

## Quality Management Principles of the Academy of Performing Arts Baden-Württemberg

The Akademie für Darstellende Kunst Baden-Württemberg (ADK; Academy of Performing Arts Baden-Württemberg) aims to make its processes transparent, to work by participation and support rather than by control, and to develop sustainable practices and concepts. In order to preserve the quality of the ADK over the long term, we can create an environment that supports and encourages instructors, staff, and students to do “good work.” To that end, the ADK quality management process aims to enable, encourage, and support feedback and observation, reflection, and dialogue wherever appropriate.

Developing and sustaining quality management is the responsibility of executive management.

The Academy will ensure a comprehensive quality management system combining internal and external evaluation. In artistic subjects with smaller class sizes and rapid changes of (artistic) course content, evaluations present specific challenges different from those presented by, e. g., larger courses in social or natural sciences. The ADK thus focuses especially on semi-structured interviews and feedback conversations.

In addition, the Academy hosts “Mondays at the ADK,” a series of regular events in which external professionals from theater, film, and the arts, as well as from other socially relevant disciplines, discuss current developments relating to the performing arts world. These discussions offer an opportunity to receive new ideas and inspiration through other points of view and to test and ensure necessary skills.

### 1 Methods of internal evaluation include:

General instruction: Regular meetings are held every fourteen days to address, assess, and act on current problems and cooperative ventures. These meetings additionally enable regular exchange of information between and with mentors of the various subject areas.

Acting: Students evaluate courses after each scene study, together with the responsible supervisor, all instructors—where present—of the year, the program director, and fellow students. These feedback sessions are structured so that participants in scene study are

confronted with questions from all those who were not involved in the work/rehearsal process (DasArts method).

Directing: Evaluation and feedback conversations are held after each major subject module (2–3 times per year). In accordance with the principles of the DasArts method, these conversations are open to all ADK students and to ADK staff. They occur from the third term onward, in order to observe artistic instruction in a larger context and investigate whether courses build on one another appropriately.

Dramaturgy: Monthly feedback conversations with students, separated by year, with the director/assistant director of dramaturgy, as well as the program head.

Directing/Acting: Twice each term, the artistic director hosts feedback conversation with each year.

There are also monthly meetings with the AStA (student union), executive management, and administrative directors. At least six times a year, general assemblies are held in which students, instructors, and staff can address and assess upcoming problems and questions, and develop solutions together with executive management/administrative directors.

## 1.1 New measures

Starting in the 2018/2019 year, the first written evaluations will be performed with the newly implemented evaluation/questionnaire software EvaSys. EvaSys will thereafter be used regularly, constituting a central element in the Academy's evaluation plan. EvaSys is a web-based tool currently in use at a number of different universities. It offers different ways of assessing courses, from checking boxes to giving letter grades to writing detailed comments and suggestions. Especially in artistic subjects, there is often considerable resistance to evaluations by questionnaire. To lessen this resistance, program directors, mentors, and instructors, along with the administration, will cooperate in the creation of these questionnaires, so that academic concerns can be incorporated into the feedback process from the very beginning. An additional factor for consideration is that it is often difficult for students to fully assess the content of a course until they have grasped its major points or have had a related learning experience in a different seminar. Choosing the correct time for evaluation is therefore critical. The Academy aims to make it as easy as possible for students to give feedback. The ADK is therefore considering a hybrid

system offering feedback options both on paper and online. Both options will, of course, be completely anonymous.

Implementation and results analysis is the responsibility of the artistic director/CEO and the administrative directors. Findings of the analysis will be communicated to all instructors in a joint meeting with all instructors once per term. The meeting will also aim to develop measures for improvement.

## 2 Methods of internal evaluation include:

Every six weeks, specialist docents/external experts and all program directors, as well as the artistic director/CEO meet for a day-long conference on curriculum-building. During this conference, goal and orientation of academy courses are discussed and examined, with corrective measures prepared wherever necessary, with the assistance of the Office of Student Affairs.

A two-day conference is held annually with all program directors, mentors, the artistic director/CEO, administration, public relations, and the Office of Student Affairs. The past year is evaluated, new strategies are developed, organizational questions addressed, and processes simplified.

### 2.1 New measures

The Academy plans to introduce alumni questionnaires in order to evaluate work placement and relevance of current course contents.

A greater number of meetings with cooperating partners in theaters, representatives of the ABK/set and costume design masterclasses, and the inclusion of program directors at these meetings will improve relevance of curriculum and rapid response to changing trends. Until recently, these meetings had been the purview of the artistic director/CEO alone.

Likewise in planning stages is the creation of an expert consulting committee, composed of representatives from the Baden-Württemberg University of Pop Music and Music Business, the State University of Music and the Performing Arts Stuttgart, and professionals from theater and the performing arts. This committee will contribute, in an advisory capacity, to examining course contents, recommending measures where necessary, and ensuring that insights from state-of-the-art teaching, research, and artistic developments from praxis are exchanged and included in the curriculum. The consulting committee will meet for a one-day conference annually.

In addition, the Academy continually supports development and training for its staff and instructors, enabling them to participate in national and international conferences, workshops, and courses. The Academy also regularly offers in-house training and development opportunities.

Thanks to the accreditation of all of its programs, the Academy has been able to apply for membership in Erasmus+, allowing not only additional training and development for instructors, but also exchange programs and greater mobility for students on a large scale.

Membership in European networks such as the E:UTSA further aids communication between different institutions on both a student and an instructor level. This supports development and adaptation of current teaching concepts and curricula, as well as the exchange of cutting-edge insights.

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