

**Quality Enhancement Research
Peer Review Report
Royal Academy of Art
University of the Arts The Hague**

Site visit dates 17 & 18 May 2017

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Introduction

This is the concluding report of the international peer review of research conducted by the Royal Academy of Art. The review took place in the framework of the Branch Protocol Quality Assurance Research 2016-2022 of the Association of Dutch Universities of Applied Sciences.¹ According to this protocol each research unit should undergo an external peer review on a regular basis. The peer review aims to assess the quality of the research carried out and to provide insight into the measures that can help the research unit to further develop its research policy. The research unit concerned here is formed by both the Royal Academy of Art and the Royal Conservatoire, the two faculties of the University of the Arts The Hague.

The process of the review consisted of three stages:

1. The Royal Academy of Art prepared a Critical Reflection and compiled a set of underlying documentation, consisting of samples of research projects and presentations, some in printed form, others as computer files or on video; the Critical Reflection was structured according to the five standards of the protocol.
2. The review panel examined the Critical Reflection and visited the academy on the 17th and 18th of May 2017 for an extensive audit with various groups consisting of the director, the lector, teaching staff members, staff officers, students and alumni.² The panel used the set of standards noted above as the basis for its investigations.
3. The review panel produced the present report. The report is structured according to the five standards. In addition to each standard, the specified requirements are included.

The peer review was carried out by a panel consisting of prof. dr. Patricia Pisters (University of Amsterdam, chair), professor Sharon Morris (Slade School of Fine Art, University College London), Eleni Kamma (artist and doctoral researcher) and dr. Camiel van Winkel (LUCA School of the Arts Brussels and Rijksakademie Amsterdam), with dr. Erik Viskil as the panel's secretary and drs. Reba Wesdorp as the minutes secretary.³

The review panel wishes to express its sincere gratitude to the Royal Academy for all the hard work in drawing up the Critical Reflection and organising the visit. The two days at the academy were compelling in all facets. The overall attitude of everyone, staff and students, was engaged, dedicated, and inspirational. The interviews took place in an atmosphere of serious enthusiasm and with an admirably open and ambitious mentality, already exhibiting the first glimpses of quality.

¹ In Dutch: *Brancheprotocol Kwaliteitszorg Onderzoek (BKO) of the Vereniging Hogescholen.*

² See Appendix 2 for the schedule of the meetings during the peer review visit.

³ See Appendix 1 for a more elaborate description of the review panel.

Summary, general remarks and recommendations

The review panel has examined and discussed the Critical Review of the Royal Academy of Art as well as the underlying documentation provided, and interviewed parties involved in the research activities during seven intensive meetings. On this basis and according to the five standards of the protocol, the panel has come to its findings on the quality of the research carried out at the academy.

General remarks

The review panel finds it important to start this review with the observation that the Royal Academy demonstrates a remarkably positive research culture. The academy has developed this culture very rapidly and without compromise. The panel is impressed by the overall attitude to research and how the school manages to address the social and the world, without instrumentalizing art. The panel also observes a strong desire and need for further development and growth of the research community. On the basis of what is already achieved – which is significant –, and the reassuring plans for the future, particular in relation to the continuing collaboration with Leiden University for at least the next ten years to come, the panel dares to foresee strong headway.

It is not without reason that the panel welcomes recent developments with great enthusiasm, such as the transformation of the Master Artistic Research (MAR), the appointment of a new head of technical workshops, and the decision to establish a second lectorate, specially devoted to the design disciplines. It is obvious that the MAR can bridge the gap between the orientation and more skills-driven bachelor programme and the doctoral research trajectories of PhDArts in the Academy of Creative and Performing Arts (ACPA) in Leiden. The panel very much appreciated learning about the many initiatives, including the self-initiatives of the students, in the city of The Hague. The panel understands the Royal Academy to be a fruitful catalyst of artistic development in the city. It suggests that by adjusting the research even more to the city's context and its diverse population and communities, the academy can further contribute in inspiring ways to the overall urban fabric and the cultural and social life of its inhabitants.

During the interviews, the director and lector, as well as some of the other participants involved, shared a certain dissatisfaction with the assessment framework and the standards of the review. The review panel agrees that the framework and some of the standards, and especially the interpretation given to these standards within the framework, are far removed from the attitude and methods employed in research in an art and design context. To a large extent, research in art and design is about the process as much as it is about outcomes. In this respect standards that focus on products miss the point as far as the artistic disciplines are concerned. The review panel holds, however, that notwithstanding the framework, the Royal Academy has succeeded in presenting its views and achievements in a clear and meaningful way.

Assessment of the standards

Regarding the first standard, the review panel considers that the Royal Academy has an ambitious, wide-ranging research profile and a clear and strong research programme that is challenging and inspiring for its researchers, teachers and students. The profile, which builds on an inclusive notion of research, forms a coherent unity with the vision of the University of the Arts; both demonstrate a high level of synergy. The panel concludes that, although the profile can be developed further, the first standard is met with excellence.

The organisation of the research, which is the topic of standard 2, has many well-functioning elements. The panel observes an active, reflective and open-minded research attitude, an organisation that is transparent, effective and highly self-directing, and a wealth of research

initiatives throughout the education programme. However, compared to the ambitious profile and programme, the human resources reserved for staff research are still too limited. With most aspects regarding standard 2 very well performed, but the human resources lagging significantly behind this level, the review panel decided after ample discussion to assess this standard as only satisfactory.

As far as the use of research standards is concerned, which is the concern of standard 3, the review panel observes that research practices are fully coherent with the mentality and the methodologies of the disciplines involved. Moreover, the Royal Academy shows a high level of reflection on questions regarding the application of standards in art and design research. This standard is assessed as good.

Relevance is a complicated standard, which is met by the Royal Academy in a dedicated, thorough and stimulating way. Research at the Royal Academy is predominantly practice based. Research questions come from the individual practice of the artists and designers involved and relate to professional situations. The review panel acknowledges the ambition for the social relevance of the research and the immense impact of it on both the education within the Royal Academy and the professional practice of the participants. Moreover, the research clearly contributes to the discourse and to the development of knowledge in the field. The panel regards this aspect as excellent.

The last standard, on quality assurance, is also met by the Royal Academy, which has an active and thoughtful attitude and can rely on an effective control system. The review panel holds the view, that regarding the modest volume of staff research, the inclusive mode of quality assurance chosen for these is entirely appropriate. However, with an increase of staff volume, the application of other evaluation means will be required.

1. Standard 1: excellent
2. Standard 2: satisfactory
3. Standard 3: good
4. Standard 4: excellent
5. Standard 5: satisfactory

General assessment

The previous has shown that the review panel deeply appreciates the research approach and achievements of the Royal Academy. The panel takes the view that the overall assessment of the research at the Royal Academy, with its dedicated and engaging community, cannot result in anything else than 'excellent'. Yet, the panel decided to assess standard 2 with only 'satisfactory'. It insists on this score, while also stands firm on 'excellent' for the overall achievement. Considering the needs of the Royal Academy's research programme and the situation of research within art schools in the Netherlands, the allocation of human resources, which is the weak point regarding standard 2, would not necessarily lead to a score below good. However, the Royal Academy has grand ambitions, and is part of an international field of art schools in which the attention to research is increasing rapidly. In order to be able to compete and succeed in this field the Royal Academy should, according to the panel, further invest in staff research. The excellent profile and programme, as well as the excellent way in which the Royal Academy succeeds in enforcing the relevance of the research, constitute the right conditions for a further development of the research community. The assessment of standard 2 can be seen as a harsh encouragement to this end. The overall assessment shows how the panel values the larger whole of the research, based on a careful consideration of all five standards and the obvious and extraordinary strengths within the admirably well-developed approach.

General assessment: excellent

Recommendations

1. Although the research profile of the Royal Academy is ambitious, well accounted for and in line with the vision of the university as a whole, the panel suggests a further development. Positioning itself as a research art school with an inclusive approach to research, which the panel supports, will in the long run probably not be sufficiently distinctive, especially in light of the increasing international competition among art schools. The panel highly values the views of the Royal Academy on research and is convinced that the most interesting ideas could be worked out systematically into a set of principles supporting a more comprehensive research profile, one that acknowledges the multifaceted nature of research and reflection in art and design in a more explicit and profound way.
2. In its Critical Reflection the Royal Academy encompasses a diverse range of activities under the heading of research. In order to strengthen the importance of its approach the academy should consider refining its terminology in a way that, for instance, the learning of both generic and specific research skills, getting acquainted with theoretical insights, and practicing simple forms of inquiry are clearly distinguished from the more complex activity of carrying out a research project.
3. There is an opportunity and a challenge for the Royal Academy in raising the profile of the existing material research in the workshops and to emphasize the possibilities of this kind of research to students and teachers. To this end the Royal Academy could take advantage of connections with industries, of which some already appear to show interest in the workshops' material research.
4. As a next step in the collaboration with Leiden University and possibly building on the first experiences of the still to be implemented double degree programme, the Royal Academy could investigate the potential of interdisciplinary projects and programmes that go beyond the humanities. This would make it possible to connect research in art and design with the natural sciences, technology and other fields.
5. In order to actively realise the ambitious research profile in practice the review panel recommends that the Royal Academy invests in additional possibilities for the teaching staff to engage with research. The Research Group could be enlarged, additional research groups could be established, material research by the technical staff in the workshops could be included, and research grants for teaching staff related to certain educational components or projects could be introduced. The panel understands the difficult position of the management, which has the responsibility to first and foremost facilitate education. The panel also knows about the long-standing desires for additional funding for research. However, if the Royal Academy really intends to be a research-oriented art school, this needs to be made clear by the amount of time and means invested.
6. In connection to the previous item, the panel would like to point out the importance of developing a clear vision on the financial position of research and the division of financial means within the academy.
7. In the present situation the quality assurance of the research done by the teaching staff is effective. If the Royal Academy increases the volume of staff research substantially, it should consider developing special tools for monitoring and evaluating the research activities and outcomes in order to stay in control and assure that the quality of research is in balance with that of the education.

8. In this period of transition, in which theory and practice are in a process of mutual reorientation, teachers, especially those in artistic disciplines, face the challenge of keeping up with developments. In particular, they have to keep pace with the speed in which students develop in relating to theory and reflection. The interviews made the panel aware of the opportunities research projects can provide for teachers who are open to developing their pedagogical qualities by way of reflection. The panel recommends a broad use of research projects and grants that favour the further professionalization and vitalisation of the teaching staff.
9. Finally, the review panel takes the opportunity to encourage the Royal Academy to further engage the diverse communities of The Hague in its research projects and, by doing so, involve them in the academy, in the curriculum and programmes, and in the attitude and visions that inspire artists and designers.

Standard 1: Profile and Programme

The research unit has a relevant, ambitious and challenging research profile and programme with accompanying objectives that have been operationalized in a number of indicators.

The research unit's research profile and research programme are indicative of how and to what degree the unit is distinctive: relevant, ambitious and challenging in education, in professionalizing practices and in the domain of knowledge. The research profile is in synergy with the research vision of the University of Applied Sciences and can count on support from internal and external stakeholders. The research programme has specific objectives; to measure these and to make them visible, the research unit has set indicators that make clear: input, products, use and rating.

Assessment of standard 1: excellent

- The research profile of the Royal Academy and the vision of research of the university as a whole form a recognizable unity and demonstrate a high level of synergy.
- Both profile and programme are relevant, ambitious and challenging, and stimulate a positive, compassionate research culture within the academy.
- The omnipresence of research in the Royal Academy and the number of students, teaching staff and practitioners from outside that are involved there strongly supports the profile and the programme components; this was further confirmed in the interviews.
- The objectives of staff research and research-oriented components of the bachelor and master programmes are well-defined and subject to quality assurance – see standard 5.

1.1 Research culture

Research in the context of art and design is an issue that evokes a series of informed and uninformed, relevant and irrelevant questions. Apart from simply questioning the need for, or the precise role of, research in the arts, every aspect related to research seems to be a potential subject for ontological and instrumental deliberation. These questions, for instance, relate to the position of theory and reflection within art, the relevance of teaching writing skills in an art school, and the appropriateness of introducing research activities at the level of the bachelor programme.

The review panel was given inspirational proof of the positive, compassionate research culture at the Royal Academy in the meeting with students and alumni, who put forward important and original views on this subject and discussed their opinions in full. One of their views is that with the technology-driven democratisation of technical skills and means of production, amateurs are in principle technically capable of carrying out almost any artistic production process. Artist and designers of our time therefore distinguish themselves and their work increasingly through a high level of reflection, for which theory and research skills are indispensable.

Art and design have been undergoing crucial shifts and changes in the past decades. We have seen all sorts of processes of opening up to the world, an increased importance of performative approaches and interventionist practices, innovation in the application of new technologies, the rediscovery of materiality and of traditional techniques, and indeed, the growing importance of reflection with an intensified interest in theory, culminating with the emergence of the notion of artists and designers as researchers.

The Royal Academy made an early start investing in research. The interviews stressed that the intense collaboration with Leiden University, through the University of the Arts, started as early as 2001, when the joint Academy of Creative and Performing Arts (ACPA) was established. Some five years ago the academy decided to take the next step and position itself explicitly as a research

oriented art school. The review panel concludes that in 2017 the Royal Academy unquestionably has a relevant, ambitious and challenging research profile, and that they have succeeded in translating it into an excellent, relevant and ambitious programme. These achievements indicate that the academy is transforming into a genuine research community.

1.2 Research profile

The research identity of the Royal Academy is coherent with the research vision of the University of the Arts at large, which is presented as part of the Critical Reflection. The vision defines artists as “reflective practitioners” and states that doing research is integral to this approach of art practice. Furthermore, it stipulates the nature of the research activities for the various educational levels.

- The bachelor’s level involves the learning of basic research skills, which relate to the ability to reflect on the artist’s own expertise and artistic practice. Students learn discursive skills such as how to deal with information, how to present various perspectives on their work and on the work of others, as well as reading, speaking and writing skills.
- At the master’s level research is directed towards doing a research project into a specific field of study. The research topics are relevant to both the artistic and intellectual development of the students and the development of the field of study.
- After the master’s course students can apply for participation in a doctoral programme at the Academy of Creative and Performing Arts, the joint facility with Leiden University. The PhD programme for visual artists and designers is PhDArts.

As the review panel understood from the Critical Reflection, research at the PhD level is called *artistic research*. Somewhat surprisingly the term also popped up with regard to the master’s level. The panel concludes that it is not reserved for PhD trajectories only. Artistic research is described as the critical and theoretical investigation of the artist into and through his or her own art practice. In the university’s vision, it is regarded as a form of academic research, with the difference that it centres around artistic practice. Research questions derive from the artistic practice, the research methods are characterized by the use of artistic practice and materials, and the results contribute to both artistic practice and to artistic academic discourse. The review panel highly appreciates the thorough and intelligent definition of artistic research.

Research at the Royal Academy – general perspective

The research profile and vision of the Royal Academy are described in depth in the Critical Reflection. Central to the approach is an inclusive notion of research, in which research is regarded as an intrinsic part of the design and creation process. The other main principles of the vision can be summarised with a series of quotes and paraphrases.

- Today’s artists and designers are expected to actively engage with cultural and social developments.
- They are increasingly perceived as researchers, no matter whether or not they explicitly position and identify themselves in those terms.
- Research thus focuses on the potential for change of the design and/or the artistic practice and awareness of this in the designer or artist.
- The research primarily results in a material or artistic outcome. It takes place as part of the creative process and in the reflection upon it, and is an essential part of it, not a theoretical addition.
- Three types of research are distinguished:
 - Research *into* art, such as history of art and (reception) aesthetics.
 - Research *for* or *for the benefit of* art and artistic practice, such as the development of new technology, form and material research and research into themes of public relevance.
 - Research *in and through* art, i.e. research by artists (artistic research) and designers (design research, research through design) in and by means of the artist’s or designer’s own work and practice.

- All three types of research serve artistic production and the realisation of an artistic outcome: they help enhance awareness of context and environment and broaden the repertoire of media and materials at the artist's disposal.
- This process results in understanding and knowledge that cannot be acquired through non-artistic means and provides new insights into the role and significance of visual art and design in modern society.

Research at the Royal Academy – education

A striking element of the approach of the Royal Academy is the inclusion of all research-oriented educational activities under the umbrella of research, also those at the bachelor's level. This is at least partly justifiable, since a large part of the education is based on the learning-is-doing principle. However, it is also applied to the skill-directed components of the programme and sometimes even to theory components. The Critical Reflection sums up the objectives which are involved with research-oriented activities in the education as:

- Encouraging the exploration of an art historical context that is specific to the subject, partly with a view to defining one's position within the cultural and social field (type 1).
- Encouraging critical research into and the development of media, materials and techniques and the application in one's own work (type 2).
- Conducting research into social, political, cultural and economic developments and prevailing views on these, for the purposes of one's own work (type 2).
- Increasing understanding of the complex tension between theory and practice, language and image, thought and creation (type 3).
- Encouraging a theoretical approach to one's own work, a working methodology, instruments for critical thought and critical (self)reflection on one's own work (type 3).
- General research skills and communicative skills, both in writing and verbally (types 1/2/3).

Conclusion of the review panel on the research profile

The review panel values the profile and the well-thought-out vision on research of the Royal Academy. At the same time, it believes that there is room for further strengthening it by adding one or more dimensions. The panel foresees that in a situation in which all art schools are moving towards research – and this is already taking place, both in the Netherlands and abroad –, it will no longer be distinctive to position oneself as a research-oriented art school (with an inclusive approach). Of course, there is the relation with Leiden, but it might be possible to define additional characteristics that add further importance to the profile. Secondly, the panel takes the view that the Royal Academy shares too diverse a collection of activities under the heading of research. The Royal Academy can sharpen the importance of its approach by tightening up its terminology. The learning of specific research skills and theoretical insights, as well as material research, and experimenting with forms of inquiry should be clearly distinguished from carrying out a research project.

1.3 Research programme

The full research programme of the Royal Academy includes the designated research-oriented components of the bachelor and master programmes and the staff research of the lectorate's Research Group, as well as other research activities of the lectorate. In addition, a small number of teachers receive financial support in order to conduct a PhD research project.

Bachelor

In all seven independent bachelor programmes research activities are carried out according to the research vision described above. In addition, the academy offers a number of more general research-oriented programme components to students of all departments.

- Research & Discourse
- Docking Station
- Research Labs

- Art Research Programme and Thesis Lab
- Thesis and Thesis Prize
- Studium Generale
- Elective courses via the Academy of Creative and Performing Arts
- Other elective courses at Leiden University
- PhDArts events
- Double degree track

Master

During the master's phase the research gains greater depth and direction. Larger research projects are involved, in which students specialise in their own field. Students learn to develop a clearly contextualised research question and to design their research. They further develop their artistic work and explore their individual position as an artist or designer. Creation and research go hand in hand and the results of the research are expressed in the completed work. The Royal Academy offers three master programmes: the Master Artistic Research, the Master Interior Architecture and the Master Type and Media.

Research Group

The lectorate's Research Group enables a selected group of teachers – at present five – to conduct specific research projects.

PhD incentive scheme

This facility is offered by the University of the Arts The Hague and currently enables five teachers and one staff member of the Royal Academy to prepare for, or conduct, PhD research. Research topics are for instance: the game as a method of concept development in spatial planning, the politics of design, the construction of personal identity through photography, and still live images and the experience of the aging body.

The lectorate

An important catalyst for research activities within the Royal Academy is the lectorate Art Theory & Practice, headed by lector prof. dr. Janneke Wesseling. It coordinates research by teachers and is entrusted with developing the research aspect in the curricula. Most of the research-oriented elements integrated at the general level of the bachelor programme (mentioned above) were initiated via the lectorate. It also has an important role to play in disseminating research results by means of study days, expert meetings, publications and conferences. The lectorate collaborates closely with the Academy of Creative and Performing Arts (ACPA), which is one of the research institutes of Leiden University.

Conclusions of the review panel on the research programme

During the second meeting with the director of the academy it was announced that the Royal Academy is creating a second lectorate, with a focus on design. Although the review panel does not have a clear picture of the intended size and the precise content of this lectorate, it regards this as an essential step in the further development of the programme. Because the design disciplines in general have a serious backlog in theoretical reflection and the Royal Academy has a strong tradition in design, the academy is an ideal place to combine urgent investments in design-theoretical reflection and design practice. The review panel is enthusiastic about the transformation of the Master Artistic Research from an interdisciplinary programme of the Royal Conservatoire to a programme of the Royal Academy. It encourages the Royal Academy to come to a certain level of alignment between the MAR and PhDArts, as announced by the management. The third new development the review panel is very positive about is the establishment of the double degree programme for excellent students who are able to combine a practical art school programme with a theoretical art-oriented programme at Leiden University. In this respect, the review panel would

suggest that both institutions also look into possibilities for interdisciplinary combinations of degrees, albeit in the longer term.

The review panel observed one big chance and challenge with regard to the programme. The guided tour through the workshops made clear that a lot of interesting material research is being done in the academy. In particular, the panel valued the so-called 'open source' research approach in the textiles workshop, the convergence between analogue and digital technologies, and the impressive experimental use of 3D printers, which even feeds back into the industry. However, it is not clear whether the potential for research of the workshops is acknowledged in full by the Royal Academy. Making aspects of material research more explicit could help strengthen the Royal Academy's research profile. The panel sees interesting opportunities for material research in collaboration with the industries.

Standard 2: Organisation, personnel and partnerships

The research profile can be realised because of the way the unit is organised, how personnel and resources are used and through the internal and external partnerships, networks and clients.

This standard embodies the conditions for achieving the research profile and the research programme based on it. The portfolio and the way the unit is organised, supports the implementation and guaranteeing of the research programme. The input of personnel and funds is sufficient in qualitative and quantitative respects. The internal and external partnerships, networks and clients are sufficiently relevant, intensive and sustainable.

Assessment of standard 2: satisfactory

- The Royal Academy demonstrates a positive research culture, with an active, reflective and open-minded attitude towards research and a wealth of initiatives within the educational structure.
- The organisation of both the research activities within the education and the staff research are transparent and effective, with a high level of self-direction and an active and open-minded attitude.
- Although the Critical Reflection gives detailed insight into the distribution of the human resources involved in research, it is not sufficiently clear what expenditures are dedicated to research.
- The research portfolio of the academy consists of research projects of the participants of the Research Group, the doctoral candidates supported by the Incentive Scheme, and the lector. The projects listed are relevant, ambitious and stimulating for the education.
- The volume of research by the teaching staff is too limited against the background of the ambitious research profile of the academy and deserves to be increased substantially.
- Research at the academy shows a range of developments that have occurred since the last review, ranging from the establishment of programme components (for instance Research & Discourse) to the provision of research grants.
- Researchers and the academy as a whole have relevant and stimulating connections with the outside world.

2.1 Human resources

The inclusive approach to research at the academy is mirrored in the staffing schemes. In those schemes human resources intended for staff research are listed in combination with resources allocated to research in education. The figures relating to these programme parts are not added up to a total amount, which emphasizes that also in the view of the academy the various parts are of a diverse nature. The structure of the human resources for research related activities reads as follows.

Programme parts	FTE
<i>Lectorate</i>	1,5
– Lector	0,3
– Research Group	0,5
– Theory Platform	0,1
– Coordination	0,6
<i>PhD Incentive Scheme (University of the Arts)</i>	0,95
– 5 Royal Academy teachers	0,90
– 1 Royal Academy staff officer	0,05
<i>Research components in Bachelor education</i>	15
– Central level: Research and Discourse, Docking Station, Research Labs, Art Research Programme, Studium Generale	
– Departments' level: various programme parts	
<i>Research components in Master education</i>	5,8

The overview shows, like the Critical Reflection of the Royal Academy, that 2,45 FTE are allocated to staff research, also including preparatory and managerial activities. The Critical Reflection estimates that the 15 FTE reserved for research related activities at the bachelor level correspond to approximately one third of the appointments of all teaching staff at this level. At the master's level research should be completely integrated into the curricula, which would mean that the teaching staff is for the full 5,8 FTE involved in research related activities, or in the words of the Critical Reflection: "in the realisation of the academy's research profile". The review panel points out that the human resources designated for education, especially those at the BA level, are deployed for a variety of more or less research related activities. They not only encompass student research projects, but also theory teaching, writing classes and activities that prepare students for doing research. Besides the resources listed in the overview the Royal Academy contributes with 3,5 FTE to the staffing of the Academy of Creative and Performing Arts (ACPA). The panel wonders if it would not be correct to include also technical staff time involved in research in the overview of human resources.

In the review panel's opinion the human resources allocated to staff research are limited if considered from an international perspective and do not reflect the previously discussed ambitions of the academy yet. In this respect it is worth noting that the Critical Reflection shows a high demand for an increase of research possibilities among the teaching staff. According to a recent satisfaction survey, 39% of the Royal Academy's teaching staff think the academy does not offer them enough research opportunities. In comparison, 17% believe the academy does so and 44% has neither a positive nor a negative view on the subject. The review panel encourages the Royal Academy to increase the volume of staff research in order to realise the ambitious profile and to be able to compete at the national as well as the international level with other research oriented art schools.

2.2 Organization

Almost all meetings, particularly those with the heads of departments, the participants of the Research Group and the teachers working on a PhD programme, produced evidence for the claim that the organisation of activities is highly self-directed, both at the central level and in the departments. The lector and the heads of departments might have the final responsibility; content and organisation are without exception in the hands of those who accomplish the activities. The research attitude is active, reflective and open-minded. Supervision and guidance are carried out in a light and sophisticated manner. This applies definitely to the research done by teaching staff as part of the Research Group and the PhD Incentive Scheme. The review panel did not come across any clues or leads that would suggest organisational flaws. The educational projects and the staff research were discussed with great enthusiasm. As already evident in the Critical Reflection, the lectorate Art Theory & Practice has a strong coordinative role in some of the centrally organised research components of the programme. The interviews with heads of departments, teachers and students pointed out that the lectorate played a stimulating role in initiating and developing these components. Thanks to the strong bonds with Leiden University and collaboration within ACPA, the teachers with research ambitions at the Royal Academy have all possible means of research consultation and supervision within reach.

2.3 External partnerships

The interviews and the Critical Reflection provided a series of examples of the connections with organisations by which research at the Royal Academy is, as they put it, "informed and nourished". A great deal of these are maintained by the lector. At the national level this goes for the Dutch platform of Lecturers in Art and Design, the Taskforce KUO Onderzoek, the Dutch National Research Agenda and the national working group on master's competencies. Most of these contacts do not entail research practice as such, but deal primarily with coordination and the exchange of information on research and related topics. Research cooperation is involved in the Critical Making NL consortium, in which the Royal Academy collaborates actively with six esteemed partner

institutions in the field of art, design and e-culture in the Netherlands. The same goes for the lector's collaborations with colleagues of Leiden University and various researchers from universities abroad. Although the review panel values the connecting qualities and achievements of the lector, they also wonder if the networking part of the research organisation does not depend too much on her activities and contacts.

Within the bachelor and master departments, research projects are conducted by students for, and in collaboration with, external bodies. Examples are: a research project with the Gemeentemuseum, looking into the possibilities of transforming the soon to be decommissioned US Embassy in The Hague into a new architectural typology of a combined museum and hotel; and a research commissioned by the National Council for Health and Society on loneliness within the Dutch urban context. In the interviews the director of the Royal Academy indicated that there are contacts and collaborations with over 60 different institutions.

2.4 Financial resources

It is difficult for the review panel to get a sharp picture of the financial resources involved in research at the Royal Academy. Whereas the income is specified in euro, the expenditures are listed in FTE without a recalculation scheme.⁴ Moreover, the human resources in FTE are divided over 11 different categories. The total amounts to 27,05 FTE for research in the year 2016, which is huge for a university of applied science. From this 27,05 FTE in total 20,8 FTE is allocated to research related education, and 3,45 FTE to ACPA, which would mean that 2,8 FTE is reserved for research as such. However, calculated from the various research components in the programme the total amount of actual research time would not exceed 2 FTE in 2016: 0,3 for the lector, 0,5 for the Research Group, 0,95 in the framework of the PhD Incentive Scheme (strictly speaking this is an expenditure at the university level), and 0,25 for doctoral candidates outside of ACPA. So, although it is not easy to gain a full understanding of what the precise expenditures of research at the Royal Academy are, the review panel is able to draw a few provisional conclusions about the use of resources:

- Nearly 80% of the financial resources related to human resources are reserved for research related components in the education.
- Approximately 13% of the expenditures on human resources go to ACPA.
- Close to 8% of the resources are allocated to research by the lector and teaching staff.

As stated previously, the review panel regards the 0.5 FTE reserved for research by teachers low, even inconsistent, for a university with an explicit research profile. In terms of the allocation of human resources, the involvement in ACPA is more important for the Royal Academy's research identity than the actual research by the teaching staff. In the interviews, the director explained the longstanding demand by the academy for more funds in order to provide more research time for the teaching staff. The panel understands that it is mainly through collaboration with Leiden University that the Royal Academy and the University of the Arts in the long run can accomplish their ambition to develop into a research-centred institute. Investments, however, should preferably be done in the coming years in order to expand the research activities of the staff step-by-step, so that the profile gets backed-up by the actual practice. Also in this respect the review panel welcomes the announcement of the second lector, who is to be appointed shortly.

⁴ The expenditures described by the Royal Academy in the Critical Reflection do only relate to human resources; expenditures on equipment are not included in the overviews.

Standard 3: Standards for carrying out research in the discipline

The research unit's work complies with the prevailing standards for carrying out research in the discipline.

This standard relates to the quality of the research process. The validity and reliability of practice-oriented research has priority. The research unit uses an explicit standard for preparing, implementing and evaluating practice-oriented research. The guideline is the Code of conduct for practice-based research for Universities of Applied Sciences (2010), approved by the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (Vereniging Hogescholen). The research is or will be carried out in accordance with the methodological rules, the ethics of research and of the profession and the values that apply within the discipline and the research domain. In the course of the review, the review panel forms an opinion of the degree to which the research processes are in accordance with the relevant standards by means of a random sample. The research unit reflects on the approach for the preparing, implementing and evaluating practice-oriented research in its self-evaluation.

Assessment of standard 3: good

- Although research standards in the field of art and design are not always conventionally strict, sometimes even implicit or difficult to pin down and in a lot of cases relying on personal methodologies, the Royal Academy employs a number of well-defined procedural standards for different stages of its research projects.
- The research done at the academy reflects the mentality and methodologies of the disciplines involved, and in this sense also complies with the ethics and the values of the professions and disciplines.
- The Royal Academy uses as a guideline the Code of conduct for practice-based research for Universities of Applied Sciences.
- The Critical Reflection reflects thoroughly on matters of methodology and the applicability of a standard-based approach to research in art and design. The methodological choices made are well accounted for and allow for fruitful research projects.
- The selected sample of a research project convinced the review panel of the thoughtful way in which the Royal Academy deals with the standards of its fields.

3.1 Preparing, implementing and evaluating research

Embedded in an outline of all research possibilities at the academy, the Critical Reflection provides descriptions of procedures that are followed on three levels: bachelor, master and the Research Group. The descriptions broadly specify what is expected from the researchers and also provide reflections on the applicability of research standards to the field of art and design in general. The review panel values the procedural descriptions as an adequate solution in order to be able to set certain beacons in a field of research that is characterized by a high degree of methodological openness. The nature and use of research standards in the arts are different. Standards can be implicit, and are sometimes hard to pin down. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that in individual cases standards can be applied as strictly as in the 'hard' sciences. The descriptions make intelligible to the review panel how the Royal Academy proceeds in setting up and accounting for research projects. The descriptions of the bachelor programmes are too lengthy for a short summary in this report. For the master programmes and the Research Group the procedures on preparation and assessment can be summarized as follows.

Master programmes

- Preparation: candidates apply with a research plan, consisting of a research proposal, with attention paid to, for instance, a research question or possible methodology. In practice, the research plans are often enhanced and adapted during the course of the programme.
- Evaluation: the students are assessed on the basis of a set of national qualifications. The most relevant qualification is *research capability*, which stipulates that the student must be “able to investigate his or her own work and working method and that of others by means of observation, analysis, problem definition, positioning and evaluation and to develop research methods based on that.” On graduation, master’s students must be capable of developing their own research methods for their work. For the Master Artistic Research one of the corresponding requirements reads as follows: “students will develop the conceptual and experiential tools needed to creatively embed or transform research materials into a personal artistic practice. They will develop their ability to solve complex problems in relation to this process, and realize the work within the terms the work itself sets forth.”

Research Group

- Preparation: Teachers apply for the Research Group with a research proposal, which describes the research topic and research question, addresses the relevance of the proposed project to the art or design practice and the education, and lays out research methods, possible outcomes, a working plan and time investment.
- Monitoring and evaluation: research proposals are evaluated by a panel headed by the lector. Besides aspects such as clarity, practical feasibility and methodological soundness of the proposal and distribution of the participants among the departments, possibilities for a concrete contribution to the education at the academy play a decisive role in the final selection. Participating teachers are expected to share the outcomes of their research projects with the academy community in the form of presentations, publications and/or lectures. The responsibility for the monitoring of the individual research trajectories of the participating teachers rests with the lector.

Regulations about the preparation and evaluation of the projects of teacher-researchers who engage in the PhDarts programme are established and maintained by Leiden University. Just like any other candidate, teachers of the Royal Academy are expected to submit an application with a comprehensive research proposal and a portfolio of artistic and written work, which is evaluated by a jury. The candidates are selected out of a total yearly number of around eighty applicants. The implementation and evaluation of the projects find place according to the rules and guidelines of Leiden University, with supervised research processes, a PhD training programme, and strict procedural regulations for the rewarding of the PhD title, including evaluation procedures.

3.2 Standards for research and the code of conduct

The review panel interprets the procedures listed by the Royal Academy as procedural standards. They specify the starting point for the research (research plan, research questions et cetera), the manner in which the research is carried out broadly, and the way it is monitored and evaluated. It is obvious that within the projects researchers decide on more specific standards, for instance on documentation systems.

With regard to the education, the Royal Academy commits itself to a range of official standards, which in some respects relate to research activities. The Critical Reflection explicitly mentions the Dublin Descriptors, the ELIA Tuning Document and the Dutch national professional and degree-programme profiles for visual arts and design (bachelor and master, with national qualifications on both levels). The review panel observes that, although attention is paid to research in these standards, they are in general of limited value for research purposes due to a restricted scope and a lack of detail.

The review panel has taken notice of the elaborate manner in which the Royal Academy accounts for its committed response to the Code of Conduct for Applied Research in Higher Professional Education. The academy seizes the opportunity to send unambiguous signals as to the nature of research in the field of the arts. In doing so, education is sometimes somewhat naively presented as if by definition it is research as well. The approach of the Royal Academy would gain importance if it would succeed in tightening up its terminology in such a way that the notion of research becomes more exclusive. This does, however, not detract from the panel's appreciation for the academy's approach to research as part of education, as distinct from the general mode of education and the staff research projects. Moreover, in its account on the Code of Conduct, the Royal Academy puts forward a series of highly interesting claims, however without always delivering the necessary backup. Among these claims and experiences valued by the review panel are the following.

Researchers serve the professional and public interest

- Research at the Royal Academy is part of the discourse in the field of art and design and contributes to a broader public debate.
- The outcomes of the research as well as the process that leads up to these will be made public or have the potential for doing so.
- At the Royal Academy research often relates to public issues identified by the researcher or to a question from a specific commissioning party.
- Designers and artists conduct research that raises understanding about complex issues and presents these to a wider audience.
- Artists and designers contribute to finding solutions or present alternative perspectives on social, ethical and political issues. At the Royal Academy, research in the visual arts and design leads to an understanding of these issues that could not have been achieved in any other way.
- Research in the arts also contributes to the discourse about the relationship between professional and public interests.

Researchers are respectful – Researchers are thorough – Researchers show integrity

- These aspects play an important role in the supervision and assessment of the work of students and teacher-researchers.
- The Royal Academy places great value on artistic freedom. However, this assumes the willingness and capability of both teachers and students to account for this freedom at all times.
- The requirements of respect, thoroughness and integrity are contained in the final qualifications both at the bachelor's and master's levels: contextual awareness, critical reflection, communicative ability.

Researchers account for their choices and behaviour

- Students and researchers must be able to justify their choices and to account for them verbally and in writing.
- Research in the arts – unlike more traditional scientific research – does not need to be reproducible, but it must be traceable: how did the artist set to work, how did his/her choices come about and what result did this lead to?
- External examiners guarantee that the work is assessed from the perspective of a critical and expert outsider.
- Students' graduation work is displayed annually in a public final examination exhibition. This ensures that it is subjected to critical scrutiny by a wide audience of interested outsiders and experts from the professional field.

3.3 Rules, ethics and values of the discipline

During the interviews and from studying the Critical Reflection the review panel became aware of how the mentality of each professional discipline is clearly manifested in the research in that field at the Royal Academy. It is the attitude of contemporary art, design and architecture, which rules the set-up of projects and the manner in which they are dealt with. There are, however, differences between the various disciplines. Research in interior architecture, for instance, tends to be slightly more conventional, and less personalized in its methodology than in fine art. The emphasis the Royal Academy (in education and in staff research) places on verbalizing and communicating research plans, progress and outcomes brings in new accents and elements into the disciplines, with a slightly modified attitude: that of the *word* as an addition to, and not a replacement of, the image. The academy herewith introduces not only a fruitful, but also necessary perspective to live up to its aim of traceability. The panel would like to stress in this respect that visual research cannot be reduced to the verbal; it is always vital to have visual evidence. Moreover, the panel is convinced that the Royal Academy shares this point of view.

3.4 Random sample

In order to shed a clarifying light on the way standards, rules and values are met within the research, the review panel analyzed an example from the Master Interior Architecture. The example was chosen out of a selection of research presentations installed in the meeting room during the visit to the academy. The analysis was made on the basis of an explanation of the project by the head of the department involved.

The research at issue relates to a small handicraft paper museum designed by the renowned TRACE office in a village in the South East of China. Master student Junyuan Jillian Chen knew about this museum beforehand, and wondered about its relation to the local context and its function for the local population. In the last few decades in all kind of cities and villages everywhere in China cultural projects have popped up. As is the case in these places, here in Xinzhuang Village the locals did not have any commitment to nor benefit from the new building. Chen decided to devote her final project to a research and reconsideration of the museum and its function. Her research included the following activities in which she met a number of standards which are applied in her discipline.

- Chen carried out research into the 1) context, 2) history, 3) actual usage, 4) position of the museum building as well as into the 5) needs of the local population. These aspects 1-5 belong to the conventional focus of an architectural research aiming for a process of transformation.*
- She employed five different research perspectives: spatial, social, economical, political, ecological.*
- She used a range of different research tools: flows, observation, interviews, photography, mapping, journal, literature study.*
- In the course of the orientation Chen formulated eight research questions: 1) Who do I design for? Visitors? Villagers? 2) What is the local identity? 3) What are the influences that the handicraft paper museum has on the village? How? 4) How was the museum planned to be built in the beginning? 5) What is the role of the papermaking business in the local context? 6) How does design influence Chinese village development? 7) Is it necessary to develop the village and why so? 8) What is the role of the village in contemporary China?*
- On the basis of the research questions and the data gathered in the research Chen formulated and reformulated her brief, which serves as the conclusion of the research and the start of the design process. The actual result is not a redesign of the museum building, but a plan for transformation of a former temple complex on another site in the same village. The design is a multifunctional public space with a leisure function, facilities for papermaking and a water cleaning system, in which the various functions reinforce each other. With the project Chen aims to create a Paper Temple for the benefit of the villagers by completely revitalizing the old temple (with new functions) and contributing to a sustainable rural process.*

In this process Chen met the following standards of her discipline, which are instrumental in formulating a well-informed brief.

- Gathering of data with regard to the context, history, actual usage, position of the building and the needs of the (intended) user; additional standards would be research on the construction, the appearance and the typology at issue.*
- Employing relevant research perspectives and research tools.*
- Formulating research questions and employing these during the research.*
- Drawing conclusions on basis of the data gathered.*
- Translating the outcomes of the research into the design brief.*

The department of the MIA assessed Chen on the following research competencies, which are part of a broader set of competencies (design, development, presentation, position), which includes an assessment of the quality of the research as part of the total project.

The student is able:

- to observe, research and analyse spatial conditions from the user's perspective;*
- to establish and interpret spatial conditions that can be improved by a spatial designer;*
- to include relevant knowledge in the analysis in a structured way;*
- to translate research results into a spatial design through design by research;*
- to compose a well-organized thesis and possesses a good command of English;*
- to make credible statements and is skilled in making graphic and verbal presentations.*

The context in which the assessment of such a research project takes place becomes clear from the principles of the department. These are the first two principles:

- Exploration: Research forms the core of the Master's phase in interior architecture. This research is primarily conducted to serve spatial design. Students undertake a journey of discovery to learn about many aspects of the context, be they anthropological, cultural, social, political, economic or historical in nature. By acquiring this wide spectrum of information through source research, field research, interviews and observation, students acquire a reliable, workable and also personal picture of the changing spatial situation in relation to their assignment.*
- Analysis: The student is capable of establishing a hierarchy in and connections within the complexity of the acquired information in a personal manner, and thus interpreting a situation and explaining it in terms of factors and phenomena that are decisive for the design of spatial change.*

Follow-up

After Chen graduated from the Royal Academy she went back to China and started working in her field of study. She brought her Paper Temple project under the attention of the authorities in the region of Xinzhuang. Her proposals were extremely well received and currently she is in negotiation for the realization of the concept at the intended place.

Standard 4: Relevance

The research unit achieves sufficient relevance in the field of:

1. *Professional practice and society;*
2. *Education and professionalization;*
3. *Knowledge development within the research domain.*

The research has sufficient impact on the fields referred to above.

The standard is about the results and the impact of the research and thus to what extent the indicators used by the research unit are achieved. The indicators show what type of products are involved subdivided into the three fields referred to:

- *Professional practice and society. The research at Universities of Applied Science is rooted in professional practice and mostly tied to the context in which it is applied. Research problems derive from professional real-life situations in both profit and non-profit sectors. The research subsequently generates knowledge, insights and products that contribute to the solving of problems in professional practice and/or the development of that professional practice and/or the wider community;*
- *Education and professionalization. The research at Universities of Applied Science is closely connected with other activities in higher professional education. By and large these follow two tracks: the link with education and the professionalization of teaching staff (from teacher to teacher-researcher) for the benefit of education and/or carrying out research.*
- *Knowledge development. The research at Universities of Applied Science contributes to knowledge development within the research domain in question. Knowledge and insights are transferred to the various target groups through a variety of channels for example: publications, contributions to professional journals, artefacts, experimental set-ups, prototypes, talks and presentations or by means of a variety of media such as internet, newspapers, radio and television.*

Assessment of standard 4: excellent

- Research at the Royal Academy is practice-based, with research questions emerging from the individual artistic practice of the artists and designers involved or, in the case of certain student research projects, established in consultation with external parties.
- Research projects relate to professional situations; some projects are commissioned.
- All research contributes in the first place to the development (or the development of insight into) the artistic practice of the researchers.
- Research projects by teachers are mostly reflected in the content and methods of the educational programmes; the connection between research and education is close and natural.
- Since research-in-and-through-art as a field of its own is relatively young and the volume of staff research at the Royal Academy is still modest, explicit contributions to knowledge development in the form of publications are still limited and, as far as PhD research by the teaching staff is concerned, in preparation. At the same time, it must be recognized that the research activities are informing the discourse in the disciplines involved in all kinds of explicit and less explicit ways. The lectorate has contributed to different fields of knowledge with well-received books, symposia and conferences.

4.1 Statements on relevance

The review panel values the reflective manner in which the Royal Academy accounts for the relevance of its research projects. The academy critically investigates what relevance means when it comes to research in the context of art and design, and how it can be made manifest. In doing so, the Critical Reflection provides a more general description of the ways in which research by artists and

designers can contribute to knowledge development, professional practice and education. In this short treatment important claims are made, which the review panel would like to highlight:

- Research at the Royal Academy is practice-based, in the sense that it focuses on the artistic practice of the artist or designer. Its relevance is first and foremost determined by the contribution of the research to this artistic practice. For the Royal Academy every other effect in any field or any application derives from this primary result.
- Artists and designers contribute to the development of discourse within the arts and artistic research, but also to other academic discourses. They not only generate new knowledge and insights, but also question and give meaning to that knowledge and those insights.
- Artists and designers generate insights that could not have been achieved through other types of research.
- In the professional world of art and design there is often a productive tension between the demand for impact and efficiency on the one hand, and the need to reflect critically on that impact and the focus on economic efficiency on the other. Artists and designers often choose to position themselves on the margins of social developments.
- Teachers at the Royal Academy are professional artists and designers, and research assumes a prominent role in most of their work.

In the light of these statements it is no surprise that the Royal Academy is critical towards the focus on economic profitability, the emphasis on innovation and problem solving, and the metaphor of industries when the relevance of art and design are discussed. This critical stance, put forward in the Critical Reflection as well as during the interviews, also concerns the standards of the Branch Protocol Quality Assurance, with its focus on seemingly clear-cut indicators such as input, products, use and value. The review panel agrees with the Royal Academy that the assessment framework of this review does not fit the attitude and the methods employed in research in art and design. With its independent and constructive critical approach the Royal Academy demonstrates a profound insight into the complex relation between research and relevance in art and design.

4.2 Illustrations of relevance

The Critical Reflection provides insight into the relevance of research at the Royal Academy with a number of case studies. These examples, presented in the form of interviews and schematic overviews, stem from the professional research practices of various teachers. Although the examples do not all concern research activities financed and organised by the Royal Academy, the review panel regards them as sound illustrations of, in the words of the Critical Reflection, “the extent to which artistic practice, research and education are intertwined”. Moreover, the review panel has dealt with the cases, and concludes that those relating to the Royal Academy’s research indicate their relevance to practice, to education and to the knowledge field, albeit not always in clear-cut, univocal ways.

A different way in which research projects can have relevance is, in the view of the panel, through directly engaging individuals, groups and communities in the process of research. In this respect, the city of The Hague is an interesting location, offering both external impulses for framing (designing) research questions and a living social laboratory where the research can be performed. A side effect of this process-oriented strategy of relevance is that it brings the academy and the diverse communities of The Hague closer together.

4.3 Evidence of relevance provided during the meetings

During the interviews, the staff provided more insight into the practical and societal relevance of their research activities by explaining personal experiences. Their findings can be regarded as confirmations of the schematized examples in the Critical Reflection. It is interesting that even without being asked explicit questions, the teachers gave examples of relevance with regard to all the fields distinguished in the review framework.

- Doing research as part of the Research Group appears to have a clear function for education. One of the participants stated that the teachers are provided the opportunity to develop elective components of the course programme, and thus are enabled to include their research questions in the teaching and adjust the educational programme to their research. As another participant put it: "I am working with the students on the subject of my research; so my own research feeds directly back into the education." A third participant reported that he needed his own research within the Research Group in order to be able to teach a research-focussed lab in the way that he did.
- A photographer who participated in the Research Group explained that the research opened up a world of theory for her that helped her to formulate fruitful questions. Answering these by way of writing helped her to further develop her practice. It is not only the mere activity of doing research, however, that contributes to the artistic practice of the participants. It is also important that they are part of a research community. A participant recounted that his research took place in a time that he was preparing a performance exhibition. As a result of the reflection within the group, which he described as an important catalyst, he started questioning the workings of his own artistic methodologies.
- Taking part in smaller research activities can be the first step toward more profound and extensive forms of research. "After finishing the Research Group", one of the researchers told the review panel, "teachers continue their research; some take the results to their practice, others also to their class, while others continue with a PhD." About the latter one of the doctoral candidates explained: "My project in PhDArts is about the relation between theory and practice. The relevance of this topic was not so much recognized in PhD programmes at regular universities. In the Netherlands, the universities tend to focus on theoretical skills, whereas in the art schools the focus is more on practical skills. I think that there is an urgent need to find a combination of the two, and also in this respect I benefited from working with practitioners in the Research Group, which was very productive for me." The researcher concerned related her interests to a need in the design disciplines to develop theoretically and produce new insights. This is also what the students are asking for. Her research can be regarded as contributing to the development of design theory.
- A particular perspective on the relevance of research emerged from the guided tour through the workshops and the conversations with the workshop assistants. Part of the small-scale research projects conducted there, mostly by students and staff with technical expertise, mostly open-source, are followed with interest by the industries. Some companies provide materials for free on the condition that the Royal Academy shares the ins-and-outs of the material research, including all kinds of experiments, with them. Significantly in this case it is not only the explicit outcome that provides the relevance to the field.
- Another striking example of relevance can be found in the graduation project of Junyuan Jillian Chen of the Master Interior Design, explained in the previous chapter. When she went back to China after her graduation, she not only started working in her field of study, but also made a film about her Paper Temple project in order to bring her research and design to the attention of the authorities in Xinzhuang Village and other potentially interested parties. As stated before, her findings were extremely well received. Chen is currently in the position of negotiating the realization of her concept, which as such has added value, not to say critical relevance, for the villagers who were the main point of departure for her research.

4.4 Relevance through grant applications

The Critical Reflection presents two successful, relatively high grant applications with NWO as indications of the relevance of the research policy of the Royal Academy. Since the applications were done by a consortium consisting of six appreciated players in the field of art, design and e-culture, the review panel considers this claim more than reasonable. Although they do not directly make future research outcomes relevant, the grants make clear that the critical position chosen by the Royal Academy and its methodologies are embedded in a larger research culture and that its quality

of research is recognized. The NWO grant of € 500,000 for the research project *Bridging art, design and technology through Critical Making* can indeed be regarded as an endorsement of the Royal Academy's research position.

Standard 5: Quality Assurance

The research unit carries out regular and systematic evaluation of the research processes and results. Where necessary, the research unit makes improvements based on the findings.

The standard is intended to guarantee care for the quality of practice-oriented research. For this purpose the research unit has at its disposal relevant management information and makes use of a cohesive whole of measuring and evaluation instruments. The follow-up to the external visitation is part of this. The measuring and evaluation results lead to reflection and to steps to improve the research profile, the research programme and the organisation and implementation of the research. The assessment framework is structured in such a way as to allow plenty of scope for the research unit to emphasize its distinctiveness. The research unit can take advantage of this scope in its critical thinking. Critical thinking offers the ideal way for researchers and their peers to have their say about the content of the research. If it is necessary to refer to the policy of institutions or knowledge centres this strictly concerns the fitness-for-purpose of the policy of the research unit in question when making an assessment of it.

Assessment of standard 5: satisfactory

- The written information as well as the interviews with management, quality officers and staff members made clear to the panel that when it comes to quality assurance the Royal Academy has an active and thoughtful attitude and can rely on an effective cyclic system.
- The research included in education is thoroughly monitored and evaluated with the help of a cohesive set of instruments.
- The still modest amount of staff research benefits from a mode of quality assurance which is integrated into the processes of guidance and supervision.
- If the volume of staff research increases substantially, the review panel advises the Royal Academy to consider developing tools in order to monitor and evaluate the research activities and outcomes in a way that exceeds the scope of individual supervisors.

5.1 Research in education

The quality assurance of the research carried out as part of education relies on a cyclic model and an elaborate set of evaluation instruments. The bulk of these instruments are used in order to evaluate the quality of the education itself and all relevant factors that relate to it from an internal point of view: student surveys, course evaluations, student panels, staff surveys and employee performance reviews. Besides this, the Royal Academy employs several instruments for having its methods and achievements criticized and reconsidered from external perspectives: external examination committee members, professional stakeholder meetings, accreditations and review panels. The Royal Academy states that since it positioned research as one of the core values of its curricula in 2013, research has become a continued point of focus for the management, a common topic when gathering information by the quality department, a fixed element on agendas of meetings and a regular part of the student assessment procedures. During the interviews, a clear impression was given of how this system of quality control functions in daily practice. It starts every year with the discussion of the annual plan between each head of department and the director. The annual plan consists of both a retrospective evaluation of the past academic year and a detailed, worked out agenda for the year to come. This agenda includes foreseen changes in staff and the curriculum, and is worked out into new budget agreements. The development of each plan involves discussions within the department, as well as input from quality assurance. In principle, every course is evaluated at the end of the semester; the outcomes are shared with the involved teachers as well as the heads of department and the director. Every two years a student satisfaction survey is conducted. It samples the students' views with regard to all aspects of the programme, including

research related parts. Apart from data from these two instruments, a range of information from various other internal and external surveys, panels and reviews are taken into account.

As part of the interviews, the management and the quality officer explained in which way they have responded to the outcomes of evaluations, and with which measures they have reinforced the processes of research education. One of the examples concerns the course Research & Discourse, which was developed after the critical evaluation of its preceding programme component, and adjusted yearly on the basis of student surveys and evaluation meetings.

5.2 Staff research

The research done by the (teaching) staff is monitored and evaluated in two ways. The activities of the five researchers of the Research Group are subject to (a light form of) monitoring and evaluation by the lector. As chair of the Research Group, the lector is involved in their selection. She also guides and advises them during the research projects, which are strongly related to their personal aims. Secondly, the PhD-projects of the teaching staff are supervised and evaluated according to the strict regulations of Leiden University. In daily practice, this means that the researchers have two or more supervisors who are responsible for the direct evaluation of their research within the given framework. The researchers have to satisfy additional demands related to their PhD training programme. All these evaluations are designed and carried-out external to the Royal Academy, and subject to accreditation and review processes at Leiden University.

The review panel paid ample attention to the question of whether the research of the Research Group should be monitored more closely, for instance by the department of Quality Assurance. Since only 0.5 FTE is involved, divided over five researchers who are trying to find their way in conducting research, the panel is convinced that the light form of evaluation, which is part of the guidance, is sufficient for quality matters, and well chosen with regard to efficiency and effectiveness. The aims of doing research and developing research skills are in this context as important as the concrete outcomes of the projects. The panel interviewed eight former participants of the Research Group. They convincingly made clear how their research, which they are often still pursuing or expanding in their own time, had and still has a positive effect on their teaching, their practice and their involvement in further research activities.

5.3 Possibilities for further improvement of quality assurance

The Critical Reflection specifies that the quality assurance can be further improved with a stronger monitoring of the integration of research in the individual departmental programmes and a further development of the instruments to assess this. The review panel emphasizes the need of a solid use of terminology in these future activities. The clarity of the programme and of quality assurance would increase by differentiating between the students' preparation for carrying out research activities (training in writing, reading et cetera) and doing – as a form of *learning-by-doing* – research as such. The same goes for distinguishing between research and adjacent activities (such as the development of a design for instance in the context of external commissions).

With regard to staff research, the review panel recommends that the Royal Academy stays attentive to the appropriate relation between the evaluation instruments and the volume of the research community. If the Royal Academy is able to increase the volume of staff research substantially it will be necessary to develop new instruments. According to the review panel, it would be interesting to find out in what way peer reviews of both research processes and outcomes, regardless if these be publications or not, could contribute to the system of quality assurance. Of course, in order to investigate such a question properly the volume of the research appointments would need to be enlarged in the first place.

Appendices

Appendix I

Composition of the review panel

Prof. dr. Patricia Pisters (*panel member and chair*)

Professor of Media and Film Studies, director of research of Amsterdam School of Cultural Analysis (ASCA), Faculty of Humanities, University of Amsterdam, NL

Professor Sharon Morris (*panel member*)

Professor of Fine Art, Head of the Doctoral Programme, Academic Deputy Director, Slade School of Fine Art, University College London, UK

Eleni Kamma (*panel member*)

Artist, doctoral researcher at PhDArts, Academy of Creative and Performing Arts (ACPA), Faculty of Humanities, Leiden University & University of the Arts The Hague, NL

Dr. Camiel van Winkel (*panel member*)

Advisor at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam, tutor in art theory and art philosophy, LUCA School of Arts, Sint-Lukas Brussels, BE

Dr. Erik Viskil (*secretary of the panel*)

Independent researcher, writer and advisor, Amsterdam

Drs. Reba Wesdorp (*minutes secretary*)

Education Quality Assurance staff member Royal Academy of Art The Hague

Appendix II

Schedule of the peer review visit

Wednesday 17 May 2017

Time	Session	Names and functions of participants
09:00-11:00	Review panel meeting	
11:00-11:15	Break	
11:15-12:00	Meeting 1 <i>Director Royal Academy and head of lectorate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marieke Schoenmakers: Director Royal Academy of Art. - Janneke Wesseling: Professor and head Lectorate Art Theory & Practice and director PhDArts.
12:00-13:00	Guided tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ernst Bergmans: Senior teacher, member Examination Board. - Erik Privee: Head Operations. - Bart Vissers: Head Workshops. - Sabin Garea: Student Master Artistic Research.
13:00-13:45	Lunch and panel members share conclusions with secretary	
13.45-15.00	Meeting 2 <i>Heads of departments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Klaus Jung: Head Bachelor Fine Arts. - Lotte Sprengers: Head Bachelor Photography. - Niels Schrader: Head Bachelor Graphic Design. - Janine Huizenga: Head Bachelor Interactive/Media/Design. - Herman Verkerk: Head Bachelor Interior Architecture and Furniture Design. - Jurgi Persoons: Head Bachelor Textile & Fashion. - Taconis Stolk: Head Bachelor & Master ArtScience. - Hans Venhuizen: Head Master Interior Architecture. - Erik van Blokland: Head Master Type and Media. - Janice McNab: Head Master Artistic Research.
15:00-15.30	Break and panel members share conclusions with secretary	
15:30-16:00	Meeting 3 <i>Quality assurance and research</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Iskandar Serail: Head Quality Assurance. - Ernst Bergmans: Senior teacher, member Examination Board. - Lotte Betting: Coordinator Lectorate Art Theory & Practice.
16:00-16:10	Break	
16:10-17:10	Meeting 4 <i>Teachers with a specific responsibility for research components in the curricula</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tatjana Macic: Coordinator Research & Discourse and teacher in Art Research Programme. - Winnie Koekelbergh: Teacher in Art Research Programme and Docking Station. - Onno Schilstra: Theory teacher Docking Station. - Ingrid Grootes: Theory teacher Docking Station. - Michel Hoogervorst: Teacher Docking Station. - Ernie Mellegers: Theory teacher Docking Station.
17:10-17:40	Break and panel members share conclusions with secretary	
17:40-18:40	Meeting 5 <i>Faculty researchers (Research Group & PhDArts candidates)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jasper Coppes: Participant Research Group 2016-17. - Anja Hertenberger: Participant Research Group 2015-16 & 2016-17. - Els Kuijpers: Participant Research Group 2015-16 and doctoral researcher at PhDArts. - Alexandra Landré: Participant Research Group 2016-17. - Jan Robert Leegte: Participant Research Group 2016-17. - Ewoud van Rijn: Participant Research Group 2015-16. - Lena Shafir: Participant Research Group 2016-17. - Hans Venhuizen: Doctoral researcher at PhDArts. - Judith van IJken: Participant Research Group 2015-16 and doctoral researcher at PhDArts.
19:00-	Dinner and panel members share conclusions with secretary	

Thursday 18 May 2017

Time	Session	Names and functions of participants
09:00-09:30	Review panel meeting	
09:30-09:45	Break	
09:45-11:00	Meeting 6 <i>Students and alumni</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natalia Jordanova: Third year student Bachelor Fine Arts. - Jan Egbers: Third year student Bachelor Graphic Design. - Ignas Pavliukevicius: Fourth year student Bachelor Interactive/Media/Design. - Laura Snijders: Third year student Bachelor Textile & Fashion. - Victoria Douka Doukopoulou: Fourth year student Bachelor ArtScience. - Klodiana Millona: Second year student Master Interior Architecture. - Josje Hattink: Alumna Bachelor Fine Arts. - Sissel Marie Tonn: Alumna Master Artistic Research.
11:00-11:30	Break and panel members share conclusions with secretary	
11:30-12:00	Meeting 7 <i>Director Royal Academy and head of lectorate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marieke Schoenmakers: Director Royal Academy of Art. - Janneke Wesseling: Professor and head Lectorate Art Theory & Practice and director PhDArts.
12:00-13:30	Review panel meeting – preparation for the feedback meeting	
13:30-14:00	Lunch	
14:00-15:00	Feedback meeting – for leadership of the institution and all others interested	

Appendix III

List of documentation

Documents available for inspection during the peer review visit

- KABK Graduation Publications – 2011, 2012, 2013
- KABK Graduation Publications – 2014, 2015, 2016
- KABK Study Guides – starting from 2012-2013
- MARCHIVE- Publications MAR
- Examples of and reports of evaluations
- BKO critical reflection and Appendices – 2017
- KABK visitatie rapporten en besluiten NVAO
- PhD Overviews and Research Description
- Examples werkveld commissie verslagen (in Dutch)
- Theorie notities – 2009-2010 and 2012
- Examples of Readers Fine Arts
- HdK Jaarverslag 2015 (in Dutch)
- Research and Discourse
- Research lab – 2010, 2011
- Research lab – 2012
- Research lab – 2013
- Research lab – 2014
- Research lab – 2015
- Readers
- AR Lab Magazines
- Publications Type and Media
- Theses by Thesis Winners
- PR Material Royal Academy
- Publication Michel van Hoogenhuyzen
- Professional and Degree Profiles
- Examination Board Reports
- Student Projects Interior Architecture and Furniture Design
- INSIDE Magazines
- Programme Studium Generale
- Catalogues
- Student Projects Graphic Design with Ministry of Finance
- Project Description and Catalogue: Budget Dreams and What's Inside the Koffer?
- Project graduate student Junyuan Chen
- List with Literature
- Website Electives Leiden University
- Website Lectorate Art Theory & Practice & AR Lab & Inside Flows
- Websites Type and Media & MIA (INSIDE) & MAR
- Websites Graduation Shows
- Websites Individual Study Trajectory & Research and Discourse
- Publications Janneke Wesseling
- Publications Lectorate Art Theory & Practice
- Photo Books Alumni Photography
- Cahiers Research Lab
- Critical Reflection Type and Media 2013
- Critical Reflection BA 2013
- Critical Reflection MAR 2017
- Critical Reflection MIA 2015