

The logo for AeQui, featuring the letters 'AeQui' in a purple, sans-serif font. A light blue, hand-drawn style line loops around the letters, starting from the top left of the 'A', passing under the 'e', looping around the 'Q', and ending under the 'i'.

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**Research Unit
ArtEZ University of the Arts**

*Report of the assessment
30 October 2020*

Utrecht, The Netherlands
January 2021
www.AeQui.nl
Assessment Agency for Higher Education

Colophon

ArtEZ University of the Arts
Onderlangs 9
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Research unit:

Professorship in Theory in the Arts
Professorship in Art Education as Critical Tactics
Professorship in E||scape for Product Design & Interior Architecture
Professorship in Fashion
Professorship in Music based Interventions and Therapies

Panel

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This document is best printed in duplex

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Conclusions and recommendations

On 30 October 2020 an assessment committee of AeQui visited the research unit of ArtEZ University of the Arts at Arnhem. Five professorships are embedded in the research unit, which is part of the Graduate School. The research unit has shown evidence of a strong and distinctive research profile, a commendable way of achieving much with a small staff and limited resources, and an impressive and relevant output. The research methods are well up to standard and the quality assurance system is regular and systematic. The committee, therefore, judges that the research is **excellent**.

Research profile and portfolio

ArtEZ research aims to contribute to build 'alternative and humane futures' by conducting high-quality, original, progressive, methodically professional and socially relevant research. The research profile and portfolio are based on the research manifesto 'Making other Kinds of Futures'. The ArtEZ research unit comprises five core professorships and three additional professorships. Since 2016, the professorships re-oriented themselves towards a research profile rather than a disciplinary location, which is described as de-disciplining. Important elements of de-disciplining are a collaborative approach, community creation and transcending different disciplines, backgrounds and visions. All professorships are actively engaged in the search for common ground. The ambition is not to be short-term problem solvers, but to make a difference, creating other kinds of futures that lead to structural changes. The committee applauds this vision and the strong commitment to it throughout the institution. ArtEZ has formulated key responsibilities of the professorships as indicators of their value. For a further strengthening of the profile, the committee suggests articulating the indicators more clearly, not so much in *measurable* terms, but rather in well-articulated *observable* terms. The assessment committee assesses the research profile and portfolio as **excellent**.

Organisation

The committee considers it impressive how much the research unit is able to achieve with a very small team and limited resources. The five core professorships and three additional professorships have used research circles and outreach units to spread a research culture within the ArtEZ community. Income from the core budget is limited and income from grants and external funds to date has not stabilised. ArtEZ is currently developing a Research Centre with core funding and a Research Development Fund to

increase the research investments in order to meet the university's research goals. In the meantime, the professorships have been creative and successful in finding alternative resources by extending their external network with very diverse partners. These are productive and complementary partnerships, building on each other's strengths. A small institution, having such a large network, fits well with how ArtEZ considers its research as a joint endeavour. The assessment committee assesses the organisation of the research unit as **excellent**.

Methodology

The committee recognises that the ArtEZ research unit is actively engaged in setting the right standards for its research. The number of publications in books and peer-reviewed journals, the contributions to conferences and exhibitions, the fact that they find academic partners for research cooperation and are awarded external grants, all show that the unit's research is valued. An undergraduate writing programme is advised to upgrade the students' writing skills, as a contribution to self-reflection and research skills. The committee commends the research unit for initiating APRIA (Platform for Research Interventions of the Arts), an online platform that curates a peer-reviewed journal (APRIA journal) and publishes essays, image and sound contributions that examine art and interventions of the arts in relation to science and society, and that encourage dialogue around themes that are critical and urgent. This is a smart move to create an outlet that fits with what the unit is doing. The assessment committee assesses the research methods of the research unit as **good**.

Output

The research unit has presented convincingly how it has a significant and relevant impact on teaching, the professional field and knowledge production.

The professorships have taken an active role in cultivating students' and teachers' research capabilities, catalysing new education programmes and disseminating research results in different education communities. The cooperation with a range of parties in the professional field is strong and has resulted in new and exciting projects and partnerships. The outreach units ArtEZ Press and Studium Generale and the APRIA website and journal play a strong supporting role. The research unit contributes to knowledge development not only through publications, but also through the organization of conferences, workshops, exhibitions, and events. Innovative projects bring researchers from very diverse backgrounds together. The assessment committee evaluates the output as **excellent**.

Quality assurance

The committee considers that through the PDCA-cycle and the continuous debate about the quality of research activities, both internally and with external partners, the research unit conducts a regular and systematic evaluation of its research processes and results. The PDCA cycle includes yearly and multi-year evaluations of each professorship, based on a peer review structure. Indicators are developed to measure the value of the professorships, based on their key responsibilities. The committee advises

a further articulation of these indicators in observable terms. Until now, evaluation is directed at the individual professorships rather than the research unit as a whole. The next step is towards a more joint evaluation on the basis of a collective framework of quality indicators. The assessment committee establishes that the research group **meets this standard**.

Recommendations

The committee is highly positive about the five quality standards for the ArtEZ research unit. In order to bring the research to an even higher level of quality in the future, the committee suggests the following recommendations:

- to articulate the value indicators for the professorships more clearly. For this, using observable terms seems more appropriate than using measurable terms.
- to be mindful of possible tensions in the cooperation with academic universities and to build a more equal relation in the long run;
- to establish an undergraduate writing programme in order to increase the students' writing skills, and thus their skills of self-reflection, necessary for research;
- to be more systematic in showing how the evaluation structure supports the reflective practice.

All standards of the BKO assessment framework are assessed positively.

On behalf of the entire assessment committee,
Utrecht, January 2021

Drs. R.R. van Aalst
Chair

Dr. M.J.H. van der Weiden
Secretary

Introduction

This report describes the outcomes of the research assessment of ArtEZ University of the Arts, based on the self-evaluation report, a presentation of research output and discussions during the online site visit on 30 October 2020.

The institute

ArtEZ University of the Arts is a university of applied sciences, located in Arnhem, Enschede and Zwolle. ArtEZ considers art as an important space of broad public significance: for individuals, groups and organisations. ArtEZ is a school and a knowledge institute. ArtEZ offers art education at bachelor's and master's level in visual art, design, architecture, music, dance and theatre. It stands for an internationally recognised standard of quality in art education. Graduates are able to contribute to constant renewal in art and quality in society. As a knowledge institute, ArtEZ defines itself as a critical, collaborative, and creative community that addresses urgent and emergent questions of our times. Artistic research is considered a transformative practice to create meaningful and caring engagements for a future of humane and ethical possibilities.

The research group

Within ArtEZ, research is organised in the unit Research & Outreach which is one of the two platforms of the Graduate School. The other platform comprises the master's programmes.

The research unit consists of five core professorships in: (1) Theory in the Arts, (2) Art Education as Critical Tactics, (3) E|scape for Product Design & Interior Architecture, (4) Fashion and (5) Music Based Interventions and Therapies. In addition, ArtEZ works with two adjacent professorships: (1) endowed professorship in Digital Policy and Design Practice, and (2) professorship in Aesthetics and Cultures of Technology. ArtEZ is also part of the networked professorship in Future Urban Regions, a cooperative initiative of the six Dutch Academies for Architecture in the Netherlands.

ArtEZ's research vision is that the professorships are structural interventions to create an intellectual movement that addresses the key idea that 'Another is Possible': another future, another emotion, another idea, another life, another us.

The research runs partly in Dutch, partly in English, depending on the background of the researchers and the bachelor and master students who are involved. The self-evaluation report is written in English and the site visit was conducted in English, which enabled both Dutch and non-Dutch researchers and network partners to participate.

The assessment

ArtEZ University of the Arts assigned AeQui to perform a quality assessment of its research unit. In close co-operation with the management, AeQui convened an independent and competent assessment committee. A preparatory meeting with representatives of the research group was held to exchange information and plan the date and research group of the site visit.

In the run-up to the site visit, the assessment committee studied the self-evaluation report and reviewed a sample of output.

The site visit was carried out on 30 October 2020 according to the program presented in attachment 2. Due to the covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions on physical meetings, it was decided to organise this as an online visit. The committee has assessed the research group in an independent manner; at the end of the visit, the chair of the assessment committee presented the initial findings of the committee to representatives of the research group and the institution.

In this document, the committee reports on its findings, considerations and conclusions according to the BKO framework. A draft version of the

report was sent to the research group management; its reactions have led to this final version of the report.

1. Research profile and portfolio

The Research Unit has a relevant, ambitious and challenging research profile; and a research program with associated goals that have been operationalized in a number of indicators.

ArtEZ research aims to contribute to build 'alternative and humane futures' by conducting high-quality, original, progressive, methodically professional and socially relevant research. The research profile and portfolio are based on the research manifesto 'Making Another Kind of Future'. The ArtEZ research unit comprises five core professorships and three additional professorships. Since 2016, the professorships re-oriented themselves towards a research profile rather than a disciplinary location, which is described as de-disciplining. Important elements of de-disciplining are a collaborative approach, community creation and transcending different disciplines, backgrounds and visions. All professorships are actively engaged in the search for common ground. The ambition is not to be short-term problem solvers, but to make a difference, creating other kinds of futures that lead to structural changes. The committee applauds this vision and the strong commitment to it throughout the institution. ArtEZ has formulated key responsibilities of the professorships as indicators of their value. For a further strengthening of the profile, the committee suggests articulating the indicators more clearly; for this, using observable terms seems more appropriate than using measurable terms. The assessment committee assesses the research profile and portfolio as **excellent**.

Findings

The research profile of ArtEZ is based on the research manifesto 'Making Another Kind of Future'. ArtEZ's visions for education and research are entangled and are both based on the idea that 'Art Changes' and have the strength and capacity to develop 'inclusive, creative, resilient, and diverse' processes and expressions to build 'alternative and humane futures': the arts are to contribute to social, technological, embodied, affective and material (STEAM) transformations. ArtEZ research aims to contribute to this by conducting high-quality, original, progressive, methodically professional and socially relevant research.

The five core professorships are part of this endeavour and are seen as structural interventions to create an intellectual movement that both addresses the education vision of 'Art Changes' and the Graduate School mission of building resilient futures, equitable societies, and critical diversity through their research and practice. The entanglement of bodies, ideas, disciplines, discourses, ambitions, locations and specificities is to lead to other possibilities: another future, another emotion, another idea, another life, another us.

The Professorship of Theory in the Arts, installed in 2008, aims to position theory as a transdisciplinary agent that 'shifts attention from theory about the arts to theory in the arts'. Discursive elements are present in any artistic work and the professorship proposes a 'theory of making' process, making the implicit values and practices explicit and positioning the arts as a way of changing the values and materiality of the world.

The Professorship in E||Scape for Product Design & Interior Architecture, installed in 2016, investigates how design can make people still feel at home in contemporary living environments, confronted with the effects of technological developments and the blurring of several dimensions (public/private, work/home, physical/virtual, local/global). The professorship explores research in design to build alternative, preferable futures that are more sustainable, inclusive and diverse, giving the designer the role of mediator between the relevant stakeholders in a value chain, to imagine and give form to new objects and spaces for these futures.

The Professorship in Art Education as Critical Tactics, established in 2014 as a professorship in Art

Education, proposes a radical rethinking of the matrices of learning and education, by taking 'creativity' as a point of departure to question the increasingly dehumanised structures of education 'measurement'. It makes interventions to support art practitioners as agents of change for equitable societies, apart from the institutional locations and traditional settings of learning. It formulates future (art) educational narratives and orients itself towards critical diversity.

The Professorship of Fashion, launched in 2002, with a new professor installed in 2017, aims to contribute to an alternative and more engaged future of fashion in which we do more justice to fashion's human dimensions. Through the development of alternative approaches, systems, vocabularies and strategies through research it wants to activate the power of fashion to reimagine future bodies, future materials and future makers to realise a more meaningful, inclusive, engaged, joyful, resilient and more human future society.

The Professorship of Music Based Therapies and Interventions, installed in 2018, balances on the boundary of music and the wide field of medical and therapeutic sciences. In its projects, it researches the effects of music on the brain and wants to create a new cognitive theory of music, explicating its materiality, composition and structure as they resonate with the discourse on brain and cognitive science research for reflecting on human precariousness and care.

The increased clarity about the scope and focus of the research areas, related to the values of the Graduate School, created space for new research positions. These professorships are seen as experiments, trying to make sense of new entanglements, opening up new areas of collaboration and dialogue. They inform the core professorships with new approaches and other domains of knowledge development:

- The Professorship in Digital Policy and Design Practice, established in 2019 for a period of two years, builds multidisciplinary and multi-

stakeholder networks of policy, technology, design and aesthetics in order to understand, unpack and reconfigure digital practices by exploring data, actions, the materiality and infrastructure of digital cultures.

- In 2013, ArtEZ co-appointed a 'network Professor' for Future Urban Regions in conjunction with the Academies of Architecture across the Netherlands. Its focus is on improving the city and investigating urban (eco)systems and innovative design resources for the city. This joint professorship helps to create new resources and intellectual infrastructure for the future.
- The Professorship in Aesthetics and Cultures of Technology, established in 2020, is coupled with the Research & Outreach directorship. It aims to reframe contemporary technology questions (about misinformation, surveillance, privacy and the digital divide) as human aesthetic questions. It is committed to co-developing academic partnerships for 3rd cycle education programming.

ArtEZ used the period 2016-2020 as an incubation period to build a consolidated research unit, positioning professors as thought leaders, knowledge mentors and critical domain experts, responsible for developing new frameworks, models, prototypes, ideas and experiments. In this period, the professorships re-oriented themselves towards a research profile rather than a disciplinary location, which is described as de-disciplining. The self-evaluation report describes professors, with their diverse expertise and distinct domains, as finding common values, working together as a collective and oriented towards common goals, informed by the common STEAM touchstones.

From the discussions during the site visit it became clear that professors are actively engaged in the search for common ground. This is not found in a specific discipline, but in the sharing of values about art disciplines, in the way ArtEZ research distinguishes itself from the academic approach and other universities of applied science.

Important elements of de-disciplining are a collaborative approach, community creation and transcending different disciplines, backgrounds and visions. The ambition is not to be short-term problem solvers, but to make a difference, creating other kinds of futures that lead to structural changes. The unit emphasises that ArtEZ research is based on non-negotiable values: to create space for critical voices and not be afraid to provoke, to ask 'what if' questions and to be drivers for change .

The professors emphasised that de-disciplining is still in an early stage and that all do it in different ways per professorship, but that they aim for more joint work. They presented a number of examples of research projects that transcend the professorships' disciplinary boundaries, such as 'Art-Based Learning in Palliative Care', a collaboration between the professors of Music Based Therapies and Interventions and of Art Education as Critical Tactics. This project looks for ways of sense-making at the end of a patient's life, using the method of art-based learning, in dialogue with an art object, and the theory of possible and impossible worlds. The project combines art and medicine and also brings in a technological side (augmented reality) through the collaboration with the University of Twente. Another example is the MOOC on Future Makers, developed by the professorships of Fashion and E|Scape for Product Design & Interior Architecture, which shows that sustainability and circularity are broader than fashion and takes a wider perspective, with input from technical design principles and bio-based materials.

The self-evaluation report describes six key responsibilities of the professorships, as indicators of their value: research, learning, community building, network creation, grant raising, and administration and service. Evaluations of these responsibilities are measured on four levels: output, outcomes, impact and transformation. Each professorship has interpreted these indicators in their own practice, concentrating on different stakeholders, based on the stage and the development

of their research (see also standard 5). The central principle and standard, however, is the focus on impact, how activities and projects contribute to local, national and international communities. This de-fetishises scale and scope and does away with perceived hierarchies of prestige projects and local programmes, but focuses on the situatedness of a project's impact.

Considerations

Throughout the discussions, the assessment committee gathered that the ArtEZ research unit has a strong vision and profile. The committee recognises that the manifesto is a living document on which the research profile is clearly based.

Research is conceived institutionally as an intellectual intervention guided by academic principles. The challenge for a university of the arts is how to implement, actualize, realize this conception of research without the academic principles crimping and cramping the imaginative and creative. Empirical research is less the sort of research relevant to ArtEZ, while instrumental research, engaged to help develop and deliver (a) work, could have a key if secondary role at the institution: what materials to use, how functionally to achieve an effect etc? The committee recognises that ArtEZ has explicitly chosen for a third kind of research, that critically reconceives a domain, conduct, (a) world(s)—research of the domain, and how to shift understanding of it. ArtEZ sees this both in practice and aspirationally as a role for itself. The committee has seen clear evidence of an institution-wide commitment to this type of research that shapes and shifts the social imagination both overall and with regards to specific issues, as shown by the examples presented during the site visit.

The committee applauds this vision and the strong commitment to it throughout the institution. The committee also commends the endeavour to de-fetishise scale and scope and how prestige projects and local programmes are not put in perceived hierarchies. The research at ArtEZ is highly explorative in nature, an unconstrained

mapping of designed future, as opposed to the directed mapping of the future found in other disciplines. This requires its own research culture, indicators and output. The committee recommends ArtEZ to further develop the characteristics of its research culture. For a further strengthening of the profile, the committee suggests articulating the indicators more clearly, in observable more than measurable terms.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee evaluates the research profile and portfolio as **excellent**.

2. Organisation

The way in which the unit is organized, the deployment of people, available resources, and the Internal and external collaborations, networks and relationships make the realization of the research profile possible.

The committee considers it impressive how much the research unit is able to achieve with a very small team and limited resources. The five core professorships and three additional professorships have used research circles and outreach units to spread a research culture within the ArtEZ community. Income from the core budget is limited and income from grants and external funds has not been very stable. ArtEZ is currently developing a Research Centre with core funding and a Research Development Fund to increase the research investments in order to meet the university's research goals. In the meantime, the professorships have been creative and successful in finding alternative resources by extending their external network with very diverse partners. These are productive and complementary partnerships, building on each other's strengths. A small institution, having such a large network, fits well with how ArtEZ considers its research as a joint endeavour. The assessment committee assesses the organisation of the research unit as **excellent**.

Findings

Organisation and resources

In line with the de-disciplining described in standard 1, the governance structure has become a more collective and interactive work structure. The aim is to pool strengths, staff and financing for research, which is considered essential for a small institute and consistent with the university's decision to take on the responsibility to work as a collaborative force of change through art. Within the Graduate School, ArtEZ is now developing an ArtEZ Research Centre, with the research unit (professorships) and the outreach units (ArtEZ Studium Generale, ArtEZ Business Center and ArtEZ Press) at its core and under the formal responsibility of the director of Research & Outreach. From mid-2020, the research unit works with a mandatory system where professors get mandated tasks for 'academic relations and research profile', 'quality assurance', 'ethics & integrity in research', 'finance, budgeting & external funding strategies', 'organisation' and 'coordination and communication'. The director of Research & Outreach makes any policy decision in consultation with the mandated professor, but retains final responsibility for every decision related to the mandated tasks. Structural components to entangle the research community are ArtEZ Community Days, Graduate School meetings, Professorship

meetings, and informal and formal meetings between the professors and the director of Research & Outreach.

The ArtEZ research unit consists of five core professors with an average appointment of 0.74 FTE. When the other three professors are included, the total amounts to 4.96 FTE, with an average of 0.62 FTE. The professor's research practices are extended by the contribution of researchers within and outside ArtEZ in the research circles of each professorship. Research circles are communities of researchers from within and outside ArtEZ who step in to engage with and contribute to research projects. Often this concerns people with research ambitions and capabilities, such as people with PhDs or enrolled in a graduate programme. Research circles are a platform where long- and short-term research projects can be conceived and implemented. Professorships have different organisational structures for their research circles.

ArtEZ is currently experimenting with flexible research circles in other internal communities, not clustered around the professorships, working with third cycle research and building new contexts for research vitalisation in the academies. These have led to several initiatives in new areas in collaboration with external (university) partners, such as the plan to develop new master's

level courses and research about the role of arts in technological developments. Other initiatives to integrate research in all ArtEZ practices are the role of the professorships in education, e.g., projects, courses and/or internships in bachelor and master programmes and an interdisciplinary honours programme. From 2016 to 2019, an Innovation Projects Fund stimulated the development of research capacities and learning communities throughout the university, with 'diversity' as the key theme, diversity in techniques, disciplines, identities, legacies, histories and discourses. This led to eleven projects and increased the relevance of research for (innovation of) curricula. The self-evaluation report states that ArtEZ having locations in three different cities (Arnhem, Zwolle, Enschede) is not considered as an ideal situation for building a research community that strongly leans on informal cooperation and communication. The financial support for the research unit, however, is considered the larger challenge.

In 2019, the average research staff for a professorship (professors and research circle) funded by the Rijksbijdrage (direct government funding), was 1.23 FTE. The core budget allocated by the ArtEZ board covers the staff costs for the professor and research support staff. The budget covers a total of 2.68 FTE of research support staff for six professorships, which amounts to an average of 0.45 FTE per professorship. This means that financing the research circle depends almost completely on extra income from second and/or third income streams. In the period 2016-2019, the research unit had an annual average of €195K in second stream income subsidies (SIA and NWO) and €226K from the third income stream (mostly private cultural funds and institutional agreements). This was not a very stable income and shows large fluctuations from one year to another. ArtEZ notes in its self-evaluation report that applying for external funds and grants through national and regional research programmes requires an expertise that is not necessarily available in-house. Also, the need to find project-based incomes leads to project-based

appointments rather than long-term contracts, with the related danger of discontinuity.

In response to these challenges, the professors are currently developing a Strategic Research Agenda and a multi-year implementation plan in line with the development of a new ArtEZ Research Centre. This new centre will get special funding from the core budget in order to grow the corpus of research investments to meet the university's research goals. A Research Development Fund replaces the Innovation Fund.

Networks

From the documentation and the online interviews during the site visit, it is clear that the ArtEZ professors are aware that they cannot accomplish by themselves the research they envision. They see the need for engaging with different networks and research consortia at regional, national and international levels. The self-evaluation report describes examples of consortia-driven work, bringing in artists, designers, entrepreneurs, academic researchers, practitioners, scientists, technologists, municipalities and governments. Research consortia help to find critical feedback and the context through which ArtEZ can apply for more ambitious grants and resources for research. Four types of networks are listed: (1) networks for research policy, such as government advisory boards, (2) university partnerships, e.g. offering opportunities for staff to achieve a PhD degree, and collaborating on research projects, both nationally and internationally, (3) industry networks, e.g. to help upscaling and mainstreaming prototypes, and (4) societal and cultural partners, as hubs of interaction, working through exhibitions, galleries, museums, performances, displays and curated knowledge events.

During the site visit, the professors emphasized that they are project initiators and crucial facilitators. Within ArtEZ, they act not as a separate unit, but are co-creating with students in every department. It is not the intention to build new teaching programmes, but rather to step into existing

ones, using the Innovation Fund and using the research portfolio to spread a research commitment. Outside ArtEZ, it is their strategy to have a track record as a catalyst for bigger change and larger contributions, to show what they can add to a larger system. They see the need to spread across other universities, draw relations and make connections 'to create an entanglement and to tie the knots together'.

Professorships work together with several academic universities: formal Memorandums of Understanding with Radboud University and the University for Humanistic Studies, discussions with Wageningen University & Research (Wageningen UR) and the University of Twente in preparation of similar cooperation agreements, cross-appointments with the University of Amsterdam, Groningen University, Delft University of Technology and VU Amsterdam. In this respect, the fact that ArtEZ is located in three different cities, with different disciplines, is an advantage, because it leads to natural connections, between the location in Enschede and the University of Twente, the location in Zwolle and the University for Humanistic Studies, and the location in Arnhem with Radboud University. Connections with international universities are maintained as well, to help amplifying and supporting the research through different routes.

The committee had a conversation with invited guests from two specific network partners, Wageningen UR and Radboud University. Both emphasized that working with ArtEZ researchers brings in a different way of thinking and different practices, while having the same objectives and values. Teaming up with ArtEZ links to other capabilities and brings inspiration from the arts about future perspectives. It is challenging and makes people think. The quality of research is enhanced by this cooperation, although it is not always easy to come out of one's own box and to make the bridge from an academic perspective to art practice and theory. Cooperation with ArtEZ researchers enlarge the academic university's net-

work and brings in new audiences. ArtEZ is considered strong in introducing new narratives and lines of research and in making the translation to other levels. Both network partners stress the complementarity of the relationship. The cooperation with Radboud University has led to two large grants from NWO in a very competitive process. They were granted precisely because of the surplus value of the cooperation where each partner does what they are good at.

The project 'Designing for Precarious Citizens' was presented in more detail as well, describing its historical research and research by design and its cooperation with Het Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam (agency and museum for architecture, design and digital culture) and the Dutch Design Week, which greatly enlarged the audience for the outcomes of this project.

Finally, a number of ArtEZ researchers spoke with the committee about their different research positions (research fellow, PhD candidate, postdoctoral researcher and lead researcher) and how they liaise with other researchers both internally and externally. They emphasise that education and research at ArtEZ are completely intertwined and that there is always a back and forth between theory and its grounding in practice, also directly with the educational department and students. They explain that it is not an individual type of research, but working with designers and students, as a group, a process of trial and error. While being part of the Graduate School, the PhD candidates are also linked to an academic university. They stress the value of this combination: the academic university provides facilities and resources such as access to publications, while ArtEZ provides openness for new directions and a critical community.

Considerations

The committee is impressed by how much the research unit is able to achieve with a very small team. The committee considers that the research lines are relatively small. A great deal falls on the shoulders of the five core professors, both to have

an impact within their fields and to be productive work partners with each other and across fields. The raising of revenue to support research projects through external grants is still quite limited. ArtEZ has, however, showed convincingly that it has been successful in creating an active research community within ArtEZ through the research circles in various forms. Externally, it has been creative in expanding its reach by instituting cross-institutional partnerships, expanding the possibility of its reach into domains not otherwise represented in the institution, creating a larger national profile. The list of contacts, provided with the self-evaluation report, is the expression of a real network. Having, as a small institution, a large network fits with how ArtEZ considers their research as a joint endeavour.

The conversations have made it clear that the network is made productive by how ArtEZ operates. ArtEZ researchers evidently have the capacity to work with people with very different capacities and with contrasting strengths to produce something valuable, in a way that is registered by the cooperation partner as productive. Much seems to depend on ArtEZ' flexibility and agility and the way it is able to adapt in engaging with academic partners. This leads to a small warning, i.e., to be mindful of the possible tensions in such cooperation. It would be good to in the long run build a more equal relation.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee evaluates the organisation as **excellent**.

3. Research methods

The research done by the Research Unit complies with the standards that apply to doing research in its field of study.

The committee considers that the ArtEZ research unit is actively engaged in setting the right standards for its research. The number of publications in books and peer-reviewed journals, the contributions to conferences and exhibitions, the fact that they find academic partners for research cooperation and are awarded external grants, all show that the unit's research is valued. An undergraduate writing programme is advised to upgrade the students' writing skills, as a contribution to self-reflection and research skills. The committee commends the research unit for initiating APRIA, a smart move to create an outlet that fits what the unit is doing. The assessment committee assesses the research methods of the research unit as **good**.

Findings

The documentation and conversations provide evidence that the ArtEZ research unit attaches great importance to an ongoing internal and external debate about the quality of its research and the methods, disciplines, processes, forms, integrity and ethics of its research. ArtEZ wishes to situate itself in close relationship with multiple stakeholders, peers and collaborators, while finding publication and presentation forms that fit its specific profile. De-disciplining means to find new measures and new partners to be critical friends. The research unit connects with discussions about artistic research at international level, because it considers this important to deal with, being serious about what theory in the arts is. Various research methods, such as participatory research, are discussed as well in a constant conversation. Products and outcomes are always considered a starting point for further dialogue.

Curiosity driven instead of validating research requires different ways of measuring and explaining its way of working. In recent years, the research unit has found various forms and platforms to publicize its research activities in a critical environment of public debates and exhibitions, conference presentations and research and innovation festivals. The reactions to these public presentations are discussed in the knowledge circles of the professorships. The partnerships with academic universities are considered a good way

of ensuring that the academic standards contribute to the impact the research unit seeks to generate. PhD candidates employed by ArtEZ are always attached to an academic university and are subject to peer review by the very nature of a PhD project. These partnerships are also helpful when ArtEZ, in order to obtain grants, must make its research intelligible to the funding bodies, as is indicated by the joint NWO grant to ArtEZ and Radboud University (see standard 2). A comparable example is the SIA-RAAK grant for Saxion University of Applied Sciences and ArtEZ.

Part of the assessment documentation is a list of books, book chapters, articles in (peer-reviewed) journals, lectures and workshops by each professor(ship), which shows evidence that ArtEZ professors meet the standards of research in their disciplines. In projects with external partners, the ways of publicizing the results are often in line with each partner's strengths. In one of the conversations, the example was given of a partnership with an academic university, where one partner focuses on peer-reviewed articles only, while ArtEZ adds exhibitions.

The artistic research as it is developing in ArtEZ, however, requires different ways of publication and presentation, with more emphasis on digital than written communication. This is not only needed to reach a larger audience, but also because the outcome cannot only be text based, but

often needs audio and video. Therefore, ArtEZ has taken the initiative for APRIA (Platform for Research Interventions of the Arts), an online platform that curates a peer-reviewed journal (APRIA journal) and publishes essays, image and sound contributions that examine art and interventions of the arts in relation to science and society, and that encourage dialogue around themes that are critical and urgent. APRIA is a form of experimental publishing and is funded by SIA-RAAK. APRIA journal is a platform to cope with visualization of research outcomes and a way of showing research initiatives in the institution, at various levels (including the bachelor programmes). Two issues of APRIA journal have been published so far: #0 on 'Searching for the New Luxury? Fashion Colloquium 2018 revisited' and #1 on 'Questioning Food: FOOD – RESEARCH – ART – DESIGN'. The next journal is planned and will be about 'Time Matters'. The journal issues contain reviewed and selected contributions and academic articles, vision articles, reflections and podcasts. They open up vistas on a worldwide topic, showing other perspectives than the traditional disciplines.

In addition to the journal, APRIA provides a website platform for contributions, inviting staff and students to write a piece for the website about particular topics, and working together with ArtEZ Studium Generale and ArtEZ Press. APRIA offers ways to make outcomes more visible than the

usual publications, offering a space for ongoing conversations and publishing the outcomes of conferences organized by Studium Generale.

Considerations

The committee considers that the ArtEZ research unit shows a high level of quality. They comply with the standard of research in the field and have found (additional) outlets that fit their way of doing research, such as APRIA. The committee appreciates that self-reflectivity is central to all practices and has impact on the artistic practices. ArtEZ professors are obviously able to articulate their research activities and outcomes.

The committee heard from one of the academic partners that undergraduate students show a relative lack of writing skills. The committee is aware that not all output is or should be written, but believes that good writing skills encourage self-reflection and will ultimately benefit the quality of research. The committee encourages ArtEZ to establish an undergraduate writing programme, supervised by mentors, e.g., older students. This works well in other universities and leads to significant progress for both students and mentors.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee evaluates the methods as **good**.

4. Output

The research unit realizes sufficient relevance to the following domains within its field: (1) professional practice and society; (2) education and professionalization; (3) knowledge development within the research domain.

The committee considers that the research unit has presented convincingly how it has a significant and relevant impact on teaching, the professional field and knowledge production. The professorships have taken an active role in cultivating students' and teachers' research capabilities, catalysing new education programmes and disseminating research results in different education communities. The cooperation with a range of parties in the professional field is strong and has resulted in new and exciting projects and partnerships. The outreach units ArtEZ Press and Studium Generale and the APRIA website and journal play a strong supporting role. The research unit contributes to knowledge development not only through publications, but also through the organization of conferences, workshops, exhibitions and events. Innovative projects bring together researchers from very diverse backgrounds. The assessment committee evaluates the output as **excellent**.

Findings

Education and professionalisation

A direct output of the research frameworks and concepts is the development of student capacity for engaging in research. In the last four years, research has started to be integrated in the curriculum and students have come into contact with urgent and relevant research questions. Critical thinking and critical consciousness are seen as key to research-making and research frameworks are translated to cultivate student capacities in research. Examples are the Honours Programme and the 2019 project *Cracking the Code of the Professorship in Art Education as Critical Tactics*. The Honours Programme is a multidisciplinary space for bachelor's students from all disciplines, to engage in critical theoretical thinking, implementing the professorial framework of the 'theory of making' about the processes by which art education engages with the theory produced in the arts themselves. 'Cracking the Code' aimed at posing questions of diversity in the ArtEZ academic community. Students were at the forefront in discussing structural blind spots and the critical needs of the community, thinking about diversity as a part of core practice rather than as an afterthought.

The professorships have taken an active role in catalysing new education programmes: a revision and reorientation of the master's in Fashion Design, an international master's in Artist Educator that builds on a radical repositioning of education outside the classroom, the initiative 'AIRs' to bring together students from all master's programmes to find a common language for their research and practice, a student-driven experiment in education called 'Create Space', and a 'Circular Fashion' MOOC (with the Circular Fashion Lab of Wageningen UR). These initiatives contribute to the expansion of the education portfolio and the institutional durability of research practice.

The professors' engaging more faculty and staff in their research projects has led to a significant increase in the number of faculty members pursuing PhDs in various domains. The professors and directors of academies have nominated candidates for an NWO teacher's research development bursary (*Ierarenbeurs*). The increased visibility of research has attracted international and research-driven faculty to ArtEZ, which strengthened the Graduate School research profile and its teaching at master's level. Staff and faculty with strong credentials and an interest in research have been positioned as senior research fellows.

They contribute to developing different standards, methods and instruments of research development at the university.

Within different education communities, professors actively disseminate their research through keynotes, workshops, seminars and lectures. This leads to new learning frameworks and a revitalisation of curricula. In the conversations during the site visit, this process was described as a student-centred way of working involving a constant feedback loop: students come up with self-driven questions, e.g. from internships or from their international background. Accordingly, research input is generated from students and social engagement. In this way the field is developed and the network grows larger.

Professional practice and society

Professors have organised a series of events in order to create the context within which researchers and practitioners could find their space. These new contexts take the form of knowledge outputs and encourage new research. The professorship in Fashion collaborated with the State of Fashion (STOF), one of the biggest fashion expos in the Netherlands, to redefine luxury in fashion against the backdrop of urgent environmental and social issues. This resulted in a Fashion Colloquium, supported by ArtEZ Studium Generale, and the first issue of the APRIA journal. The professorship in Theory in the Arts organised a project 'In de Maak', inviting stakeholders to leave the borders of their own domain and make new connections with the discourse and practice of others. This will be further developed into a future-oriented communal space for arts and sciences as part of the Wunderkammer project, in cooperation with the University of Humanistic Studies, the Police Academy, the Society of Arts Netherlands and Radboud University Nijmegen.

The professorships consider implementation and prototyping a key part of their research. This attracts different industry partners and leads to the creation of experimental spaces and ways to enable new research methods. Experimental space is

created in the innovation projects of the ArtEZ Centre of Expertise 'Future Makers'. These projects are framed in two different domains of research: 'speculative space' and 'futuring field labs', to make a clear distinction between a more speculative and critical approach to research and solution-driven research through innovative interventions in existing production and consumption systems. Enabling new research methods is linked to the process of de-disciplining and finds new collaborations. The E||Scape professorship initiated a project 'Composing the New Carpet', bringing together speculative approaches in design to further the intended economic and social impact of companies and knowledge institutions. The professorship in Art Education as Critical Tactics has developed a methodological toolkit for 'Art-Based Learning', creating a new vocabulary and framework to understand education in the arts and its capacity to move from action to activation, from consumption to revitalisation, from information to learning, and from individual experience to collective intermediation. This led to the 'No School' project, in collaboration with two vocational training schools (vakscholen), aiming to develop the theoretical and creative imagination needed to produce the creative professionals of the future.

Two of the outreach units, ArtEZ Press and ArtEZ Studium Generale, participated in the research project 'Making Public: Pressing Matters in Publishing'. They hosted an international conference and launched the open-access academic journal APRIA (see standard 3) to document new forms of research practices and knowledge. During the site visit, the value of Studium Generale was described as a way to mobilise first conversations sooner, compared to the often slow response time of research. It is a platform to melt together different initiatives, with the aim to empower people to engage in conversations, e.g., through the APRIA website. When an open call is announced, a board of students, teachers and alumni is formed to help students submit their research more effectively.

To open up other (shared) artistic-scientific research fields, the Theory in the Arts professorship started the research seminar 'Time Matters', inviting (international) representatives of different disciplinary fields to enquire how time invades and forms artistic and scientific practices. The seminars attracted artists and scholars from ecological fields especially, such as TNO. The results will be published in the APRIA journal in 2021.

The research unit informed the committee that they are very well embedded in all three cities where ArtEZ is located, and that all professors are involved in local initiatives, e.g., working with museums locally (Airborne museum, Openluchtmuseum) and with local production technologies. The unit wants to be not of, but in the local.

Knowledge development

All professors of the ArtEZ research unit contribute to the discourse through publications, thus ensuring codes of integrity, critical analysis and peer-reviewed knowledge production. In addition, they organise conferences, workshops, exhibitions and events to stage and rehearse knowledge. Examples are the 2016 collective conference on what research in the arts can be, the 2018 conference 'Food Friction' with academic papers, art works, workshops, speculative design and creative interpretations, and the project 'Designing for Precarious Citizens' by the E|Scape professorship, a speculative and art-driven design project that produced an exhibition, a book of dialogues and speculative design exercises and a larger discussion about the role and future of design (see also standard 2). ArtEZ Press and the APRIA journal offer a system of peer-reviewed publication closely aligned with the ArtEZ research themes.

The professorships consider the materiality and embodiment of artistic practice central to their research methods and inquiries and look for new contexts and resources. They see their role as critical researchers who question the structures of the status quo and show the possibilities of a different way of being and living. One example is the

project 'The Future of Living Materials', a cooperation between the ArtEZ Future Makers and Wageningen UR (see also standard 2). The collaboration between fashion designers, textile designers, pigmentation producers and chemical engineers showed possibilities for a more sustainable fashion industry guided by natural principles. The presentation of the outcomes at relevant exhibitions has led to a cross-disciplinary consortium with Wageningen UR, Utrecht University, Groningen University, Delft University of Technology, University of Applied Sciences The Hague and various societal and business partners to raise research funding (an NWA-ORC five-year research grant).

A second example of creating new forms of research is 'From Womb to Adolescents' by the Music Based Therapies and Interventions professorship. In collaboration with University Medical College Groningen, VU Amsterdam, Amsterdam UMC, University of Helsinki, Max-Planck Institute Leipzig and the University of Cambridge, the project investigates whether live music intervention in neonatal intensive care is possible and how it influences the well-being of mother and child. The project has already resulted in the appointment of a resident music therapist at UMC Groningen and the initiative for a process to establish an endowed professor in collaboration with the University of Amsterdam to further this field.

Considerations

The committee considers that the research unit has presented convincingly how it has a significant and relevant impact on teaching, the professional field and knowledge production. The written documentation was already convincing in itself, while the conversations during the site visit illustrated how research permeates at all levels of education and is open to bottom-up initiatives from students. Similarly, the community building in all layers is clearly visible and open to bottom-up processes. The committee commends the ways in which ArtEZ professorships strive to be relevant to all fields and how they apply a strong filter to do what fits their vision of research, as laid

down in the manifesto. The research is highly relevant in all respects.

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee evaluates the output as **excellent**.

5. Quality assurance

The Research Unit conducts regular and systematic evaluation of its research processes and results. Where necessary improvements are implemented.

The committee considers that through the PDCA-cycle and the continuous debate about the quality of research activities, both internally and with external partners, the research unit conducts a regular and systematic evaluation of its research processes and results. The PDCA cycle includes yearly and multi-year evaluations of each professorship, based on a peer review structure. Indicators are developed to measure the value of the professorships, based on their key responsibilities. The committee advises a further articulation of these indicators in observable terms. Until now, evaluation is directed at the individual professorships rather than the research unit as a whole. The next step is towards a more joint evaluation on the basis of a collective framework of quality indicators. The assessment committee establishes that the research group **meets this standard**.

Findings

Quality assurance (QA) at the ArtEZ research unit is a combination of a PDCA cycle (Plan-Do-Check-Act) and an ongoing debate about the quality of research activities with internal and external partners. The multi-year and annual plans, reports and evaluations are prepared, discussed and evaluated in meetings, such as the 'professors' meetings', bilateral conversations between professors and the director of Research & Outreach, and the regular informal 'coffee meetings'. There is a continued conversation about the state of projects, the development of partnerships and the strategies and plans of the research circles. The self-evaluation report states that this leads to a system of continuous dialogue, collaborative checks and balances and a measurement strategy that is iterative and qualitative, and ensures relevant and robust output.

Each professorship, after its first tenure of four years, undergoes a blind peer review. Three international sector leaders from academia and practice review and evaluate the professorships' body of work and give advice on the continuation of the position and the next steps for its profile. This process has helped transform two professorships in their next tenure. It also signals to new professors that, while continuity of research leadership is cherished, the research unit is open to revise and consolidate its practice. Every two years,

feedback sessions are organised in cooperation with the QA department with a selection of external stakeholders for each professorship as collective moments of evaluation. These sessions deliver input for evaluation of what has been done, but also for determining the next steps for each professorship in particular and the research unit in general.

In addition to the internal PDCA cycle, each professorship has its own peer review structure, participates in professional networks and research platforms and has an advisory board. The results of such meetings are documented in internal reports or external publications. The status of professors can also be measured by peer-reviewed selections for subsidy grants, publications, conference papers and presentations, and the positions they hold on policy and advisory boards. Fostering the partnerships with academic universities is also considered a good way of ensuring the academic standards and how they contribute to the intended impact.

Together with the art universities of Amsterdam and Utrecht, ArtEZ works on a plan related to the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity.

Upon publication of the research manifesto, the professors initiated a process with the QA team

and a series of stakeholders to create an explicit norm according to which they can hold themselves accountable. The role of research is seen as 'breaking paradigms', the research practice should create conceptual, methodological and material contexts through which impact can lead to creative collisions or transformative entanglements. The idea of an ethnography of experimental practices under way at ArtEZ would help to codify the undertaking, enable reflectivity of what works and what can be learned from it, and make available more broadly both process and potential outcomes in undertaking experimental work in an art and design research setting. A first attempt to describe some indicators for evaluating impact is the document 'Breaking paradigms to create inclusive futures & equitable societies'. Professors should measure their value along two axes: their responsibility as professors working in a university of applied sciences, and the societal relevance and impact of their research practices. The six key responsibilities, as mentioned in standard 1, are research, learning, community building, network creation, grant raising, and administration and service, and are measured on four levels: output, outcomes, impact and transformation. Output refers to events, publications, exhibitions and courses that emerge as part of the research vision. Outcomes are linked to output and indicate the circulation and spread of the output. Impact is an indicator that establishes the relevance and value of the research through collaborations with different internal and external stakeholders and the continuity of the research projects. Transformation refers to long time-lines that indicate a shifting base-line or other movement in the fields in which the research is situated. Each professorship has interpreted these indicators in their own practice, concentrating on different stakeholders, based on the stage and the development of their research. This has helped to map investments in terms of time and resources and to set priorities based on the needs of the community and the sector. Multi-year plans, annual reports and multi-year reports are based on these responsibilities and evaluation levels.

The self-evaluation report states that, until now, quality assurance has mostly been limited to the individual professorships and not to the research unit as a whole. A joint reflection on the quality and impact of the research projects during this period has not yet taken place. The next step, therefore, is to create a more collective framework of quality indicators in the context of art research, in a joint effort with art research at other universities of applied sciences in the Netherlands. Possibilities to define and monitor the quality of the research unit are an internal and external peer review system and a collective advisory board.

In the conversation with members of the research community during the site visit, researchers mentioned that, for them, peer review is the way to maintain quality. Publishing in peer-reviewed academic journals and presentations at conferences are encouraged, but a second, stronger, way lies in the critical community: the internal relations and external partners. Researchers try to create a research community in the Graduate School and report to each other. Many work with iterative processes, using the advice from external experts. Some researchers said that they had started to create a track record of what they do, as a method of archiving and looking back at their work, which they feel is necessary in an iterative process. Recording is necessary when grants are received because funding bodies demand yearly reporting, but in ArtEZ generally there is no systematized or formal structure or method on how to report; this rather depends on the research field and the specific relation with a professorship. Internal critical reviews are held with the director of Research & Outreach once a year formally, informally more often. All this information feeds into the formal review cycle.

Considerations

The committee considers that the ArtEZ research unit has a regular and systematic, but highly informal evaluation system in place. There are regular meetings internally and externally, mostly at

the level of individual professorships, but also at the level of the research unit as a whole. The type of engagement is systematic in the fact the professorships and researchers have iterative processes of dialogue. The informal character fits the kind of research and institute. The committee, therefore, does not advise building a more formal structure, but being more systematic in showing how the evaluation structure supports the reflective practice. The committee thinks that develop-

ing a set of value indicators is a worthwhile exercise and encourages the research unit to articulate them in observable terms (see also standard 1).

Based on the interviews and examination of the underlying documentation, the assessment committee establishes that the research group **meets this standard**.

Attachments

Attachment 1 Assessment committee

Raoul van Aalst, chair, is an independent consultant on organisations and management philosopher

Christine De Lille is a Professor Innovation Networks at The Hague University of Applied Sciences

Evelyn Wan is a Media and Performance Studies Lecturer and Researcher at Utrecht University

David Theo Goldberg is Director of the University of California Humanities Research Institute within the University of California system-wide research facility for the human sciences and theoretical research in the arts.

The panel was supported by **M.J.H. van der Weiden**, secretary.

All panel members signed a declaration of independence and confidentiality.

Attachment 2 Program of the assessment

Friday October 30, 2020 (online)

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 14.30-15.00 | Opportunities and challenges of the future of research at ArtEZ
Meeting with management |
| 15.00-15.15 | Break |
| 15.15-17.00 | Vision, Values, Manifesto, Impact |
| 15.15-15.50 | (pre-recorded) presentations including showcases |
| 15.15-15.30 | Research vision, values and manifesto |
| 15.30-15.35 | Showcase Art-Based Learning in Palliative Care |
| 15.35-15.40 | Showcase APRIA |
| 15.40-15.45 | Showcase Future Makers: MOOC |
| 15/45-15.50 | Showcase Design for Precarious Citizens |
| 15.50-16.20 | Conversation with all professors |
| 16.20-16.30 | Break |
| 16.30-17.00 | Conversation with all professors |
| 17.00-17.15 | Break |
| 17.15-18.50 | Partnerships, Quality, Impact |
| 17.15-17.55 | Academic and societal impact |
| 17.15-17.25 | (pre-recorded) showcases |
| 17.25-17.55 | Conversation with professors and invited guests |
| 17.55-18.10 | Break |
| 18.10-18.50 | Educational and societal impact |
| 18.10-18.20 | (pre-recorded) showcases |
| 18.20-18.50 | Conversation with professors and invited guests |
| 18.50-19.00 | Break |
| 19.00-19.45 | Research community in practice
Conversation with ArtEZ researchers |
| 19.45-20.25 | Panel session to discuss first conclusions of panel |
| 20.25-20.30 | Concluding session, first conclusions
All professors, board members, all participants of the visitation |

Attachment 3 Documents

- Self-evaluation
- Manifesto 'Making other Kinds of Future' (2018)
- 'Here as the Centre of the World', ArtEZ strategy plan 2016-2021 (2015)
- 'The Here and Now: An Account of the Graduate School of ArtEZ', vision document 2017
- 'Recommendations VKO and actions taken', document 2020
- 'Ways of Research', research policy plan 2016-2021 (2015, in Dutch)
- Graduate School document 'Perched on a Hyphen, In-between-ness as a Space to Occupy' (2019)
- Annual reports 2016, 2017, 2018 (in Dutch)
- Research Development Investments 2020
- List of internal and external partners (2020)
- List of memberships advisory boards and committees 2014-2020
- Proposal ArtEZ research agenda 2019
- Documents Project CORPS-AS Collective Research Practices of Arts and Sciences
- Memorandums of Understanding (Radboud University, University of Humanistic Studies)
- Overview subsidy applications and grants professorships (2020)
- Overview research output 2014-2020
- Multi-year plans, annual and evaluation reports per professorship
- The Code of conduct for research integrity – project plan (2019)
- Feedback session 'Quality of ArtEZ professorships' (2017, in Dutch)



AeQui