Preface

General conclusion of the QANU assessment panel

The panel was pleased to assess the bachelor's programme Creative Technology. Based on the critical reflection, it initially had concerns regarding the content and structure of programme. However, during the site visit the panel discovered that many protocol documents were available on the spot, and it was pleasantly surprised by the variety and content of projects. In addition, it met a group of highly motivated and dedicated lecturers and students, who truly embody the soul of the programme. The study association PROTO has an important role in providing substance to the curriculum and is crucial to the functioning of the quality control cycle.

The programme has an internationally appealing profile, and the panel points out that the Faculty basically possesses a diamond in the rough: the content of the programme has a tremendous future potential. It hopes that the programme will be valued by the Faculty for its interdisciplinary character and excellent focus on societal relevance. The panel describes the bachelor's programme Creative Technology as a precious programme of which its management should be proud.

However, the panel notes that it is also quite vulnerable. In order to maintain the programme's quality and unique identity and character, its management should closely guard and express its vision, and urgently invest in additional teaching staff.

Conclusion

The panel assesses the bachelor's programme Creative Technology as 'satisfactory'.

Creative Technology

Development Plan

Stage 1

Introduction

This document is intended to be the first in a series of documents, in which we lay down:

- Our findings regarding the Creative Technology programme when measured against the accreditation standards, and our own ambitions
- The actions we agree upon to achieve improvement.

This first document summarizes the "considerations" of the QANU assessment panel. For this moment they are essentially "the findings" regarding the Creative Technology programme.

These findings are annotated as follows:

✔   Findings are positive

✔?   Findings sound positive, but there is an implicit criticism, or doubt.

!   Findings are positive, but with an explicit warning.

??   Findings/advice are/is unclear.

✗   Findings are negative, action required

In some places we added a comment indicating that the findings of the assessment panel are not exactly our own findings. But it would be wise to make them our own findings.

In subsequent stages of this development plan we shall define (and refine) actions to be taken to counteract the negative findings.

And add new findings (of our own and other observers), as the programme further develops.

1. Intended learning outcomes (Standard 1)

✘　The assessment panel studied the domain-specific framework of reference and concludes that the document is currently unsuitable to serve its purpose. It therefore advises the programme management to re-write the document and make use of a T-shape model in order to explain the programme's positioning in a more comprehensible and visual manner.

> *Comment: We believe that a DSFR should contain two "coordinate systems". One is to determine the position of your intended learning outcomes, the other to determine the position of your curriculum (leading towards the intended learning outcomes). Our annex to the self-assessment report was (considerably) more than just the description of two coordinate systems. It contained extensive argumentation to underpin our choice of coordinate systems, and it included a reflection on the position of our intended learning outcomes and our curriculum relative to these coordinate systems. We feel that the panel completely misunderstood our intentions.*
>
> Action:
> Reduce the DSFR as included in the self-assessment report to its core. (from 36 to 6 pages)
> Actor:
> Hans van den Berg
> Due date:
> Within two months from now.

✔　Nevertheless, the profile of the programme is well defined and the panel appreciates the fact that it allows for a diverse range of creative technologists.

✔　The academic orientation is adequate,
!　　although the panel believes it should be carefully guarded.

✔　The intended learning outcomes are of bachelor's level and
✔　　they are formulated well.

2   Teaching - learning environment (Standard 2)

✔   The panel is positive regarding the freedom students experience during project work: it encourages independence and stimulates creativity.

??   It therefore advises the programme management to entirely implement TOM in the new modules.

> *Comment: we have to find out what they mean*

✔   The four pillars of the teaching concept of Creative Technology are appreciated by the panel. Teaching methods used include lecturing, tutorial classes, practical sessions, (homework) assignments and project work. They match the teaching concept and principles of TOM and are successfully applied.

!   The panel studied the new curriculum and concludes that for the third year, not all details have been worked out yet.

> <u>Action 1</u>
> The first half of the third year is "profileringsruimte" (for personal profile modules). The options students will have for their choice of personal profile are not entirely clear yet (this holds true for all UT bachelor's students). Especially for Creative Technology students, the personal profile modules can also be "bridging" modules, which serve to gain admission to a Master's programme. The list of bridging options is not complete yet
> The full list of personal profile modules (and other personal profile options) must become available, including bridging modules. The UCO and VAC are working on it. So is the course coordinator (Erik Faber). We are in close contact with Inge Boomkamp (on behalf of the CvB) about progress.
>
> <u>Due date</u>
> April 23rd (minor market day)
>
> <u>Action 2</u>
> Define the final semester, including graduation work. (This is an issue for all UT bachelor's programmes.)
>
> <u>Due date</u>
> April 23rd (minor market day)

✔   The first and second year however, consist of relevant and coherent modules covering a broad range of disciplines.

!   The curriculum could be improved if the programme management would emphasise its research orientation and user-focus.

> *Comment: This kind of improvement requires some thought on what ways there are to emphasise. But probably it will turn out to be a curriculum change.*

✔?   The majority of the intended learning outcomes is adequately embedded in the modules.

> *Comment: and what about the other ones? Which ones are not adequately embedded?*

✔   The admission policy has improved since the start of the programme. The panel particularly appreciates the matching procedure and tutoring activities.

✔ Tutors, the study advisor and student assistants contribute to the feasibility of the programme.

❗ The panel finds the course load adequate, but advises the programme management to guard that it will remain feasible and not increase any further.

> *Comment: although the panel concludes that the study load is adequate, they suggest that there is a threat here. Every module evaluation confirms the threat, and results of NSE also show that a large group of students perceive the study load as being too high.*
>
> *Comparison with previous (pre-TOM) years seems to indicate that this is more than just work load, the students seem to experience an increased sense of fear. We have to think about counteracting these feelings*

✘ According to the panel, the programme management should develop a perception on internationalisation and ventilate it clearly. Although the bachelor's programme is taught in English and has an international student population, an explicit internationalisation strategy is absent. The panel advises the programme management to actively stimulate students to participate in internships, conferences and minors abroad.

> *Comment: I can't recall any conversation with the panel about internationalization, it is not an issue we addressed in our self-assessment, and no one asked us to address it. So this finding comes a bit as a surprise.*
>
> *Moreover, Creative Technology management may not have an explicit internationalization strategy, it is actively involved in foreign exchange, both incoming and outgoing students. The percentage of Creative Technology students who study abroad (for their personal profile) is larger than for any of the other EWI bachelor's programmes.*
>
> *As part of our concern for the academic character of the programme we have been reluctant to give permission for internships.*
>
> *This internationalisation issue is also a money issue. My guess is that parents (being prepared to support their children with money) are a more important factor for the success of internationalization than whatever strategy of the programme management (except maybe a strategy to reward students with scholarships)*

✔ The panel met excellent and highly motivated teaching staff members during the site visit.

✘ When it comes to the staff-student ratio however, it has some serious worries. Currently, the programme copes with a shortage of core teaching staff members and a severe fragmentation of the total number of available fte (6.8 fte spread over fifty-four staff members). This directly disturbs communication between lecturers and students, it negatively influences uniformity and possibly threatens the sustainability of the programme. The panel stresses that the staffstudent ratio should remain priority concern of the programme management.

> *A complicated issue. The text seems to suggest that we should not look for more people involved in Creative Technology, but for more involvement per person. Not only the number of persons in the group is an issue, but also the nature of their involvement and their being a coherent Creative Technology community.*

Action 1

Open two more vancies for CreaTe dedicated staff.

Actors: dean and programme director

Action 2

Secure the "embedding" of Creative Technolgy in the faculty

Actor: programme director, "disciplineraad" (or designated group of chairs)

Action 3

Enlarge the group of people for whom Creative Technology is their prime concern in teaching

Actors: programme director, designated group of chairs

Action 4

Enhance (both formally and informally) the community spirit

Actors: event organization committee (Edwin Dertien, Angelika Mader)

✔ The programme-specific quality control is adequate. Due to the informal relationship between students and lecturers, problems can easily be addressed.

! Nevertheless it is advisable to further formalise the quality control procedures and to systematically implement feedback sessions.

Action

The Programme Committee is already working on this

✔ The panel is enthusiastic about the participation of students in the quality control cycle.

3a Assessment and level achieved(Standard 3)

✔ The panel is pleased with the diversity of assessments, such as assignments, multiple choice assessments, essays, papers, et cetera.

However, the panel observes three areas for improvement regarding the current assessment system.

✘ First, oral feedback has to be conducted systematically to ensure sufficient feedback is provided.

✘ Second, students should include in-depth reflections in their project-based work and final project reports.

✘ Third, the Board of Examiners should adopt a more proactive attitude.

Comment and action still open

✘ Since the panel did not receive sufficient information regarding the thesis procedure prior to the site visit, it had difficulties assessing the work of fifteen graduates. It argues that the assessment system requires more transparency.

Comment: definitely true. If only because it appears that the assessment panel did not understand (and still doesn't understand, even after we asked them to revise their remarks on grading the theses) that we give grades for the final project, and not just for the final project report

Action

Write down the procedure, make sure that students and supervisors know and understand the procedure, make sure that they stick to the procedure

Actors: Graduation project coordinator, programme director

Due date

Procedure must be laid down within two months from now.

✘ The panel also states that the programme management and Board of Examiners should consider the identity of a thesis: what makes the report a Creative Technology thesis?

✔ The panel is enthusiastic about the four-eyes principle, which departs from the idea that every thesis has to be checked by at least two supervisors.

✔ The assessment panel studied fifteen theses and states that the overall level is what one would expect of an academic bachelor's programme.

✔ It prepares students adequately to continue a master's programme or to enter the labour market.

✔ The panel was keen to see an example of how the programme even produces young entrepreneurs.

✔ It is confident that students of the bachelor's programme Creative Technology achieve the intended learning outcomes upon graduation.