

# TILSYNS- RAPPORT

2022

## **Master of Arts in Design (Master i design)**

Kristiania University College (Høyskolen  
Kristiania)



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<b>Degree / ECTS</b>	Master / 120 ECTS
<b>Expert committee</b>	Professor Toni Kauppila, Professor Ashley Jane Booth, Master student Signe Berg
<b>Decision date</b>	06.10.22
<b>NOKUT's case number</b>	21/08427

## Introduction

The external quality assurance performed by NOKUT consists of a periodic supervision of the institutions' systematic work on assuring and enhancing the quality of the education they offer, accreditation of new provisions and revision of accredited provisions. Universities and university colleges have different self-accrediting powers. For an institution without self-accrediting powers to establish a provision in a certain cycle an application must be made to NOKUT.

NOKUT's methodology for accreditation of new provisions entails, as described in attachment 2 in this report, that the experts have the possibility to change their assessments and conclusions during the accreditation process, if new information is provided. This is the case with this report. The committee's additional assessment is found under the appropriate sections.

An expert committee appointed by NOKUT has evaluated the application from Kristiania University College for the accreditation of Master of Arts in design and its assessments are found in this report.

**Master of Arts in design at Kristiania University College does fulfil the conditions for accreditation in the Quality Assurance Regulation in Higher Education and the Ministerial Regulations concerning quality assurance and quality development in higher education and tertiary vocational education. The provision is accredited by the decision made 06.10.2022.**

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## 1 Information regarding the applicant institution

As an accredited university college, Kristiania University College has the power of self-accreditation for educational provisions at bachelor level (first cycle). Kristiania University College now applies for accreditation of Master of Arts in Design (In Norwegian: Master i design).

## 2 Decision

Vilkårene i NOKUTs forskrift om tilsyn med utdanningskvaliteten i høyere utdanning av 9. februar 2017 (studietilsynsforskriften) og i forskrift om kvalitetssikring og kvalitetsutvikling i høyere utdanning og fagskoleutdanning av 1. februar 2010 (studiekvalitetsforskriften) er oppfylt.

NOKUT akkrediterer *master i design* ved Høyskolen Kristiania. Akkrediteringen er gyldig fra vedtaksdato.

## 3 Expert assessment

### 3.1 Summary

Kristiania University College (hereafter: KUC) has submitted an application for a Master of Arts in Design with specializations within interior architecture and visual communication, with the objective to educate candidates who reflect critically on design professional practices, in their own work and larger contexts. In big strokes the committee is satisfied with the proposed master program and its academic core, however there are some elements that are unsatisfactory in this application that need addressing.

Most notably the committee is sceptical to a few aspects of the master thesis project. The committee finds it somewhat unfortunate that approximately 45 % of the total workload within this program is dedicated to independent work, especially considering the few hours dedicated to supervision and common learning activities within the master thesis. The committee therefore requires KUC to reduce the amount of time designated for independent work within the master thesis and thus increase the amount of time allotted to supervision activities and common learning activities. The institution is also advised to reconsider the size of the master's thesis and its integration in the programme and elaborate on the supervision students will be offered as part of their master thesis project.

Additionally, the committee finds the applications discussion of active learning to be lacking as it puts the responsibility of active learning on the individual student instead of the institution as required. KUC must therefore elaborate on how they are planning to promote active learning and student engagement. Regarding student exchange KUC has to describe how the content of the exchange programme is academically relevant, and how the student work with the Master project while on student exchange.

The application also includes professional training as an optional course (15 ECTS) on the 3rd semester that has not been discussed satisfactorily and the institution must enclose relevant agreements with partners, and write why the partners are relevant for a Master in Design.

The committee does not recommend the accreditation of the programme in the applications current state but are positive to future accreditation once the required changes have been made.

#### Assessment after the response from the institution

Kristiania University College has submitted comments to the initial report and documented several changes to the study programme. They have also commented on the committee's recommendations. In their response Kristiania University College have clarified uncertainties the committee had to, especially, the master project. The time allotted to supervision and common learning activities have increased, although the time allotted to supervision is still lower than other comparable master programs. KUC has also made clarifications regarding student exchange. The professional training as an optional course has been taken out of the program, in KUC's rely. Because of these changes the committee is able to recommend the accreditation of the Master in Design at Kristiania University College.

However, the committee finds that on a few of the demands that were addressed in the reply, the master program barely surpasses the minimum requirements and encourage KUC

to further develop and improve the program in future in line with the recommendations given in this document.

## 3.2 Basic prerequisites for accreditation

### 3.2.1 Demands expressed in the Universities and College Act

#### Regulations on Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Section 3-1 (4) It is a condition for accreditation being granted that the requirements of the Universities and University Colleges Act are met. Regulations adopted under the authority of Section 3-2 of the Universities and University Colleges Act shall form the basis for the accreditation.

#### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-1 (1) The requirements of the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges and its corresponding regulations must be met.

#### Assessment

The programme is a 120 ECTS master's programme, including individual work. In reference to § 3 of the *Master's regulations*, the degree builds on completed bachelor level programmes in creative fields of study and requires students to have 80 or 120 ECTS in the academic core field of the master's.

In compliance with § 3 of the *Master' regulation*, the programme includes a "Masterprosjekt" of 52,5 ECTS, in addition to 30 ECTS «Fagområdeemner», 22,5 ECTS «Spesialiseringsemner», and 2 x 7,5 or 1 x 15 ECTS «Valgemner».

The information in the diploma and the Diploma Supplement is correct, and the translations in the Diploma Supplement are sufficient.

#### Conclusion

Yes, the requirements are fulfilled.

### 3.2.2 Information about the programme

#### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-1 (2) Information provided about the programme must be correct and show the programme's content, structure and progression, as well as opportunities for student exchanges.

#### Assessment

The application contains specific information about the programme's content, structure and progression. The presentation of the different modules and the subject-matrix follows the argued logic, and it is sufficiently clear. The programme consists of course categories on "Fagområdeemner", "Spesialiseringsemner", "Masterprosjekt", "Valgemner" and

“Fellesemne”. Their content, structure and progression are communicated thoroughly enough.

There is an openness towards the elective courses (“Valgemner”), where there is a certain palette of offerings presented in the application, yet also stating that there might come changes on those, and that there could be further options. This is considered as a positive proposal, allowing the students to customise their own studies according to their personalised needs. Yet on the critical note, this also demands rigorous work from the institution to fulfil the promise as communicated here, where the options are rather more than less. The “Supervised professional training” (“Praksis”) is presented as one of these options, yet there is not enough information to understand if this is feasible (see chapter 3.3.9).

The Master-project seems to have rather extensive and complex structure. This model is elaborated and argued for in the application. The Master-project has an ambition to provide flexibility and openness towards diverse approaches by the individual students. This is in general a positive quality. However, due to its complexity, length and size, the communication of the course comes across somewhat ambiguous. As in the course description, the course is explained as an integrated module spreading across the two years, that is split in to two parts. Yet the courses are technically divided into four parts to fit into the semester plan, challenging the clarity of structure and assessment. This places the weight on good detailed course planning and guidance to overcome these issues (see chapters 3.3.3, 3.3.4, 3.3.5).

The proposal provides student exchange during the third semester. Information about exchange opportunities is sufficient, although some concerns are risen for the practical arrangements to support good progression on the exchange students’ studies within the proposed structure and partnerships, and it would require more information to clarify this. Also, particularly how the Master-project’s progression is safeguarded during the exchange period remains vague (see chapter 3.3.8 about student exchange).

If the local shortcomings are addressed in their respective chapters, the information about the programme on general level fulfils the requirements.

## Conclusion

Yes, the requirements are fulfilled.

## 3.3 Demands to the educational provision

### 3.3.1 Learning outcome and title of programme

#### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (1) The learning outcomes for the programme must be in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning, and the programme must have an appropriate title.

## Assessment

The application has titled the programme as ‘Master of Arts in Design’ (‘Master i design’ in Norwegian). The objective with the proposed master program is to educate candidates who



reflect critically on design professional practices, in their own work and larger contexts, and who can help define what design can and should be in the society of the future. The proposal is to include two specialisation areas, Visual Communication and Interior Architecture, but it is indicated that there is a will to further increase the specialising fields within the programme in future. Therefore, the programme's title and, later on, the general learning outcomes are intentionally defined accordingly to also support the possible future expansions and to enable a more inclusive definition.

The overall learning outcomes are at master level, and are sufficiently subject-specific for a master in Design. Most of the described learning outcomes in the courses follow the given guidelines set up in the national qualification framework for the master level (level 7). Some learning outcomes use level 6 formulations, which the application argues is because you do not necessarily achieve level 7 competence in newly introduced courses before that course is complete. This appears consistent as the *Fagområde- og fellesemner* and *Spesialiseringsemner* that heavily build on the student's prior knowledge are in line with the level 7 guidelines, while the *Valgemner* appear to use more level 6 formulations. However, as there is a very high standard for student admission for this MA, as described within other parts of the application, one could argue that a student with a Design BA (or similar) and at least 80 credits within their specialization would have the prior knowledge required to achieve a level 7 competency within all courses.

The chosen name 'Master of Arts in Design' ('Master i design' in Norwegian) is elaborated in the application in its both language versions. The proposed name is based within the umbrella term *Design*, which is an established field that is recognizable and communicates the content of the master program accurately both to applicants, the field and academia. The titles are also reflected on and compared with the existing models used nationally and internationally. The chosen titles do articulate the proposed programme satisfactorily.

### Conclusion

Yes, the requirements are fulfilled.

The institution is advised to:

- reconsider to what degree level 6 formulations is necessary within the courses' learning outcomes

### 3.3.2 The programme's academic update and professional relevance

#### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (2) The programme must be academically up-to-date and have clear academic relevance for further studies and/or employment.

### Assessment

The courses are directed towards exciting, relevant and thriving fields of research, as is the work of the staff involved in the programme. However, there are some examples of syllabuses that could benefit from newer literature. For example, the courses *Abstraksjon* and *Designforskningsmetoder* have little to no literature published in the last 5 years in its syllabus. It is of course paramount that the programme is based in design tradition and

history, however several courses could benefit from the additional input that newer literature can provide, to either replace or support the current literature.

The application showcases thoroughly how the programme is relevant to working life both within private and public sectors. The skills that are described as in demand within the industry are reflected and balanced within the study program, and the desires of the industry have clearly influenced the composition of the curriculum.

The programme is relevant for further studies and the best candidates may be qualified to apply for PhD programs at KUC in the future or at other institutions.

### **Conclusion**

Yes, the requirements are fulfilled.

The institution is advised to:

- explore which courses could benefit from some newer literature to either replace or support the current literature

### **3.3.3 The programme's workload**

#### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (3) The total workload of the programme must be between 1,500 and 1,800 hours per year for full-time students.

### **Assessment**

The workload for the two-year "Master in Design" is presumed at a total of 3200 hours for full-time students. This is within the total as stated in the demand.

The total workload is consistent across courses, with all 7.5 ECST courses expecting 200 hours of work, all 15 credit courses expecting 400 hours and the 37.5 ECTS *Masterprosjekt i design 2* expecting 1000 hours, and thus meets the requirements. The committee finds the workload to be realistic and in line with the program's intentions.

### **Conclusion**

Yes, the requirements are fulfilled.

### **3.3.4 The programme's content, structure and infrastructure**

#### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (4) The programme's content, structure and infrastructure must be adapted to the programme's learning outcomes.

## Assessment

The programme's content has an easy to understand structure with modules falling within the main categories of "Fagområdeemner", "Spesialiseringsemner", "Masterprosjekt", "Valgemner" and "Fellesemne". Each of these categories provide the students with different academic perspectives relevant to the programme's learning outcomes. The "Fagområdeemner" focus on the core design principles that bring together the specializations, while categories such as "Spesialiseringsemner" and "Valgemner" allow the students to develop their competence within their respective fields in a more practical way. The applications also briefly mention supervised professional training in the form of "Praksis" (15 ECTS), however this is not elaborated on. See 3.3.9 for the committee's assessment.

The study model is built around an extensive master's project, which runs through all four of the semesters and is developed by the student in dialogue with the supervisor. This is how the master project works as the focal point for a large part of students' learning. It is argued that to ensure progression, reflexivity and professional practice at a high level, the first part of the master project must start already in the first semester, as starting early with your own design work means that the knowledge acquisition from the other subjects can be linked closely to the individual's master's project. This idea suggests a varied and open-minded progress throughout the two years of study while at the same time keeping the student within the safe boundaries of one of the two specializations.

However, there is a flip side to this structure. Firstly, having to decide on a subject for the master thesis at the beginning of the programme can pose problems if it turns out to be the wrong project, and it may prove difficult to integrate the knowledge gained throughout the education in the project. Furthermore, the sheer size of the individually planned master's thesis (running a total of 52,5 ECTS) within the programme jeopardizes the basic coherence of the programme.

In general, the committee finds the structure and content to be coherent with the programme's learning outcomes. Furthermore, the two specializations seem to complement each other well and allows for "Fagområdeemner" which benefit and enrich the academic perspectives of students from both specializations.

Regarding the infrastructure the students and the staff are placed mainly on one campus with access to other facilities outside this campus when needed. The master students will have their own specified area at their disposal, which allows for close contact between faculty members and students. The workshop, lab and library facilities appear to be sufficient as does the infrastructure in general.

## Conclusion

Yes, the requirements are fulfilled.

The institution is advised to:

- reconsider the size of the master's thesis and its integration in the programme

### 3.3.5 Teaching, learning and assessment methods

Academic Supervision Regulations
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Section 2-2 (5) The teaching, learning and assessment methods must be adapted to the programme's learning outcomes. The programme must facilitate students taking an active role in the learning process.

## Assessment

The programme offers several varied teaching and learning methods and the application argues well for the multiplicity of chosen methods given the diverse needs of the master programme. The forms of assessment are generally varied, and students can be assessed both individually and in groups, allowing for collaboration in appropriate subjects.

The amount of self-study throughout the programme is high, especially in relation to the master project. The majority of the allotted hours, as described in the attachment that describes workload per course, are designated for working on the thesis; 400 hours within *Masterprosjekt i design 1* and 1000 hours within *Masterprosjekt i design 2*. Of these 1400 hours, most of the time will be spent on independent work, with only 19 hours total dedicated to supervision and common learning activities. The committee finds it somewhat unfortunate that approximately 45 % of the total workload within this program is less specified, as it stands as independent work, and finds it especially unfortunate that the time dedicated to supervision and common learning activities within the master thesis courses is so low. This number of hours is far lower than similar master programs in the same fields and the committee will require KUC to reduce the amount of time designated for independent work within the master thesis and increase the amount of time allotted to supervision activities and common learning activities.

As mentioned, about 45 % of the programme's workload is less specified, and the committee is additionally interested in reading more about what kind of supervision the students will be offered in relation to their master thesis, as the brief mention of supervision under "Undervisnings-, lærings- og vurderingsformer" only mentions formative and corrective feedback and lacks any mention of for example guidance and advice.

With such a high amount of self-study, little is done to enable students to take an active role in the learning process. The application references Prince (2004) definition of active learning and argue that because "Art and design pedagogy is at its core characterized by active students [...] it is assumed that students have an active and exploratory attitude to their own design practice" and therefore will engage in active learning. However, the responsibility to encourage active learning lies with the KUC, not with the individual student, and the committee therefore requests further elaboration on how the KUC will promote active learning and student engagement.

The institution is required to:

- reduce the amount of time designated for independent work within the master thesis and increase the amount of time allotted to supervision activities and common learning activities
- elaborate on how the KUC are planning to promote active learning and student engagement

### Assessment after the response from the institution to the initial report

In response to the committee's requirements the subject descriptions for the master's project were updated with clearer descriptions of learning activities, time spent in teaching related to the master's project, and planned examination format.

The committee is pleased to find that these changes are in line with the above requirements. The master thesis course now contains a larger number of supervision activities and common learning activities in the form of regular gatherings with student presentations, group discussions and shared critical reflection and plenary lectures, as well as the extensive independent work already discussed above. By creating development groups where 3–6 students across the specializations follow each other's projects and exchange feedback throughout the first year of study, the committee believe the institution help promote the active learning and student engagement the committee was seeking.

These group activities are estimated at a total of 48 hours, with supervision estimated at a total of 15 hours. With another 120 hours set aside for examinations and compulsory activity, independent work within the master thesis is reduced from 1381 hours to 1217 hours. The committee still finds it unfortunate that only 15 hours is set aside for individual supervision of the master thesis over a two-year period, and we would like to stress that these 15 hours are to be allotted to student supervision and does not include preparations and finishing work for the supervisor. We also encourage KUC to increase this quota to reflect the time allotted to similar activities in comparable master programs in the same fields.

### Conclusion

Yes, the requirements are fulfilled.

The institution is advised to:

- increase the allotted time for individual supervision to reflect comparable master programs in the same fields

### 3.3.6 Links to research and/or artistic development work and academic development work

#### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (6) The programme must have relevant links to research and academic development work and/or artistic research.

### Assessment

For the programme to have relevant links to research and academic development work and/or artistic research, the individual researchers connected to the programme need to be engaged with the programme's academic core research interest. In the application design is described as the academic core with a large spread in disciplines within that, from media science and design history to design-based artistic work. This shows a great understanding of the history and traditions of the design field as multidisciplinary and links well to the overall goals of the master programme.

Both the programme and the research and academic development linked to the programme have two main interests: 1. how one has designed, can and should design for

the future and its challenges, as well as 2. how design (including images, ideas and fashion) is and has been interpreted and mediated in a contemporary and historical context. The committee finds that these goals are indeed reflected in both the programme and the research and academic development work and/or artistic research.

Additionally, the academic community linked to the programme have a diversity of academic and practical backgrounds which seems in line with the master's programme's goal of developing graduates with both an academic and practical understanding of design.

## Conclusion

Yes, the requirements are fulfilled.

### 3.3.7 The programme's internationalisation arrangements

#### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (7) The programme must have internationalisation arrangements adapted to the programme's level, scope and other characteristics.

## Assessment

The School of Arts, Design, and Media claims to be internationally oriented in education, research and dissemination. The application states that focus on design in a social and cultural context presupposes an international orientation. The application makes references to international discourses and arenas where the school wants to be part of, through various networks and activities. The application also states to have agreements with key international organisations within higher education in respective fields of the arts. These include with CUMULUS (International Association of Universities and Colleges in Art, Design and Media), ELIA (European League of Institutes of the Arts), SAR (Society for Artistic Research) and CIRBUS (Nordic-Baltic Network of Art and Design Education).

Further on the proposal refers to several established bi-lateral partner agreements, mainly based on faculty's networks, elaborated in more detail in 3.3.8. Also, some of the faculty members have either international backgrounds and/or international ongoing activities, that bring in certain credibility towards the internationalisation arrangements. Thus, in general, the application demonstrates a certain ambition on an institutional level for internationalisation. The master's programme does not intend to be an international programme, nor it is not primarily targeted for international students. The programme's teaching language is mainly in Norwegian (with the exception of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester, which is to cater for exchange students, see chapter 3.3.8). Applicants are therefore mainly considered to come from Norway but can also come from other Scandinavian countries. The entry requirements seek for competence in Norwegian language. Requirements for internationalisation in higher education mean also that even though the teaching language might be Norwegian, the applicants are expected to master English well enough to read and understand academic articles, literature and other syllabus material, as well as actively participate in teaching conducted with English as working language. Within the course descriptions, it is clear that the great majority of the proposed literature is in English. Also, the linguistically structured framework for the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester, poses an active use of English as practiced working language.

As a conclusion, the programme has internationalisation arrangements well adapted for a masters programme in design.

## Conclusion

Yes, the requirements are fulfilled.

### 3.3.8 The programme's arrangements for international student exchange

#### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (8) Programmes that lead to a degree must have arrangements for international student exchanges. The content of the exchange programme must be academically relevant.

## Assessment

Technically, the application fulfils to some extent the needs for arrangements for international student exchange. In the application it is mentioned that KUC will have their basic international student exchange schemes through mobility programmes, such as Nordplus (in the Nordic or Baltic countries), ERASMUS + (in Europe) and 'Study Abroad' (for students in and outside Europe). Beyond those general exchange programmes, the application states four specific institutions as established partners for international exchange. These are Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti (NABA: Milan, Italia), Solent University (Southampton, UK), University of Monterrey (Monterrey, Mexico) og Deakin University (Geelong, Australia). The application appendixes also testify a contract with Goldsmiths University of London since 2018. This is the most prestige partner in their rooster, yet this is not mentioned in the application. The application focuses on highlighting these four specific institutions for international exchange. However, there is no clarifications why these particular institutions have been chosen as partners, other than as rather arbitrary choices, and in some cases these connections seem to be based on networks of singular faculty members. Within international relations, this is a fully understandable starting point for a collaboration, but in terms of a core framework for the application, it also bears a risk whether being sustainable, and whether these particular collaborations and exact institutions would be the most suitable partners for exchange within the master programme in question. It must be said though, that few and correct partner institutions can work well for active and fruitful international collaboration, if elaborated, developed and articulated well, but the application does not manage to communicate this.

Some of the challenges can be overcome by personalised assessment of individual candidates by the respective academic programme leader, both for the incoming and outgoing students, but it can also constitute structural challenges, if the chosen partners offer too restrictive alternatives to complement the study plan. Also, when the exchange network is very thin, it comprises a risk to fulfil in general all the intended exchange activities, especially if the offerings both for the incoming and outgoing students do not match their personal needs. This might thus also limit the individual students' abilities to practice international exchange during their studies within the proposed programme. This could thus lead to jeopardising the whole intention of the international student exchange. Some of the proposed partners also run different semester structure or plan, that does not match KUC (with Deakin especially). This can be overcome with special arrangements but might as well become practically impossible to organise as planned.

The study plan dedicates the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester for incoming student exchange activities, where the course offerings are provided in English or are bi-lingual. The same period is dedicated

for possible outgoing student exchange. Yet the practicalities for arranging the exchange possibilities on the proposed 3<sup>rd</sup> semester bears some complications. The suggested structure in the study plan would provide several elective courses during this period. The possibility for the incoming exchange students to choose from a variety of options can be seen as a positive model, allowing more diverse pathways and catering different needs. Yet the challenge comes with 'Master-project in Design 2', which will occupy the other half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester. This is an integrated part of the *Master-project* that runs throughout the two years of the proposed programme. Now, whether the indicated partner institutions operate on a similar or appropriate structure remains unknown. This might become a challenge for both incoming students, as to how to provide them meaningful and practical study opportunities during their stay, but also for outgoing students, as to how to secure their progression within their master-project continuum. The application states that this issue would be adjusted with individual cases, but it remains unclear how the intended learning outcomes would be safeguarded in such a case.

The institution is required to:

- describe how the content of the exchange programme is academically relevant
- describe how the student work with the Master-project while on student exchange

#### Assessment after the response from the institution to the initial report

In response to the committee's requirements KUC have made some clarifications regarding the model of student exchange. KUC write that the students consider the relevance of the partner institutions together with the supervisor. In their reply KUC does not offer any examples of courses, or similar structures with the partner institutions. From the formal exchange agreements it is clear that Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti in Italy has similar master programmes, and therefore is relevant. For the other partners it is still not entirely clear for the committee whether this is something KUC have examined in the process when naming the relevant partners. We expect that this is something that has been examined, and that the burden is not entirely on the students and supervisors alone, and that this is followed up on in the years to come, for all partners.

In the updated programme description for "masterprosjekt i design del 2" there is now a description of how students work with the master-project while on student exchange. They are encouraged to choose a partner institution based on the master-project theme. There will be regular gatherings available digitally, and the supervisor will help the students make a plan for the semester abroad. We see this as relevant to secure the progression of students abroad, and have them still stay connected to KUC while on exchange. There is no mention of a second supervisor abroad, but as stated in the reply, the exchange institution must be relevant for the students project. We understand that there must be some flexibility in how integrated the student is in the student environment and professional environment at the partner institution, but it is important that the students know what they can expect from the partner institution.

#### **Conclusion**

Yes, the requirements are fulfilled.

The institution is advised to:

- make it clearer to the students how the content of each exchange programme is academically relevant, and the practical arrangements are followed through



### 3.3.9 Supervised professional training

#### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-2 (9) Programmes that include supervised professional training must have formal agreements between the institution and the host for the supervised professional training.

#### **Assessment**

The application also includes professional training as an optional course (15 ECTS) on the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester. The course intends to provide the student with up-to-date knowledge of work practices and discourses within the specialised field, to build professional skills via extensive practical experience. Practice should take place in relevant professional environment. Yet the application has not provided any required agreements with such parties.

The students are further encouraged, if relevant, to bring the *Master-project* into the internship work to achieve synergies and new angles for their work. This sounds as a potentially interesting model. If so, how this would be co-ordinated between the two parallel courses remains unclear.

The institution is required to:

- enclose relevant agreements with partners, and describe why the partners are relevant for a master in design

#### Assessment after the response from the institution to the initial report

In their response KUC has decided not to include professional training as an optional course in the study programme. The study programme therefore does not longer need agreements for professional training, and the requirement is no longer relevant.

Supervised professional training can be an excellent way for students to gain experience, and in this regard, it is a positive element. However, it is very important that it is well academically integrated in the master programme, which are important aspects to consider if KUC in the future decides it is relevant to include in the programme.

#### **Conclusion**

The requirement is no longer relevant to be assessed.

### 3.3.10 The programme's defined limitations and academic breadth

#### Regulations on Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Section 3-2 (1) Master's degree programmes shall be defined, delimited and have sufficient academic breadth.

## Assessment

The applicant states that the master's program will be under Westerdal's institute for creativity, storytelling and design that offers bachelor's programs in several disciplines within design and related disciplines: art direction, graphic design, interior design, retail design and service design. The master program will offer two specializations: interior architecture and visual communication design.

The programme's common core content is well defined in a social and cultural context, «where they question on what design can and should be in future of society». Through the subject areas «Design and society», «Design research methods» and «The designer's position» students acquire a common academic understanding of what it means to be a designer in today's society» (p.3).

The common courses are based on artistic practice and research, the applicant also argues for how artistic research-based courses can contribute to research-based knowledge, competence, and practice-oriented learning for the candidates. The aim is to educate candidates who reflect critically on design professional practices, in their own work and larger contexts, and which can help define what design can and should be in the future society.

The committee finds the programme to be defined, delimited and to have sufficient academic breadth.

## Conclusion

Yes, the requirements are fulfilled.

## 3.4 Academic environment

### 3.4.1 The academic environment's composition, size and competence

#### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-3 (1) The academic environment for each programme must be of a size proportionate to the number of students and the programme's characteristics, be stable over time in terms of competence and have a composition that covers the programme's topics and subjects.

#### Regulations on Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Section 3-2 (2) Master's degree programmes shall have a broad, stable academic environment comprising a sufficient number of staff with high academic expertise in education, research or artistic research and academic development work within the field of study. The academic environment shall cover the subjects and courses that the study programme comprises. Staff members in the academic environment in question must have relevant expertise.

### Assessment

The application presents a broad, stable academic environment comprising a sufficient number of staff with sufficient academic expertise within the two specializations of the programme. It is a rich and diverse team whose intersecting and wide-ranging interest cover broad enough areas both for practice and theory. The proposed age range and gender diversity is seen as an advantage.

One concern might be that the expertise in artistic research, a key component in the programme, appears to be limited to few members of staff.

There is also a concern relate to the required tutoring, as the student intake is quite large compared to the associate professor level staff in the respective specializations. Also, very few of those with associate professor level competency seem to have previous experience in tutoring as well as teaching at the master's level. Within the proposal there is a considerable emphasis on feedback regarding individual projects (especially in relation to the role given to the *Master-project*). This might become a challenge within the faculty's work plans.

### Conclusion

Yes, the requirements are fulfilled.

The institution is advised to:

- increase tutoring capacity

## 3.4.2 The academic environment's educational competence

### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-3 (2) The academic environment must have relevant educational competence.

### Assessment

The academic staff presented in the application are a collective of able researchers in their individual fields, and the staff show good educational competency from within the perspective of and in specific relation to the programme's common core.

Educational competency is also intrinsically linked to research activities; especially with regards to research-grounded courses. The academic environment's research interests and profound publishing and prolific artistic results are highly admirable and relevant for the planned master programme.

Most the programme's academic staff have basic pedagogical competence.

It should be noted that it is positive that the academic staff attending the programme includes one individual who has recently been awarded the status of "Merittert underviser" (2020).

### Conclusion

Yes, the requirements are fulfilled.

### 3.4.3 Academic leadership

#### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-3 (3) The programme must have a clear academic leadership with defined responsibilities for quality assurance and the development of the study programme.

#### **Assessment**

The application describes the academic leadership model for the Master programme. The study programme leader will report directly to the dean of the department. Furthermore, the programme council includes several educators and scientists, as well as student representatives and representatives from the working life.

As described in Master programme application (p:30/31) the study programme leader will secure the quality of the programme. The study programme leader is responsible for programme quality, management quality, intake quality, teaching quality and framework quality throughout the study. The study programme leader will ensure programme quality by following up academic content, level, pedagogy and assessment methods in the programme, and ensure that students' learning outcomes are achieved. The study programme leader is also the student's academic contact point and evaluates and quality assures the study's overall learning outcomes and subject descriptions. The study programme leader monitors the quality of management by appointing course coordinators, involve them in order to coordinate the implementation of the study, as well as provide guidelines for those responsible for the course implementation.

The study programme leader contributes to intake quality through marketing of the study, follow up the relevance of the study program, have contact with society and business, as well as other educational institutions, both nationally and internationally. The study program leader also manages the responsibility for teaching quality by following up course evaluations, and framework quality by planning and staff the study programme, and through this has a defined responsibility for quality assurance.

The committee finds that the programme has clear academic leadership through the study programme leader.

#### **Conclusion**

Yes, the requirements are fulfilled.

### 3.4.4 Staff with primary employment

#### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-3 (4) At least 50 per cent of the academic full-time equivalents affiliated to the programme must be staff with their primary employment at the institution. Of these, academic staff with at least associate professor qualifications must be represented among those who teach the core elements of the programme. In addition, the following requirements apply to the academic environment's level of competence:

- a) For first-cycle programmes, at least 20 per cent of the members of the academic environment must have at least associate professor qualifications.

- b) For second-cycle programmes, at least 50 per cent of the members of the academic environment must have at least associate professor qualifications. Within this 50 per cent, at least 10 per cent must have professor or docent qualifications.**
- c) For third-cycle programmes, the academic environment must consist of academic staff with at least associate professor qualifications. At least 50 per cent must have professor qualifications.

### Assessment

The application shows that most of the academic full-time equivalents affiliated to the program are staff with their primary employment at the institution, and therefore fills the requirement. The committee consider the core elements of this master to be interior architecture and visual communication. Staff with at least associate professor competence is represented in both elements.

Of the 14 staff members which comprise the academic environment, eight (4/5,7 full time equivalents) hold at least an associate professor qualification. This fulfils the requirement. Of these 14 two (1,2/5,7) have professorial competence (one professor and one "dosent"). This corresponds to 21 % of the staff, but since there are only two with professor qualifications KUC should seek to improve this ratio.

### Conclusion

Yes, the requirements are fulfilled.

The institution is advised to:

- maintain or increase the number of professors to keep fulfilling the requirement

## 3.4.5 The academic environment's research and/or artistic research and academic development work

### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-3 (5) The academic environment must be actively engaged in research and academic development work and/or artistic research, and be able to demonstrate documented results with a satisfactory quality and scope in relation to the programme's content and level.

### Regulations on Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Section 3-2 (3) The academic environment must be able to demonstrate documented results at a high level, and results from collaborations with other academic environments, nationally and internationally. The institution's assessments shall be documented so that NOKUT can use them in its work.

### Assessment

The application defines the key research activities primarily as Artistic research and Artistic development work. These are then further on to be understood as practice-based

investigations that carry an integrated component of reflection. This type of practice-based or practice-led research is often based on an individual's own art or design work and have an extensive degree of subjective experiences as a vital component within them. Within the given academic framework, it is still stated that even if the Artistic development work uses the individual's practice as a starting point for the disciplinary knowledge production, these are to be disseminated, shared, and discussed in the broader institutional context. These definitions are well in-line with the common practices and comprehensions within the respective fields of study.

The proposed teaching and research faculty comprises of a broad set of professionals with a variety of competences. These variations are within the programme's common core. In Art & Design education institutions most faculties are engaged with the 'hands-on' practices. This is to be considered as a strength.

The listed inventory of works spans from three PhD dissertations to a prolific number of academic peer-reviewed articles in journals, to articles in magazines or newspapers, to exhibitions and artistic results.

There is no possibility to assess the quality and explicit content of these listed works. Yet, some of the inputs give the impression of being a substantial contribution within their subject areas. The demands specific to the content and level of the programme are fulfilled.

## Conclusion

Yes, the requirement is fulfilled.

### 3.4.6 The academic environment's external participation

#### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-3 (6) The academic environment for programmes that lead to a degree must actively participate in national and international partnerships and networks that are relevant for the programme.

## Assessment

The application states that KUC is a member of key international organisations within higher education in the arts. These include CUMULUS (International Association of Universities and Colleges in Art, Design and Media), ELIA (European League of Institutes of the Arts), SAR (Society for Artistic Research) and CIRBUS (Nordic-Baltic Network of Art and Design Education).

Beyond these formal agreements, the application has listed the various faculty members' connections and networks in their respective areas. These listings include different memberships in miscellaneous organisations, some more general and some more professionally specific. The KUC academic environment has a will to engage and has participation in national and international collaborations and networks. The academic environment actively participates in national and international collaborations and networks relevant for the programme.

## Conclusion

Yes, the requirement is fulfilled.

### 3.4.7 Supervision of professional training

#### Academic Supervision Regulations

Section 2-3 (7) For programmes involving mandatory supervised professional training, the members of the academic environment must have relevant and updated knowledge from the field of the professional training. The institution must ensure that professional training supervisors have relevant competence and experience in the field of the professional training.

## Assessment

Not relevant.

## 4 Conclusion

Based on the written application and the attached documentation, the expert committee concludes the following:

**The committee does recommend accreditation of Master in Design at Kristiania University College.**

In this report the committee has provided advice for the further development of this In this report the committee has provided advice for the further development of this educational provision. Please see the individual assessments and conclusions above.

## 5 Documentation

21/08427-1 HØYSKOLEN KRISTIANIA - ERNST G MORTENSENS STIFTELSE - Akkreditering av master i design

21/08427- 17 Tilsvar til utkast til rapport – akkreditering av master i design (120 studiepoeng) ved Høyskolen Kristiania



## Appendix

### ***Learning outcome of the programme***

#### **Kunnskap**

Kandidaten...

K1 har avansert kunnskap om metoder, strategier, teorier og prosesser som brukes innen kunstnerisk utviklingsarbeid og forskning, innen designfag generelt og særlig innenfor sin valgte spesialisering

K2 har inngående kunnskap om utvalgte teoretiske perspektiver som brukes innen kunstnerisk utviklingsarbeid og/eller forskning i og om design

K3 kan anvende designfaglig kunnskap for å utvikle en kritisk, undersøkende og eksperimenterende tilnærming til sin spesialisering

K4 kan kontekstualisere sin praksis og valgte spesialisering i lys av designfaglige roller og tradisjoner, samt den bredere samfunnsmessige og teknologiske utvikling

#### **Ferdigheter**

Kandidaten...

F1 kan analysere faglige, samfunnsmessige, etiske og andre problemstillinger, samt formulere faglige resonnementer om og igjennom designfaglig praksis i respons til disse

F2 kan anvende relevante kunst- og designfaglige teorier og metoder til å innhente, tolke og analysere informasjon, og som inkorporert del av selvstendig skapende praksis

F3 kan selvstendig velge og anvende relevante designfaglige metoder for forskning og kunstnerisk utviklingsarbeid

F4 kan gjennomføre et omfattende, selvstendig, kontekstuell relevant faglig arbeid på høyt nivå

#### **Generell kompetanse**

Kandidaten...

G1 kan analysere designfaglige, yrkesmessige, bærekraftrelaterte, samfunnsmessige og etiske problemstillinger

G2 kan anvende designfaglige teorier og tradisjoner, samt de håndverksmessige, uttrykksmessige, skapende og organisatoriske ferdighetene som trengs til å utføre et designprosjekt innen sin valgte spesialisering, individuelt eller i samarbeid med andre

G3 kan presentere resultater fra forskning og/eller kunstnerisk utviklingsarbeid, gjennom praktisk designarbeid og/eller skriftlig form, til spesialister innen sitt fagfelt, til allmennheten og til arbeidslivet

G4 kan reflektere over og diskutere designerens rolle og ansvar med spesialister innen sitt fagfelt og med allmennheten

G5 kan individuelt, eller i samarbeid med andre, utføre designprosjekter som er utforskende, nyskapende og/eller særegent i form, uttrykk, kontekst, metodikk og/eller tematikk

## ***The accreditation process***

NOKUT makes an administrative assessment to ensure that the application and documentation is suitable for external expert review. For applications that have been approved administratively, NOKUT appoints external experts for the evaluation of the application. The external experts have declared that they are legally competent to perform an independent evaluation, and carry out their assignment in accordance with the mandate for expert assessment passed by NOKUT's board, and in accordance with the requirements for educational quality as determined by the Academic Supervision Regulations and Regulations on Quality Assurance in Higher Education. The institution is given the opportunity to comment on the committee's composition.

NOKUT is responsible for the training and guidance of the experts during the entire process. Based on the documentation the expert committee writes their assessment. The expert committee conclude either with a yes or no, as to whether the quality of the educational provision complies with the requirements the Academic Supervision Regulations and Regulations on Quality Assurance in Higher Education. NOKUT also requests that the expert committee advise on further improvements of the programme. All criteria must be satisfactorily met before NOKUT accredits a programme.

If the expert committee recommends accreditation of the programme, the report is sent to the applicant institution, which is then given one week to comment on factual errors. If the committee do not recommend accreditation of the programme, the applicant institution is given three weeks to comment and make smaller adjustments to the programme. The committee receives the institutions comments and submits a revised assessment. The Director of Quality Assurance and Legal Affairs then reaches a final decision about accreditation.

## ***Presentation of the expert committee***

*The Academic Supervision regulations section 5-6 determine the expert committee requirements for accreditation of study programmes at the bachelor's and master's level.*

- **Professor Ashley Jane Booth, Universitetet i Bergen**

Professor Ashley Booth er engelsk statsborger, men har lang erfaring som grafisk designer i Norge. Booth har vært ansatt som grafisk designer, art director i A-magasinet, avdelingsleder for grafisk design i Lillehammer Olympic Organising Committee (LOOC) som utviklet den visuelle profilen for Lillehammer '94 og har drevet eget firma, Ashley Booth Design AS (ABD), fra 1994 til 2010. ABD spesialiserte seg på utvikling av identiteter, men også sikkerhetsdesign, informasjonsdesign og redaksjonell design. Ashley Booth ha vært Professor i Visuell Kommunikasjon ved Kunst- og design høyskolen i Bergen fra 2008 og Universitet i Bergen siden 2017. Booths designutviklingsarbeid har vært

fokusert på et samfunnsengasjement og hva det vil si å være en person med daglige utfordringer er sentrale temaer. I 2010 startet Booth et forsknings- og designutviklingsområde kalt Sosial Substans. Den er basert på sosiale, og deltakende designtekningen.

- **Professor Toni Kauppila, Kunsthøgskolen i Oslo**

Professor and architect Toni Kauppila is the Head of the Interior Architecture and Furniture Design programme at Oslo National Academy of the Arts in Norway. He also runs his research-based architectural practice ND. He has been teaching over 20 years in several international universities including at Aalto University in Helsinki and as a guest Professor at TAMA Art University in Tokyo. Kauppila's approach is to closely connect research, teaching, and practice into an ongoing laboratory for developing design processes for societal change. His key design values are to celebrate diversity and to embrace the encountering of otherness as ways of addressing the emergent challenges. The works span from strategical work, to large scale urban issues, to embodied experiences within the material praxis. He has founded research units 'School for Unforced Errors' for experimenting artistic pedagogical frameworks and 'New Practice' for exploring novel entrepreneurial modus operandi. His main research focus has been acknowledging ambiguity and uncertainties as inherent qualities both in design and pedagogy. Kauppila's work has been awarded internationally.

- **Masterstudent Signe Berg, NTNU**

Signe Berg har en bachelorgrad i Medievitenskap fra NTNU med fordypning innenfor religion, historie og filmvitenskap hos University of London. I dag studerer hun til en mastergrad innen Interaksjonsdesign hos NTNU og skriver masteroppgave om hvordan fremme inkluderende design for fremtidens eldre. Gjennom jobben hos NTNUstudent, NTNU sine rekrutterende sosiale mediekkanaler, har Berg i snart 5 år hjulpet fremtidige studenter med å vurdere og velge rett studie for seg. Som en del av denne jobben presenterte hun i 2019 for NTNU Karriere om studentenes arbeidsmuligheter og hvordan bachelorstudenter vurderer valg av masterprogram. I hennes jobb som UX-designer hos Altibox fikk hun praktisk erfaring med hvilke egenskaper og verktøy en designer bør ha med seg inn i dagens arbeidsliv.



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