event.

Teaching Culture

As mentioned above, the MA Programme has a relatively small and international student cohort. This, in addition to the smallness of the population in Reykjavik and indeed in Iceland enables accessibility to leading institutions of importance for the field. This impacts the possibilities for making inter- or cross-disciplinary collaborations across academia and/or art institutions. Furthermore, the awareness for individual students of proximity to the field and potential individual impact is empowering and can positively influence the progress of study. The Programme is aware of the importance of the relationship to the professional field and regards this as an expanded learning environment that could be utilised further. The MA students have open access to all facilities at the Department. At the start of the MA studies they are introduced to these with a view to establish connections to staff and workshop facilities. Further access and use may be subject to technical introduction but following that the MA students are able to access technical staff on individual basis.

REFLECTIONS

- With an increased number of international students there are different demands on resources especially with regard to issues concerning social life and well-being. Community building is of importance and students and staff have suggested that a kitchen would support that as well as being financially beneficial to non-Icelandic students. In practical terms on the institutional level this is not possible at this point. A working group has been established by the central office focusing on how IUA can better support its international student cohort.
- The MA website was reviewed and upgraded in 2017. More work needs to be done on this to better reflect the courses and the work of students and staff. Check possibilities of involving students in suggestions for changes to website.
- The international dimension of the studies is important for the sustainability of a quality MA Programme in Iceland. Currently 60-70% of the MA students are non-Icelandic. This increases diversity among the student group and enriches the study for an MA degree in fine art in a homogenic society where there is a strong tradition for going abroad for an MA degree.
- The Department values and is increasingly involved in collaborative projects (both domestic and international). There are plans on a local level to formalise these more

fully and on a semi- or more permanent basis. On an international level, the Department is open to proposals that connect with the Department's research interests and the expansion of the academic curriculum. The expansion of the programme is a welcome opportunity, again to reconsider approaches to teaching and learning within fine art where the Department's expertise and strengths are effectively and increasingly both promoted and brought to bear.

- The Department values its partner institutions, but would like to formalise collaboration better with Reykjavík Art Museum and the National Gallery, possibly looking also at internships. A couple of students were selected from a large group of applicants to participate in an anniversary exhibition at the Living Art Museum. The Department is looking to establish a collaboration with the Living Art Museum that might possibly involve exhibiting as well as a more direct teaching related platform.
- Considerations regarding collaboration on research and site-specificity together with 'Verksmiðjan Hjalteyri' in the north of Iceland was very successful last year, a project conceived in collaboration with École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux Art Paris. The Department would like to cultivate the collaboration with Hjalteyri in continuation with BeauxArt or other partners.
- Workshop inductions on an MA level need to be formalised and a structure created that allows all MA students to have access to facilities they require.

Relations Between Teaching and Research

The relationship between staff research and teaching is of importance and activities have been started to further this connection. Although the MA Programme does not specialise in a particular area within fine art, ecology, perception, and aesthetics are a common denominator in MA staff research. Applications from international students often evolve around the specifics of local nature and landscape. In response to this, the Department has initiated inter- and cross-disciplinary two conferences relating to ecological, environmental issues involving internationally acclaimed speakers across a variety of professional fields. These are then followed up with MA seminar sessions in which students work and thinking is foregrounded. The site-specific collaborative workshop at Verksmiðjan Hjalteyri is also in response to the above.

REFLECTIONS

- The Department is preparing a study line in curatorial practice within MA Fine Art, to be launched in autumn 2019. This study line is being developed according to IUA standards and guidelines on starting new programmes. Educating curators in close proximity to art students would benefit the professional field as a whole. It is important for the Department to provide education in the different professions within the art field.
- In connection to a new curatorial study line being established it is important to review collaborations with partners such as National Gallery, Reykjavík Art Museum, and The Living Art Museum, to open up possibilities to create collaborative research projects as part of curatorial studies.
- The relationship between staff research and teaching could be strengthened further. An important step was taken this academic year with the introduction of the conference Avoiding Nature and related student engagement. Insertion of seminar sessions into the programme in connection with public lectures and/or exhibitions in the city that also connect to staff research. Plans have been made to make staff research more visible by placing some information on the MA section of IUA website. Staff research also opens up possibility for increased MA and BA correlations.
- The Department would like to make better use of IUA possibilities of hosting guest researchers.

4.3. International Perspectives

The IUA takes active part in international collaboration. The focal point is student and staff exchanges through networks and partnership agreements, as well as curriculum development and capacity building projects. Most of these activities are supported through the Nordplus or Erasmus+ mobility programmes. Through Nordplus, the University has fostered a relationship with all of the major arts higher education institutions in the Nordic and the Baltic area. The Department of Fine Art is a member of KUNO, a Nordplus network focusing on the development of fine art higher education. Through KUNO, the Department is able to offer its students access to an open short-term courses programme in addition to regular semester study exchanges and placements (training in a work place). The KUNO network hosts an annual event where leaders, teachers and international coordinators are invited to a seminar and discussion forums. This is an important platform where peers come together for discourse on the future of fine art higher education.

The Department has formed partnerships with 40 art universities and academies in Europe in addition to the 18 HEIs of the KUNO network. Erasmus+ plays a big role and through that programme the Department has been able to strengthen its relationship with partner institutions and the professional field in Europe. The Department sends around twenty students abroad for semester exchanges each year and receives a similar number of exchange students in return. Additionally, around twenty fine art students/graduates make traineeships abroad with visual artists, cultural organisations, galleries or enterprises in Europe. The Department receives many guest teachers from abroad each year through its international relations. In 2017-2018, three academic faculty and two workshop adjuncts have received an Erasmus+ mobility grant for teaching or training abroad. In this academic year, the Department will receive eight visitors from the professional field in Europe supported by Erasmus+ as well as one visiting teacher coming through the Fulbright plan.

Encouraging and supporting mobility of students is in line with the University's strategy to prepare its students for the professional world, which is becoming increasingly more global rather than local. Active participation of staff in international collaboration is likewise promoted and is considered an important tool towards development of curricula and teaching methods.

The IUA has been a forerunner nationally when it comes to mobility of students and staff. It has several times been awarded a quality price for its participation in the Erasmus+ programme. For a Strategic Partnership in Music in 2017, in which the University is a project coordinator, and for Erasmus student and staff exchanges in 2015. Through years of sharing and guidance, the IUA's students and staff should now be well aware of the many opportunities there are to seek training and studies abroad. The International Office arranges introductory meetings for students where information about support and opportunities is offered, and where students having returned from abroad share their stories. Staff also share their knowledge and experiences from visits to partner academies abroad.

From 2016 – 2020, the International Office at IUA hosts the secretary of the KUNO network. This entails applying for funding for the network to the Nordplus programme, allocation of mobility grants and planning of KUNO annual events and mobility. It should also be noted that the dean of the Department of Fine Art is currently a member in the steering group of KUNO. This is a clear indicator of the commitment the University holds towards international relations and of how it seeks to promote these. It is also an indicator of the trust and strong profile that the University has gained through its active participation in international relations for the past decade or more.

Study trips to large international exhibitions, such as the Venice Biennale, Munster Sculpture Projects and Documenta, are organised by the Department as extra curriculum activity. The Department participates in the Talk Series, a collaborative lecture and visiting programme with the Reykjavík Art Museum and the Icelandic Art Center, bringing leading international artists and art practitioners to these institutions as lecturers and visitors. Furthermore, the Department connects with international artists and professionals through flexible national

networks and collaborations with local institutions. Due to the small scale and connectivity in the Icelandic art scene, international artists that exhibit their work in local institutions are often invited as guests, and the programme greatly benefits from the willingness of artists to engage with students.

During the academic year 2016-2017, the Department received 16 exchange students in total and hosted 20. The number of applications exceeded the number of available study places by far. The selection of incoming students is based on the portfolio and motivation as well as partnership agreements and staff resources.

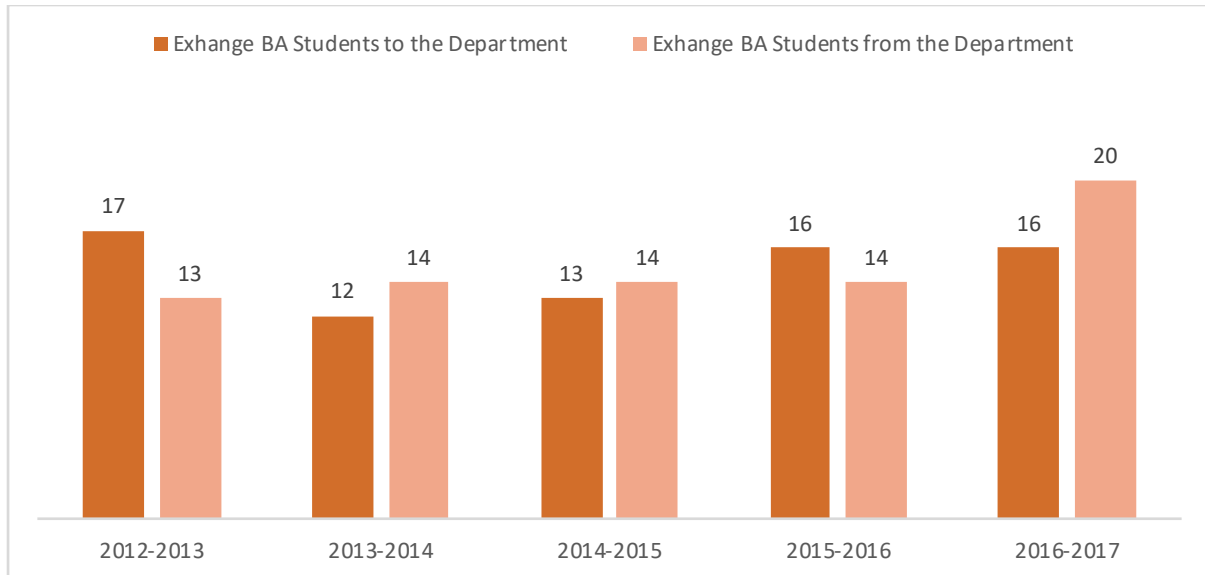


FIGURE 2 EXCHANGE STUDENTS 2012-2017

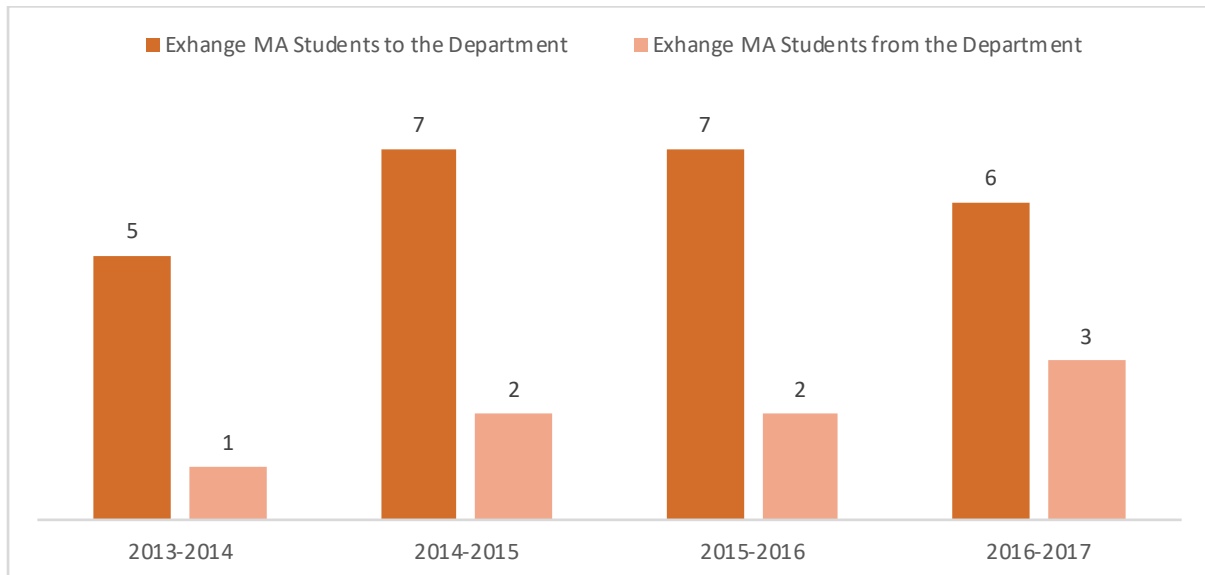


FIGURE 3 MA EXCHANGE STUDENTS 2013-2017

The Department of Fine Art regards international exchange in all forms as highly valuable:

- A. As an integral part of academic development.
- B. For reaching a larger network (enabling).
- C. To broaden the students/staff horizon.
- D. To increase communication and cultural skills of students.
- E. To be exposed to best practice teaching and training (staff exchange).
- F. To broaden professional networks.

Language

The IUA has a public language policy (see Appendix M). The Department is acutely aware of its role in safeguarding the formulations and translations of terminology in the field into the Icelandic language; to maintain and strengthen the use of Icelandic in the professional context. To this end, the Department has e.g. been part of the research project *Vocabulary for Fine Art* since 2003. The general language of instruction at the undergraduate level is Icelandic. Enrolled non-Icelandic students must be prepared to meet this challenge. Exchange students are expected to have a good level of English. Most graduate programmes are international, and the language of instruction is English.

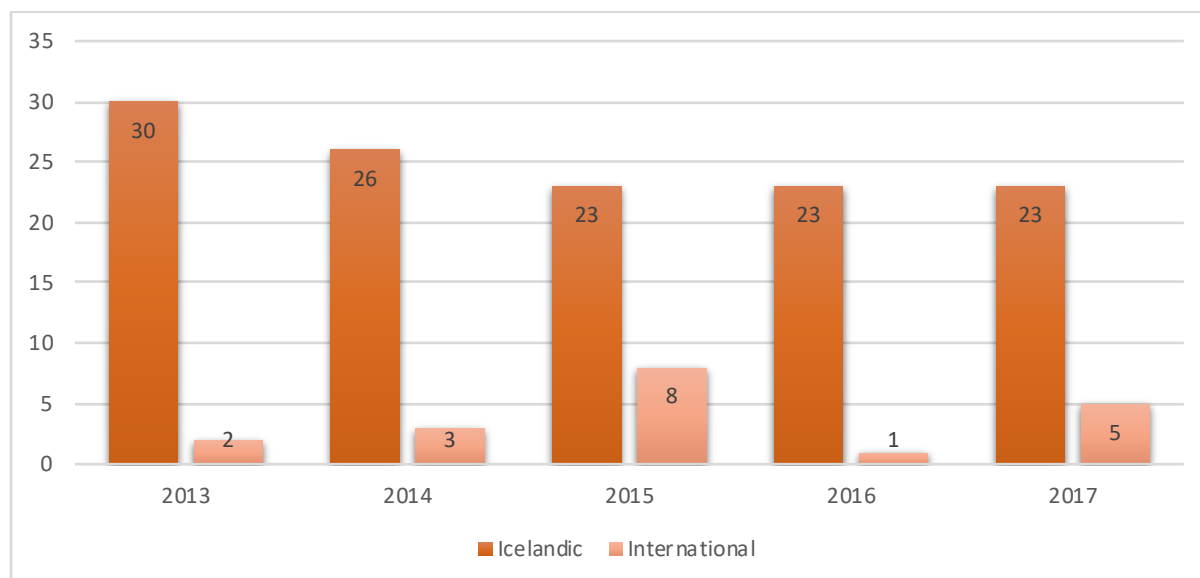


FIGURE 4 RATIO BETWEEN ICELANDIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS, ADMITTED AT BA-LEVEL

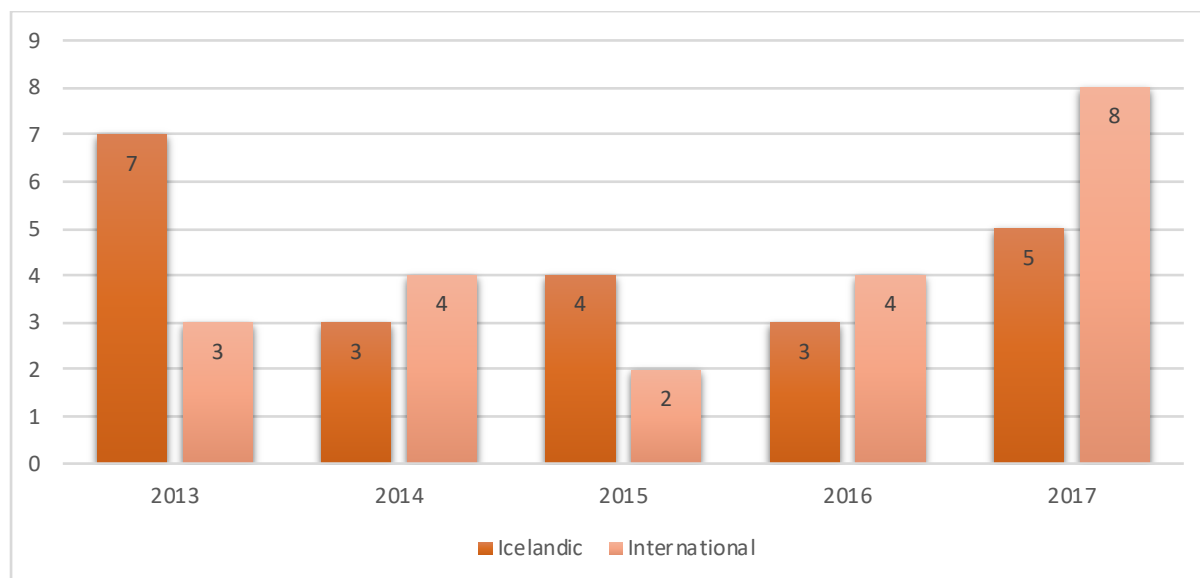


FIGURE 5 RATIO BETWEEN ICELANDIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS, ADMITTED AT MA-LEVEL

As seen in figures 4 and 5, the ratio of admitted non-icelandic speaking students is considerably higher at the MA-level, where English is the teaching language. Each year, some international students are admitted to the BA Programme, where the principal language of instruction is Icelandic.

REFLECTIONS

- Students suggest setting up an interdepartmental Icelandic course for exchange students, students, faculty, and staff. This is expected to start on the institution level in autumn 2018.
- Language can be a barrier and IUA has to improve its policy in this regard.
- Curriculum could be adjusted bearing in mind that most exchange takes place during the spring semester of the second year in the BA Programme.
- More attention needs to be given to social space and inclusion of exchange students.
- In recent years the housing situation in Iceland has changed drastically due to increased tourism, resulting in difficulties for international students to find housing. This has put pressure on the IUA to support international students more.
- Local students support exchange students and seek to welcome them through social events and sharing of information.

5. Student Trajectory

5.1. Prospective Students

The IUA website contains general information about the University and the individual departments. It is the main channel for information on application process, entry requirements, the study structure, and other practical information for prospective students. In 2017, the whole curriculum became available online, with detailed information on study structure and learning outcomes for each programme. The Department participates in the IUA Open Day in autumn and a national Open University Day in spring. These are advertised in local media, newspapers and radio. Selected upper secondary schools nationwide that focus to some extent on fine art or other creative fields, are visited by Department staff, director of communications, and a student. The Department welcomes groups on introduction visits throughout the year. These are not advertised particularly but develop from dialogue between staff and art teachers in upper secondary schools, who wish to bring their students. The Department has in recent years met regularly with the directors of art studies programmes in upper secondary level specialist schools to discuss expectations and requirements with regard to its applications. This relationship is currently in further development for joint benefit of the two educational levels.

Communication and Outreach Policy

The Department seeks talented and creative individuals with solid basic education and knowledge of art. The communicative canals are various, i.e. open lectures, student exhibitions open to public, active involvement in international networks/exchange and open seminars are an important part of the Department's outreach policy. MA and especially BA graduation exhibitions take place in public venues. The BA exhibition held in the Reykjavik Art Museum attracts a large number of visitors and is one of the biggest art events in Reykjavik each year and serves as an important showcase for the Department's ambitious approach. The Department uses the IUA website for sharing information about activities, additionally using social media (Facebook and shared IUA Instagram and Snapchat accounts) to share information and insights into the studies and Department's activities. Limited printed material is produced due to budget cuts but booklets with general information are available. Graduation exhibition catalogues for both study programmes are printed in a limited edition each year.

REFLECTIONS

- Material for public relations could be improved, more visual and vivid methods of delivery of courses and programmes, i.e. video. Inefficiency in this regard can be due to lack of human resources

5.2 Application process and entrance qualifications

IUA employs a standard electronic application form. Fine Art applicants also hand in a printed portfolio. In spring 2019 portfolios will also be submitted electronically. Application processes are in line with the University's Policy of Equal Rights, ensuring equal opportunities of genders to the education.

BA Programme Admission Process

Applicants for BA programmes must have completed upper secondary school or received comparable training. The University is nevertheless allowed to grant admission to those applicants who possess knowledge and experience deemed as sufficient. However, the general rule is that in order to qualify for such an assessment, the applicant shall have completed at least 75% of secondary school. Applicants must submit a portfolio of works along with a written statement describing their aims and intentions with the studies. The application deadline is in March each year and results are emailed to applicants in May. The Admissions Committee is appointed by the Department Council, headed by the dean. The assessment process is in two steps; a review of anonymous portfolios and an interview based on the assessment. The Admissions Committee consists of three members of staff (two academic and the department coordinator) and one external assessor (recently graduated visual artist). The Committee individually grades the anonymous portfolios. Generally, about 50-75% of the applicants that meet the general requirements are invited to an interview. Each Committee member delivers a second grading following the interviews. A list of successful applicants and a waiting list is composed based on these two gradings. Various factors are evaluated and taken into consideration in case of doubt to seek a balanced student demography.

MA Programme Admission Process

Applicants must have a BA degree in Fine Art or related disciplines within art and theory or received comparable training. Emphasis is placed on applicants possessing knowledge and competencies for independent art practice with initiative and ability to follow their ideas through. Applicants must submit a study proposal, describing their artistic intentions and personal aims within the programme, as well as a portfolio of recent works. Application deadline is in April and results are emailed to all applicants in May. Admissions Committee is appointed by the Department Council, headed by the dean. Admissions Committee consist of three members of the academic staff (MA programme director, theory programme director, academic) and one external assessor (visual artist). Portfolio and study proposals are reviewed individually by the Committee. Interviews are conducted with applicants with the highest score after the first reviewing process of portfolios and written proposals. A list of successful applicants and a waiting list is composed based on the initial review and the interview.

BA	Applications			Admission		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
2013-2014	59	31	90	20	12	32
2014-2015	46	22	68	17	12	29
2015-2016	41	17	58	23	8	31
2016-2017	35	12	47	18	7	25
2017-2018	41	26	67	17	11	28

TABLE 1 BA APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS BY GENDER, 2013-2017

MA	Applications			Admission		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
2013-2014	21	4	25	8	2	10
2014-2015	11	6	17	5	3	8
2015-2016	9	5	14	5	2	7
2016-2017	8	5	13	4	3	7
2017-2018	19	6	25	8	3	11

TABLE 2 MA APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS BY GENDER, 2013-2017

5.2. Enrolment and Orientation

Students who accept the invitation to study are enrolled in May/June. They receive a welcoming letter from the rector including practical information about the beginning of the semester and important dates. In early August prospective students receive more detailed information, a schedule for their first semester and login information for the IUA intranet, MySchool. On the first day of the autumn semester students meet with the dean and members of faculty who inform them about the multiple aspects and operations within the Department. In the afternoon, new students attend IUA orientation day for all departments, welcomed by the rector and a member of the alumni. All first year BA students are enrolled in the mandatory studio course *Methods and Process*, which focuses on the creative process, the Departments facilities, local environment, studios, and structure, in addition to mandatory introductory courses to all workshops.

5.3. Student Progression

Students are assigned a supervisor (from academic staff), with whom they meet regularly in group sessions. Students are responsible for their own study progress. They can seek advice from their supervisor or departmental coordinator who oversees the students' progress. At the end of the 3rd semester, when BA students are half way through their studies, the dean, supervisor, and departmental coordinator meet for a joint reflection on the studies and planning of the remaining semesters, leading to graduation. Progress is according to school rules and additionally the Department follows specific procedures. See Appendix B, IUA Rules 2017-18.

Drop-Out

Drop-out rate is relatively low at the Department and the IUA. The high teacher-student ratio and student focused learning plays a big part here.

Graduation

IUA graduates students three times during the academic year, in autumn, winter, and spring. Most students graduate in spring after completing a BA/MA project and degree exhibition and thesis. The Department graduated 114 students in the years 2014-2017, 24 with an MA degree and 90 with a BA degree. The graduation ceremony is a festive occasion and is held in Harpa concert hall in spring and at the IUA library or another University location in autumn and winter. The deans of the relevant departments graduates their students.

The University has been awarded the DS label by the European Commission, LLP for Higher Education. The Diploma Supplement (DS) accompanies a higher education diploma, providing a standardised description of the nature, level, context, content, and status of the studies completed by its holder. The University uses the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). ECTS makes teaching and learning in higher education more transparent across Europe and facilitates the recognition and quality assurance of all studies.

Alumni

The Iceland University of the Arts Alumni was established as an organisation in 2015. All graduated students automatically become a member of the Alumni Association. The Association agenda is to enhance the connection between IUA and alumni, networking and discourse on education and research in the field of art. The BA Programme prepares students to realize their ideas in the widest sense. According to the Alumni Survey students go in various directions after completing these studies; into careers as artists, curators, into MA Programmes or other studies in Iceland or abroad. Growing debate on the importance of art education is reflected in the extreme variety of professions alumni can be found in.

REFLECTIONS

- With regard to introduction to the professional field, many courses address and connect directly with the professional field, this can be stated more clearly in course descriptions and learning outcomes.
- The Department speculates about graduates as a sought-after work-force, even in fields not related to the arts. The meeting with alumni revealed examples of this, for example artists are sought after workers in the educational system and the health sector, where their skills are in high demand while they however get paid as unskilled. The Department wishes to investigate this further and map more closely in which fields other than the arts graduates work for salary. The Alumni Survey has been improved to this extent.

5.4. Interactions with the Professional Field

The IUA is an important contributor to the cultural life of Iceland. From its foundation, the general policy of the IUA has been to forge, emphasise, and strengthen the connection with the cultural sector of the country. This is practiced at the Department of Fine Art in form of student exhibitions open to the public, collaborations with various institutions, open lectures, support to faculty staff's active involvement in the field, and importantly through the vast number of part-time lecturers. Staff in general at the Department are also active parts of the art scene outside of the University. Both the BA and the MA programmes demand participation in the professional field of the arts through courses run in collaboration with art festivals, lecture programmes, seminars, museum archive work or other specific projects.

Exhibition spaces: The Department has four exhibition spaces on site, three in Laugarnes and one in Breiðholt, a suburb of Reykjavík, which is rented by the Department but run by students. Series of solo exhibitions by 3rd year BA students (autumn) and 1st year MA students (spring) are open to the public and an important way to welcome professionals and members of the public to the Department. Additionally, some courses are concluded with public exhibitions at various other venues in the city.

Open Lecture Series and Seminars: Every year, a number of artists, curators and academics give public lectures on their work and ideas at the Department. The lectures are intended to introduce and encourage discussion about various topics in contemporary culture as well as to explore how the field connects and interacts with other disciplines and professions. These lectures are an important part of the University's public relations as well as being an open platform for contact between students and the professional environment of the arts. The lectures can be viewed online at vimeo.com

The Department has also organised open seminars with artists and scholars; *A Twisted Relation to the Object*, 2016, *Avoiding Nature*, 2017, great platforms for inspiration and dialogue and received much positive feedback. In February 2018 a seminar will be held in collaboration with the Department of Philosophy at the University of Iceland.

Collaborations: The Department is engaged in an ongoing collaboration about joint courses with the Department of Art Theory at the University of Iceland. Currently (in the academic year 2017-2018) a parallel collaboration is in development with the Department of Museum

Studies, and the Department of Philosophy at the University of Iceland, with the aim of a fruitful and enriching outcome in coming years. The Department furthermore seeks to make collaborative agreements with other institutions engaged in complementary activities. These include certain projects with Kópavogur Art Museum (MA graduation show), Reykjavík Art Museum (BA graduation show), The National Gallery – Museum of Sigurjón Ólafsson (annual exhibition of MA students), Skaftfell Art Center in Seyðisfjörður (3rd year BA course and exhibition), Hjalteyri Art Factory (MA field trip/research/event/exhibition), Þingeyri Old Blacksmith Forge, (BA/MA field-trip/research/event/exhibition), Mengi art venue (experimental performative evenings), SÍM – The Association of Icelandic Artists (exhibition), The Icelandic Art Center (in relation to the Venice Biennale) and others on a temporary basis.

Full Time and Part Time Lecturers: The Department of Fine Art interacts with the local art sector at all levels through both official and informal meetings, conferences, committee and jury work and various organisational panels. Part-time teachers are practicing artists, curators, and academics. The majority of full-time faculty and part-time teachers (and other staff) are professionally involved with organisations outside the IUA. This creates a fluid and vibrant study environment and a dynamic dialogue between students, staff and the professional field. Through this structure, students get a rich insight into the professional field and engage with it right from the very beginning of their studies.

Internships and Research Projects: MA students can apply to do a special research project in connection with specific interests, often involving the outside professional world or other public interactions. According to the Department's aim to strengthen professional practice training for its student, students are able to do internships as part of their studies as part of the Erasmus+ programme. These are organised on an individual basis and have mostly taken place abroad in artists' studios and in relation to the Venice Biennale in collaboration with the Icelandic Art Center. A few internships have found a path locally (an example is The Living Art Museum) alongside with the student's studies. One student is currently doing such an internship with a local artist (spring 2018). It is the wish of the Department to set up internships with local institutions.

Assistant Teaching is currently under development and has been tried on a few occasions with MA students assisting in BA courses. Additionally, a structure for MA students' participation in seminars, article writing, conferences etc. Inside and outside of the University, is being encouraged, outlined as Discourse Participation.

Examples of collaboration with the professional field: research project on the writings of academics, critics and artists themselves on the Icelandic art scene over the past decades, supported by a grant from the Student Innovation Fund (Nýsköpunarsjóður námsmanna), students' involvement in preparations for the Reykjavik Art Festival, Sequences Art Festival, and Raflost, the electronic media festival, collaborative research projects on the performance archive and the artists book collection of the Living Art Museum.

REFLECTIONS

- Communication and outreach: to further utilise the IUA website to communicate the Department's actions and policy.
- The small size of the Icelandic community results in close communication and easy access to the local professional field on all levels. Prominent local artists are brought in as part-time lecturers each semester, and the Department maintains a close relationship with all the main art institutions in Iceland, in addition to seeking input from grass-root organisations and recently graduated alumni. The Department would like to formalise this collaboration further, through regular meetings with stakeholders and defined collaborative projects.
- It should be noted that fine art education in upper secondary schools and preparatory studies at the Reykjavik Art School has improved considerably in recent years, and applications to the Department are of a markedly better quality than they were a

decade ago. A majority of students complete their studies within the given timeframe and dropout rates are low.

- The Department would like to strengthen professional practice training for its students further, both at the BA and MA level. To explore the set-up of internships with local institutions and artists and further establish Assistant Teaching and Discourse Participation.
- In regard to introduction to the professional field, many courses address and connect directly with the professional field, this can be stated more clearly in course descriptions and learning outcomes
- The Department aims at creating a tighter framework/closer community around the large number of part-time lecturers. Planning further ahead and working towards enriching the sense of belonging among part-time teachers.
- Cultivate further the relationship with art teachers in secondary level, to prepare students better for studying at IUA and share experiences in art education on both levels.

6. Facilities, Resources, and Support

6.1. Housing and Facilities

The IUA is located in five buildings in different parts of Reykjavik. The Department of Fine Art shares a 4,463 m² facility with the Department of Art Education. The Department's private facilities count just over 2500 m² (calculating 50% share in work shop facilities) or around 23 m² pr. student. There is potential for further expansion and development, as the building has so far only been partially renovated for temporary housing purposes.

Workshops and Studios

The Department of Fine Art has five workshop facilities: print, photography, wood/metal and moulding workshops, which are shared with the Department of Design and Architecture, and the video lab, which is run solely by the Department of Fine Art. Additionally there is a 3D modelling and laser-cut workshop, located in Þverholt and a newly established mobile interactive workshop. Instruction takes place in the workshops and supervisors, (almost all of them artists), provide support to students and consultations to other teachers. The workshop supervisors regularly teach in courses that relate particularly to the relevant workshop. Introductory and technical courses at the workshops generally include some level of teaching, assignments etc. The workshops are satisfactory adequate and much of the equipment is regularly renewed.

All students, both BA and MA, are assigned studios in an open shared studio space. Students have access to these studios and workshops (excluding heavy machinery) 8AM – 1AM. BA student studios range from 8 – 13 m². MA studios were improved in 2017 and are on average 21 m² per student.

Future Housing Plans

2017 saw considerable development towards improving the housing situation of the University. Currently the Government Construction Contracting Agency that manages public construction projects in Iceland, is going through the official procedure to prepare for an international architectural competition following conditions and specifications for a tender (bid for construction). Furthermore, improvement of IUA housing situation is stated in the newly formed government agenda. This is a significant step in the process of uniting all departments of the IUA in one building, and such a transition will obviously have an enormous effect on the Department.

Meanwhile, plans have been made to relocate the Department of Performing Arts to Laugarnes as of autumn 2018. Additional space will be renovated in the building to make space for the additional department, but other facilities will be shared between three

departments instead of two. The Department's facilities have great potential for further development, as it is spacious and conveniently raw in its structure.

In a requirement analysis for a new building for the Department, focus is put on ample studio space, multiple project/exhibition spaces, seminar and lecture rooms and workshops. The Department requires big open spaces that can be adjusted to the needs of a progressive unit. This presents opportunities to further enhance the students' and staff's working process. It will be a challenge to keep all the positive aspects that the Department has going through the transition. New housing will call for new approaches in sharing space interdepartmentally. It will require considerable re-thinking of programmes and time-schedules. This is a challenge and an opportunity.

6.2. Financial Resources

The IUA is a self-governing institution that operates on a contract with the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. It receives 80% of its funding from the Ministry and 20% from student fees. The contract allows for a minimum of 385 students and a maximum of 600 students. For the academic year of 2017, this number was 371 BA students, five Diploma students, and 71 MA students.

In 2018, funds from the Ministry will be 1.162.000.000 ISK. Contribution per student will be ISK 1.183,000 to ISK 4,205,000, depending on the study program

The 2018 budget also lists a 40 million ISK support for research from the Ministry to improve the IUA's standing in getting contribution from national competitive funds as well as an extra 40 million ISK to improve housing in Laugarnes for the Department of Performance Arts.

Student fees (tuition) in 2018 is estimated at 250.000.000 ISK.

The IUA budget is planned from October to November and is a cooperative effort of the deans, the financial manager, the managing director overseeing the support services, and the rector – and is finally approved by the Board.

Salary and wages	98.500.000
Office and administrative costs	3.850.000
Tools, special housing costs and equipment	2.980.000
Other operating costs (travel costs, materials, student costs)	3.350.000
TOTAL COSTS	108.680.000

TABLE 3 OPERATING COSTS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FINE ART, 2017, IN ISK

Income

In 2017 the contribution from the Ministry of Education towards each student (same for BA and MA programmes) was 2,1 million ISK. The total number of students in the Ministry's budget was 94 students¹. Income from tuition was 49 million ISK. The Department's income from the contribution and tuition was 245 million ISK, the Department's share of other income from grants and sales were 20 million ISK.

Total income of the Department was therefore 265 million ISK.

Expenses

The Department's direct expenses (salaries and operational costs) were 108 million ISK and its share of costs for support services and workshops was 135 million ISK. Total expenses of the Department were therefore 243 million ISK.

In 2015 and 2016 the IUA suffered substantial financial losses. The Ministry acknowledged this by contributing 90 million ISK in 2017 to improve the financial standing of the University.

¹ In 2017 there were 89 students enrolled in the Department but the contribution was for 94 students based on the formula stated earlier.

This extra contribution is included in all calculations for the University and its departments in 2017 and explains to some extent the surplus of funds in 2017.

What has changed at the IUA since 2013?

In 2015 the IUA went through a total overhaul of all its IT equipment, systems and services.

- The mail system was changed from Gmail to Outlook to improve security and to give students and staff free access to the Office365 package.
- All servers, backup drives, and hardware were renewed.
- All WIFI points in all buildings were strengthened and new ones added.
- In 2016, the IUA website software was updated resulting in a much better source of information and a huge increase in visits to the site.
- In 2017, work started on a new filing system that complies with the national standard of institution filing systems.
- From 2015 until 2018 salaries of all IUA employees have been raised by 18,7% with an extra 4% due in June 2018. Salaries for adjuncts and programme directors were raised beyond this in August 2017 to improve salaries of the lowest paid academic staff as well as acknowledging the extra responsibility of programme directors.
- The Government's contribution to the IUA has improved and is now on par with that of the pre-financial crisis years. The recently formed government has stated that one of its missions is to improve the financing of Icelandic Higher Education Institutions.

6.3. Student Support and Counselling

When students are faced with a challenge regarding their studies, they turn to their supervisor or departmental coordinator, who also provide assistance and information regarding ECTS and the progression of studies.

The goal with student counselling is to enhance the students' awareness of their position, interests, and talents for optimal results in their studies. It is a venue for students to address educational matters with the assistance of a student counsellor who acts as their confidant. The student counsellor also provides support for students with special needs such as dyslexia or other disabilities during final exams. It is the student's responsibility to inform the student counsellor of his/her disability when commencing studies at the IUA. It seems that need for psychological support has increased and it has been discussed on the institution wide level to offer better service. The student counsellor has in some cases offered psychological sessions at cost of the institution, to students in need. Procedures regarding sexual harassment and abuse have been reviewed across the institution as a whole in reaction to #metoo, autumn 2017.

Library and Information Services

The IUA Library operates in two locations of the University, in Þverholt and in Laugarnesvegur, and serves the whole of the academic community as well as the public. The Fine Art Collection, housed in Laugarnesvegur, is built on the original Arts and Crafts School's library and counts 13.580 items. The collection is in constant development and purchasing is done in close cooperation with programme directors and faculty. In addition to the physical library, users have access to a selection of electronic databases and e-journals through the Iceland Consortium (IC). The IC is a service agreement between the National and University Library of Iceland and the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture for providing academic and scholarly content to anyone online with an Icelandic Service Provider and an Icelandic IP number. The IUA is a participating institution in this service, and also caters to students and faculty of all departments by providing access to expert databases and e-journals within each

discipline. The Fine Art Collection is open Monday to Friday. Access to a computer for dyslexic people is available at the Library.

Physical items	13.580
Journals in print:	10 titles
Electronic journal titles in special subscription	7 titles
Full text e-journal titles in the national consortium	22.000 titles

TABLE 4 FINE ART LIBRARY COLLECTION IN NUMBERS

MySchool

The IUA intra system is MySchool, an important source for input and output about the courses and each individual's progress. The system is under constant development and construction but can be rather complicated to navigate and not particularly user friendly. Programme directors and other department staff, spend much time serving the system and assisting part time lecturers using the system. This adds to their workload and is a regular source of complaint.

Student Equality

The IUA has an Equal Rights Policy (see Appendix N) that aims to ensure the equal rights of students (and staff) within the academic community through specific actions and by encouraging active debate about equal rights in all areas of the University operations. The University wants to ensure that its human resources – the talents of its employees and its students – thrive as much as possible. The Equal Rights Policy is currently under revision as a result of #metoo. Other procedures such as the ones for sexual assault and harrasment were improved autumn 2017. The IUA has an Equal Rights Council that addresses, and processes matters that come up. Currently a change in the definition of gender is in process.

7. Academic Faculty

7.1. Size and Composition of Academic Faculty

In 2017 a total of 21 persons were working at the Department on a daily basis. 11 females and 10 males. The Average age is 42 years. All faculty academic staff and part-time teachers at the Department are active practitioners and researchers within the field of visual arts. Permanent staff, part-time teachers and visiting artists represent a broad variety in methods resulting in a diversity in artistic approach within the Department. This is reflected in graduation exhibitions. Supportive staff, departmental coordinator, project manager, service assistants, and workshop staff are also either practicing artists or have extensive experience of working within the art field. Academic faculty in the Department consists of nine people in 7.2 full positions (see Table 5 below). Part-time teachers and visiting artists are around 80 each year in both study programmes. The Department yearly invites visiting artists from abroad, through the Erasmus+ network and the KUNO network. The student/teacher ratio is 9.8 students per teacher in 2017.

Position	Specialisation	Position %	Teaching%	Admin%	Research %	Service%
Academics						
Dean		100	0	100	•	
Professor	Time-based	100	44	26	30	
Assistant professor	Three dimensional	50	54	26	20	
Associate professor	Three dimensional	50	49	26	25	
Assistant professor	Two dimensional	100	54	26	20	
Professor	MA programme director	70	44	26	30	
Associate professor	MA Programme	50	75	0	25	
Assistant professor	Art theory programme director BA	100	54	26	20	
Assistant professor	Art theory programme director MA	100	54	26	20	
Part-time teachers		420	100			
Workshops						
Adjunct *	Video	100	20			80
Adjunct	Photography	25	20			80
Adjunct	Photography	25	20			80
Adjunct	Wood	25	20			80
Adjunct	Wood	25	20			80
Adjunct	Moulding	12,5	20			80
Adjunct	Metal	12,5	20			80
Adjunct	Print	12,5	20			80
Adjunct	Print and Workshop Supervisor	35	20	20		60

TABLE 5 COMPOSITION OF ACADEMIC POSITIONS AND DIVISION OF WORK COMPONENTS

*Deans have the option to go on research leaves (sabbaticals) for one semester within each cycle of hiring (5 years).

*The video workshop is run solely by the Department of Fine Art. Other workshops are run in partnership with the Department of Design and Architecture.

Recent Faculty Changes

A new dean was appointed 1 March, 2016. An artist was hired from a group of seven applicants to be the second dean of the Department since its inception in 1999. The same year presented quite a turnover in the academic faculty, two professors were finishing their terms according to IUA regulations. (The hiring term is now 4+4+2 years and 5+5 years for deans and the rector.) A third position, filled by an adjunct appointed without the proper academic hiring procedure, was also advertised. It was the decision of the new dean to split one position in the BA Programme into two and also to split the total of 120% position of MA Programme into two 70% and 50% positions and consequently eliminate a 20% position of visiting professor. The Department received 54 applications for four posts, 33 were qualified. Signifying that a lot of highly skilled professionals seek to work at the Department.

Subsequently five new academics were hired; A professor and director of the MA Programme, 70% position (which will increase to 100% as of 1 January, 2018); an associate professor in the MA Programme, 50% position; assistant professor in the BA Programme, two dimensional mediums, 100% position; an associate professor in the BA Programme, three dimensional mediums, 50% position – all of these started on 1 August, 2016 – and an assistant professor in the BA Programme, three dimensional mediums, 50% (started 1 January, 2017). Theory academic progressed from position of adjunct to assistant professor of theory and the position increased from 50% to 100% as of autumn 2016. Following these shifts were also some changes among other staff. The positions of supportive staff, departmental coordinator (80%), and project manager (50%) and service assistants (shared with the Department of Art Education) are all filled by new people as of spring 2017. Workshops have also seen considerable renewal of staff, with most workshops now lead by teams of two 50% positions, resulting in increased flexibility, enhanced professional approach and diminished negative aspects.

7.2. Qualifications as Educators

Institutional procedure for academic appointment and progression underwent significant changes in 2014-15, together with the revision of core documents describing division of responsibilities and working procedures among academic staff. Distinct qualification criteria were defined for each academic position (assistant professor, associate professor, professor),

sabbaticals were introduced (on a competitive basis), and appointment periods were limited to 4+4+2 years, or a total of 10 years. Within each period, academic staff can apply for progression, based on their teaching and research output. Total appointment period for deans is 5+5 years, accommodating one sabbatical within each of the five-year periods (non-competitive). Finally, annual working plans were developed as a management tool at the departmental level, where each faculty member lays out their hours and timing for teaching and research in relation to their formal duties and titles. Administration is now inclusive in each of the two working components (teaching and research), except for programme directors, who have a defined number of hours for administration. The working plan is also a way for faculty members and deans to oversee and control the high level of work load.

'Rules on Appointments at the Iceland University of the Arts' specify the advertisements, application process, committee evaluation procedures, and final decision protocols for all academic staff (See Appendix Q, Rules on Academic Appointments). Programme directors (PD) are assigned by the dean from the faculty cohort. They supervise a specific study programme and serve a key purpose in structuring and shaping the curriculum and delivery of the study programme. They attend departmental meetings and have a seat in the department council as well as other councils and committees, as appropriate. Among PD main tasks is to provide students with guidance and supervise their learning progress, follow-up on teaching evaluation results, supervise part-time teachers, select external examiners and sit on admissions committees, supervise final projects and final theses, oversee promotional tasks and outreach, in addition to supervising relations to the professional field.

REFLECTIONS

- Communication within the Department is generally open and unrestrained.
- Programme directors experience a heavy administrative workload. It has been suggested that project managers' position percentages could be increased to better support programme directors, academics, and part-time teachers.
- An institution-wide unit has recently revised the role of PDs, and their conclusion was to further elevate the professional leadership but reduce paperwork.

Part-Time Teachers

In 2016-17, 83 part-time teachers and visiting lecturers taught at the Department, representing 4.6 full positions. The hiring process is informal, and educators are often handpicked within the professional community. The selection of educators reflects the expertise required in relation to specific course content, and in relation to the practice output the Department is aiming for. The hiring of part-time lecturers is therefore first and foremost based on their artistic and/or research activity and the quality of their work. In recent years, emphasis has been on allowing study programmes to respond to urgent and topical issues in society with the flexibility of writing new course descriptions, thus regularly evolving the curriculum and introducing new tutoring staff in the programmes.

REFLECTIONS

- Out of 22 people working on a daily basis at the Department, academics, workshop or admin, 15 started in 2016 or later. There has been extensive renewal. This has of course been a challenge for everyone but has also generated new energy and enthusiasm.
- It is necessary to further enhance the framework for including part-time teachers better and to ensure that they get all the necessary information and support and that they feel a part of the larger academic vision. To address this, part-time teachers, programme directors, project manager and academic coordinator meet at the beginning of each semester. Courses are introduced, which creates knowledge of the bigger picture and part-time teachers also support each other and reflect between themselves. This is an improvement according to the part-time teachers taking part in the self-evaluation process.

- Since part-time teachers deliver a large number of courses at the IUA, a comprehensive programme for the inclusion of part-time teachers within the University benefits the sharing of learning and teaching experience. It has proven problematic to get part-time teachers to engage properly in what has been on offer on the institutional level, but smaller groups on the departmental level do better.
- It would also be constructive to create a stronger framework for documenting course activity lead by part-time teachers. The know-how and experience of part-time lead courses does not build-up adequately within the Department or the University. The set-up of a new inner web for IUA might contribute in this matter.

Induction and Orientation for New Faculty Members.

The induction and orientation for new faculty members mainly happens in conversation with the dean, the manager of human resources, and other members of staff. A formal procedure is followed when introducing new staff members, with basic information on the IUA working procedure, division of roles and responsibilities (see Appendix R).

Staff Development, Annual Staff Interviews, Human Resources.

Academic staff write yearly working plans for the following academic year at the end of spring semesters. These are reviewed and discussed in meeting with the dean. In the fall semester, the dean meets with all members of staff for annual staff interviews. The IUA supports family values and flexible hours.

Erasmus grants and KUNO grants are available as part of staff development, as well several internal funds, such as the Academic Staff Development Fund, Publication Fund, and the Support Staff Development Fund. To enhance research activity, academic staff have been offered a course on writing as part of the workload (in exchange for less teaching hours). Finally, Sabbaticals have been introduced in 2015 (see next chapter).

Surveys have been conducted among staff of IUA since 2013. They address factors such as the work itself, work environment and management. Roughly, these surveys reflect discontent in regard to housing conditions, workload, and salary, but factors such as participation in policy making, support, management by head of departments, morale among staff, flexibility and independence in the workplace, flow of information, staff development, equality issues, satisfaction, and merit turn out positively.

8. Research

8.1. Institutional Context

The Iceland University of the Arts places high value on research and has actively promoted and supported staff to participate where possible in research related and knowledge producing activities. There is also an understanding for the importance of the practice itself and the variety of forms the exposition of these can take within the variety of specialism created in the arts. Despite its undisputed responsibility in terms of research in the field of the arts, institutional funding for research is minimal compared to other HEIs in Iceland. In 2016 the government contribution for research was approximately 9% of the institution's total government funding, when other HEIs received up to 44%. Considerable efforts to claim more research funding have been made by the IUA leadership, especially since research is now an institutional priority, along with the pressing housing situation. In recent years effort has been put into defining artistic research within the context of the IUA. The rector, the Research Committee and the director of quality, teaching and research have had significant impact on the IUA research culture and institutional approach, which is now more open and transparent. Recent developments include:

- A new framework for a formal internal evaluation of research output is being developed, building on a scheme developed in 2014 (see Appendix V). Feed-back and follow-up are being processed at the time of this SER.

- Rules on sabbatical were implemented in 2015 with the first faculty members going on sabbatical leave in 2016-17. These are granted by review of application by the Research Committee (see Appendix S). Three faculty members at the Department of Fine Arts have been granted sabbaticals (out of six in total). This will without doubt give an important signal to the field allowing for less suspicious attitudes towards research as a valuable component of the multitude of possibilities residing within artmaking.
- The rector, the director of QTR, and the deans have annual meetings in each department where each faculty member's output and research plans are discussed, with follow-up meetings. These meetings have proved to be an excellent platform for a consensus of terms, concepts and institutional approach to research.
- Every faculty member with research time is now required to reflect critically on their artistic practice. Guidelines on critical reflection have been issued, where content and form are addressed. Writing workshops have been organised where faculty members can train and exercise their writing/reflection skills. Other discursive platforms have been organised as part of staff development for faculty.
- Research agendas at the departmental level have emerged from within all departments, with action plans being developed respectively.
- A Publication Fund was established in 2015.
- A new Research Fund has been established, to be launched in Autumn 2018.
- The arts have now entered the panel of humanities in the Iceland Research Fund, with the first grant being allocated to an artistic project in Spring 2018.

Institutional Management of Research Output

Academic faculty within the Department is appointed with a specific percentage of working hours for R&I activities, ranging from 10-30% of their total working hours depending on their academic title and interest. All faculty members with a research component in their employment contract document their artistic and scholarly activities in the University online database for research output. On the basis of this documentation, an internal peer review is conducted every year. The database portrays each faculty member's artistic practice, research activities, publications and participation in conferences, public discourse, memberships and overall outreach to the professional environment. Assessment criteria for research output are currently being revised by the Research Committee, which will lay the basis for a new quality framework for research management and approach to research at the institutional level. The framework will embrace research activity, dissemination, impact and critical reflections by faculty, in accordance to benchmarking with Scandinavian HEIs. The framework is foreseen to have an impact on faculty progression, applications for sabbaticals and applications to the IUA Research Fund (criteria to be finalised in Spring 2018).

8.2. Departmental Research Organisation and Research Culture

Within the Department of Fine Art, eight faculty members are awarded research time, leaving only adjunct lecturers and workshop teachers with no research time. This amounts up to an average of 24% research investment in total working hours, which is the highest across the institution.

The Department has recently developed its own research agenda (see Appendix U), as a means to execute the institutional research agenda, which has a rather technical and administrative approach. All academic staff in the Department are engaged in the development of their own theoretical research and/or practice. This work is made public as part of Departmental lecture series that is open to all staff, students, and the general public. Furthermore, all academic staff come together with the dean, the rector of IUA and director of QTR, where publications, exhibitions, works in development and research is presented. This meeting is the platform for staff to acquire insight into each others' work. Recently there have been conferences within the Department in which professionals from other fields have

introduced aspects of their research. These conferences have been connected to research interests of individual staff and to student projects.

As mentioned in Chapter 4 – all three of the core staff team in the MA Programme have a PhD or equivalent. Most recent was the completion of a MA staff member in the Norwegian Research Fellowship programme that has established connection on this level between the Department and Norwegian tertiary education. The other staff member completed a practice-based PhD in Gothenburg, Sweden, and has experience of supervision in the Swedish National Research School as well as at the Faculty of Fine, Applied and Performing Art at Gothenburg University. The third member of staff has a theoretical PhD from Calgary, Canada. Together these three members of staff thus have a valuable experience to bring forth once the University is able to accept guest researchers and/or PhD candidates.

REFLECTIONS

- A public lecture format does not allow room for much developmental discussion. More opportunities are needed for staff to discuss works in progress.
- Need for staff to have an honest and open-minded discussion about what constitutes research in Fine Art and how their artworks are connected to it.
- There is understanding of the need for creating space in the otherwise heavy academic workload for this to take place. The relatively new dean has an acclaimed national/international artist profile and an insight into the importance of the development of practice for artistic and/or academic delivery. In the visual arts the development of practice is the basis for research to emerge as a thread through artworks and projects. This understanding is of great importance which if acknowledged might help practice based staff see this relationship more clearly.
- More effort needs to be put into assisting faculty members applying for external competitive funding, i.e. through The Icelandic Research Fund, or international research schemes.

Dissemination of research

The University organises an annual research conference, *Hugarflug*, which members of staff, post-graduate students, professionals, and other academics are encouraged to participate in. *Hugarflug* has been an important platform for staff to bring out the research component in their projects and to present their ideas and professional developments to their colleagues and other professionals for discussion. There has also been increased participation of academic staff in both peer reviewed international and national conferences within other academic institutions.

A majority of the academic staff in the Department exhibits regularly in established local and international venues. On a national level, there are opportunities to participate in highly respected exhibition venues outside of Reykjavik, thus connecting the Department further to different parts of the country.

9. Summary

Writing this self-evaluation report has proven to be most beneficial for the Department of Fine Art. The whole process has helped to establish a clear understanding of the structures within the Department and the institution it is part of. The process has shaped a clearer vision on how to develop further as a department and where improvements can be implemented both departmentally and institutionally. The mission of the Department is to provide quality education in fine art. The Department's strength is its artistic diversity, high student teacher ratio, flexibility and openness in communication, and close proximity to the professional field.

The input from the external expert was especially valuable, not only his reflective view of the Department's current practice, but also the number of points of good practice that he identified within the unit. In-depth conversation with academic staff, students, part-time lecturers, supportive staff of the IUA, alumni, and stakeholders has made it possible to put together this reflective analysis of the department. Everyone involved has been open and generous in attitude.

An action plan has been drafted (see Appendix W), based on the results of this report, for the Department to address the principle aims and objectives for the next five years. This plan will be assessed every autumn semester during Project Week and re-evaluated at the end of each spring term:

Teaching and learning.

- Continuing emphasis is on artistic diversity and individual growth.
- Continuing diversity of course content. Encourage students to seek electives in other departments by creating cross-departmental flexibility in study structure and time tables.
- Increase student involvement in course planning and open lecture programming.
- Strengthen the relationship between staff research and teaching.
- Involve workshop staff more in course programming, with the aim to intertwine studio practice, workshops and theory.
- Establish a study line in curatorial practice within MA Fine Art.

Administration

- Define the roles of programme directors and other faculty members, in order to reduce workload and clarify responsibilities.
- Work towards making students more responsible for their studies.
- The Department would like to show more initiative in involving staff from central administration more with regards to internal quality management, student support and public communication. This will also enhance the notion of belonging to one single IUA.
- As the Department undergoes transition in housing on the institutional level it is necessary to ensure that this supports and improves the departments working environment.

Research

- The Department has great potential for enhancing research within the field of visual art in this country, with its human resources and experience in running an international research-based MA Programme. Faculty research activity needs more support at all levels; national, institutional, departmental, and financial.

Public Outreach

- Strengthen IUA and departmental website to communicate and archive the Department's activity.
- Strengthen communication with upper secondary level schools and other prospective students

10. Supporting Documents

- A. Strategic Plan 2013-2017
- B. Rules 2017-18
- C. BA Learning Outcomes
- D. BA Study Structure
- E. BA Student Trajectory by Year
- F. MA Learning Outcomes
- G. MA Study Structure
- H. Scoring Rubrics
- I. Course Assessment Form (MA)
- J. Course Evaluation (list of questions)
- K. Procedure for the Design and Approval of Programmes
- L. Procedure for Periodic Review of Programs
- M. Language Policy
- N. Equal Rights Policy
- O. Code of Ethics
- P. Grievance Committee on Student Rights
- Q. Rules on Academic Appointments
- R. Academic Positions and Working Procedures
- S. Rules on Sabbaticals
- T. Rules on Staff Development Fund
- U. Dept. of Fine Art Research Agenda
- V. Quality Framework for Research & Innovation in the Arts (2014)
- W. Dept. Action Plan 2018 – 2022
- X. External Expert Visit Agenda
- Y. External Expert Report