
KEN


2023-2027

DOCTORAL SCHOOL

EDUCATION QUALITY REPORT

Szkoła doktorska

Akademia Muzyczna im. Feliksa Nowowiejskiego w Bydgoszczy



Name and seat of the doctoral school

Szkoła doktorska

Evaluation period

10/1/19–12/18/24

Name and seat of the entity that is responsible for running the doctoral school

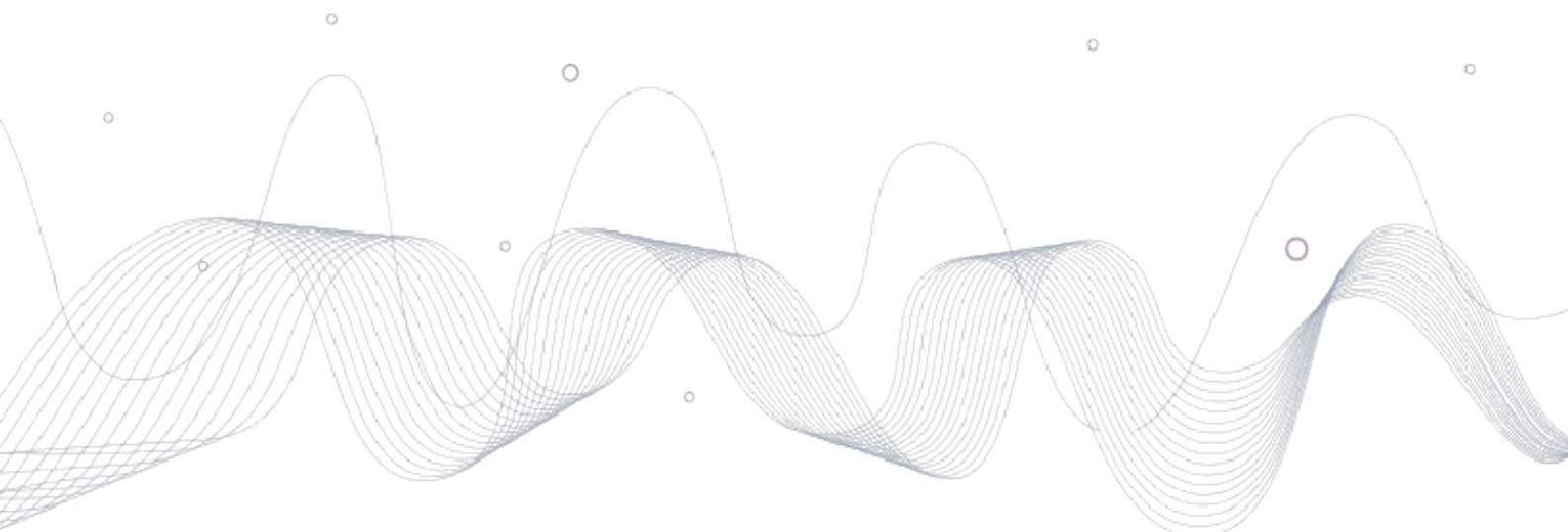
Akademia Muzyczna im. Feliksa Nowowiejskiego w Bydgoszczy

Entities that jointly run the doctoral school (when conducted jointly)

-

Date of report

3/12/25



Composition of the evaluation team:

Chairman:

Grzegorz Biegas

Secretary:

Ewa Grabowska-Lis

Team members:

Magdalena Blum

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE DOCTORAL SCHOOL

Name of doctoral school	Szkoła doktorska
Date of establishment	2019
Date of commencement of education at doctoral school	10/1/19
Entity cooperating in the conduct of education (this does not refer to entities co-founding a doctoral school)	-
Domains of study	The arts (from: 01-01-2018)
Discipline(s) of science or art in which training is provided	music (from: 01-01-2018)
Name/scope of the education programme	Theory of Music Conducting Instrumental studies Jazz and Stage Music Vocal studies Composition Sound Engineering
Number of instructors	25
Number of doctoral students undergoing training at the doctoral school (as of 3/12/25)	11
Number of supervisors in terms of guidance in preparing doctoral dissertations (as of 3/12/25)	14
Number of auxiliary supervisors in terms of guidance in preparing doctoral dissertations (as of 3/12/25)	3

II. INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION AND ITS COURSE

The site visit took place on 9 May 2025 with the participation of all members of the evaluation team. The schedule of the visit had been previously communicated to the authorities of the Doctoral School and the Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz. The programme of the visit proceeded as follows:

10:00 Meeting with the Rector, Vice-Rector, and the Director of the Doctoral School of the Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz, concerning the detailed schedule of the visit and a multimedia presentation on the Doctoral School delivered by its Director.

10:30 Meeting with the team responsible for preparing the self-evaluation report and the administration of the Doctoral School.

Review of documentation submitted by the Doctoral School.

Discussion of individual evaluation criteria and a Q&A session concerning the Self-Evaluation Report.

Interviews with persons responsible for preparing specific sections of the report.

Discussions with administrative staff regarding archiving and compliance of documentation.

Collection of missing information related to individual criteria.

Review of submitted documentation, including:

Individual Research Plan form and sample Individual Research Plans;

Certificates confirming learning outcomes achieved for qualifications at PQF level 8;

Reports of the Quality Assurance Committee;

The system for evaluating doctoral supervisors;

Results of the mid-term evaluation;

Reports of the Director of the Doctoral School;

Documents confirming the number of defended doctoral dissertations.

12:00 Meeting with academic teachers conducting classes at the Doctoral School and doctoral supervisors.

Discussion with the academic staff regarding their work with doctoral students, teaching hours, implementation of the curriculum, and the artistic development of doctoral students. Eight academic teachers participated in the meeting, held in hybrid form (on-site and online).

13:15 Meeting with doctoral students and the Doctoral Student Council. The meeting was attended by five doctoral students and a representative of the Polish National Association of Doctoral Candidates (KRD), in a hybrid format.

14:00 Summary meeting between the KEN evaluation team and the team that prepared the self-evaluation report.

Q&A session regarding the submitted documentation.

14:30 Final meeting with the authorities of the Doctoral School of the Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz.

Summary of the evaluation process;

Presentation of the next stages and the timeline of the evaluation procedure.

Conclusion of the site visit

The authorities of the Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz ensured optimal conditions for the evaluation team, enabling the proper and effective conduct of the visit. The

evaluation team wishes to emphasise the excellent organisation of the entire day, the full readiness and openness of all individuals involved in the visit. The meetings took place in a cordial atmosphere conducive to the reliable exchange of information and constructive dialogue. The engagement and openness of the Academy's and Doctoral School's authorities are especially noteworthy.

III. COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE ENTITY AND THE DOCTORAL STUDENT SELF-GOVERNMENT

The Directorate maintains contact with the Doctoral Student Council through formal consultations, email correspondence, and telephone communication. Direct communication, as stipulated in the Doctoral School Regulations, is viewed positively by both the Directorate and the doctoral students. However, there are no systemic mechanisms in place to ensure the continuity and transparency of this relationship in the event of personnel changes.

A member of the council was actively involved in the activities of the Polish National Association of Doctoral Candidates (KRD), which was positively received by the Director of the Doctoral School, who took part in a meeting organised for doctoral students with the participation of KRD representatives.

According to the documentation (minutes of meetings between the council and the Directorate, council reports from 2020–2023, and formal opinions), the Doctoral Student Council actively participated in the adoption of its own regulations and the curriculum, having received seven requests for opinion – all of which were reviewed positively. The requirement to consult the council when determining the curriculum is included in the Regulations.

The council has representatives in the Senate, the Quality Assurance Committee, the Anti-Mobbing Committee, the Library Council, and the Disciplinary Committee. During the pandemic, doctoral students completed their coursework in accordance with the curriculum and evaluated it positively. At the request of the Directorate, the Academy's library resources are made available during the summer period.

The Doctoral Student Council does not have its own infrastructure, but no such need has been reported – meetings are held online, which suits the nature of the educational process. The council has no financial resources to support its operations. Doctoral students usually participate in conferences at their own expense and also cover, from their personal budgets, the costs related to the production of artistic works, including remuneration for performers. They positively assess their access to the Academy's infrastructure, including rehearsal rooms and instruments. Doctoral students also have access to student housing and psychological support services.

IV. INFORMATION ON THE DOCTORAL SCHOOL TO WHICH THE STATUTORY CRITERIA APPLY

- **The adequacy of the education programmes and individual research plans with respect to the learning outcomes for qualifications at level 8 of the PQF and their implementation:**

The set of learning outcomes for the curriculum at the Doctoral School of the Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz was developed on the basis of the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 14 November 2018 on the second-degree characteristics of learning outcomes for qualifications at levels 6–8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework.

The analysis of the list of learning outcomes revealed the following inconsistencies and omissions that require correction:

Learning outcome K_W03: "Demonstrates advanced knowledge of a foreign language..." has been incorrectly assigned to the *Knowledge* category. In accordance with PQF level 8 standards, it should be reassigned to the *Skills* category.

The following learning outcomes are missing: P8S_WG, P8S_WK, P8S_UW, P8S_UK.

It is also essential to apply terminology consistent with the PQF descriptors (i.e. "knows and understands" / "is able to" / "is ready to").

The inclusion of the legal basis (Journal of Laws, item 2218) could be considered.

The learning outcomes matrix is clearly structured. However, the curriculum itself requires revision in terms of readability, as its interpretation is not intuitive. Following clarification, it was determined that the proposed solutions appear to meet the intended educational goals. Concerns were raised about the limited number of teaching hours allocated to the course "Discipline-specific seminar", especially in light of the learning outcomes expected to be achieved through it. These concerns were confirmed in discussions with stakeholders. It is recommended to consider increasing the number of hours for this course in order to avoid situations where academic staff deliver it on a voluntary basis.

In accordance with Article 200(3) of the Act on Higher Education and Science, the institution offering the Doctoral School is obliged to publish the curriculum no later than five months before the start of recruitment. This condition was not always fulfilled (in 2023, the curriculum was approved by the Senate of AMFN on 30 May 2023).

The Individual Research Plan is properly constructed and adequately reflects the scientific and artistic activities of doctoral students, as well as the methods of disseminating their outcomes. It would be advisable to publish a template of this document on the Doctoral School's website and in the Public Information Bulletin (BIP), in order to comply with the principle of accessibility.

- **The method of assessing the learning outcomes for qualifications at level 8 of the PQF:**
The method of verifying learning outcomes complies with the requirements for qualifications at PQF level 8. It includes the curriculum, the Individual Research Plan, as well as mid-term and final evaluations. The report describes various forms of learning outcome verification, such as: course credits, oral examinations, colloquia, evaluation of artistic and scholarly presentations, and annual reports submitted by doctoral students. The verification process involves, among others: supervisors, academic teachers, faculty deans, the Director of the Doctoral School, and the doctoral students themselves through a self-assessment mechanism.
In the absence of a survey system, self-assessment remains the only tool for submitting feedback on the quality of the educational process. Oversight is exercised by the University Committee for Quality Assurance in Education, the Council for Academic Excellence, and the Director of the Doctoral School. The principles for verifying learning outcomes are described in numerous documents (Doctoral School Regulations, study plan, grading policies). However, their dispersion may significantly hinder orientation and constitute a barrier to doctoral students' access to essential information.
Therefore, it seems justified to prepare a separate document that would comprehensively present the process of verifying learning outcomes and its individual stages within the curriculum. It would also be advisable to develop a template for a course syllabus – a document that currently does not exist – which would reflect the specific subject matter of doctoral dissertations and include learning outcomes, programme content, methods, and forms of verification. Providing this information solely in oral form does not guarantee its clarity or full accessibility.
The publication of relevant information on the website of the Doctoral School and in the Public Information Bulletin is essential to ensure transparency of the educational process. Another important step will be the establishment of a Quality Assurance Committee dedicated specifically to the Doctoral School, which should support the creation and refinement of principles governing the educational process at this level.

- **Qualification of academic teachers and academic staff employed at the doctoral school:**
The academic teachers involved in education at the Doctoral School of the Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz constitute a professorial body of the highest qualifications. The profiles of selected Masters presented in the self-evaluation report inspire recognition and respect. The teaching staff includes some of the most distinguished representatives of the discipline of musical arts, including:
Prof. Hanna Kulenty, Prof. Katarzyna Popowa-Zydroń, Prof. Anna Nowak, Prof. Agata Zubel, Prof. Piotr Reichert, Prof. Dariusz Łukasiewicz, and Assoc. Prof. Radosław Sajna-Kunowski. These are eminent academics, artists, lecturers, and authors of scholarly publications. The selection of teaching staff – including individuals not employed at AMFN – is guided by the objective of appointing specialists in the specific research topics pursued by doctoral students in their dissertations, as well as experts from outside the field of the arts (e.g. Logic, Media Studies), in order to engage individuals with the highest level of expertise. The qualifications and competencies of the academic staff are appropriately analysed and monitored. The Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz has implemented a proprietary electronic system, *Moje Osiągnięcia* ("My Achievements"), which monitors the artistic and research activity of employees. The institution also plans to establish a dedicated Quality Assurance Committee for the Doctoral School, which would further enhance the process of verifying and selecting the best possible specialists to educate young researchers at the Bydgoszcz Academy. An alternative solution could involve strengthening the existing body – the University Committee for Quality Assurance in Education – one of whose statutory aims is to ensure high-quality doctoral education (Statute of AMFN in Bydgoszcz, §35a, point 1 and 2). The academic staff of the Doctoral School actively participate in concerts and scholarly sessions involving doctoral students, and they monitor the artistic and academic activities of their mentees, which attests to their commitment to the educational process and to tracking its outcomes.

- **The quality of the admission process:**

The recruitment process complies with the provisions of the Regulations of the Doctoral School of the Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz. Each version of the Regulations defines the requirement for a positive opinion on the "Terms and Conditions of Recruitment" issued by the University Council for Academic Excellence prior to submission of the document for approval by the Senate of the Academy. However, the internal legal acts available in the Public Information Bulletin (BIP) on the AMFN website are not organised in a fully clear manner.

According to Article 200 of the Act of 20 July 2018 – Law on Higher Education and Science, the Terms and Conditions of Recruitment to the Doctoral School should be determined and published no later than five months before the recruitment process begins. This requirement has not always been met. The University website did not provide English-language versions of the "Terms and Conditions of Recruitment to the Doctoral School" or the curriculum.

Publishing these documents would certainly facilitate access for potential international applicants, as no foreign nationals have been admitted to the Doctoral School to date.

It is worth noting that the Academy's website is accessible to people with visual impairments, and the Terms and Conditions of Recruitment specify communication methods tailored to candidates with officially recognised disabilities. The recruitment process is reviewed, improved, and adapted annually to meet candidates' needs – which is particularly valuable, as the system created at the Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz does not exclude potential applicants with disabilities.

There is, however, an inconsistency between the 2024 Terms and Conditions of Recruitment and the 2024 Regulations of the Doctoral School regarding who is responsible for publishing the recruitment terms – in one instance it is the Head of the Recruitment Office (Terms and Conditions 2024, §3, point 2, subsection 3), while in another it is the Director of the Doctoral School (Doctoral School Regulations 2024, §6, point 12).

The system for appointing members of the Recruitment and Examination Committees for the first and second stages of the procedure raises no concerns. The candidate assessment process is transparent, non-discriminatory, fully open, and reliably verifies applicants' skills and aptitudes.

However, the change introduced in 2023 to equalise the weighting of the first stage of the entrance examination with that of the second stage raises questions. This approach may prove disadvantageous for candidates applying to "performance-oriented" programmes.

- **The quality of scientific or artistic guidance, and support in research:**

Based on the available information, it can be unequivocally stated that the quality of artistic and academic supervision provided at the Doctoral School is very high. Particular attention should be paid to the academic and artistic calibre of the staff – supervisors and auxiliary supervisors are among the most distinguished representatives of the discipline of musical arts. They possess a recognised artistic output, publish scholarly works, lead masterclasses, release recordings and original compositions, and are actively engaged in supporting the development of young artists.

The supervisor selection process is characterised by transparency and the inclusion of doctoral students' input. This participatory approach allows for the appointment of a supervisor who best meets the candidate's academic and artistic needs. The effectiveness of this system is confirmed by the near-total absence of cases where doctoral students resign from supervisory arrangements.

The scope of academic and artistic supervision is comprehensive and includes not only support in designing and implementing individual research plans, but also ongoing monitoring of progress in the preparation of the doctoral dissertation, as well as assistance in scientific, artistic, and organisational activities. The outcomes of this cooperation include numerous successes of doctoral candidates – from highly rated dissertations and active participation in conferences and publications, to prestigious competition awards and intensive concert activity on an international scale.

Particular recognition is also due to the broad support for the development of social competences. Doctoral students engage in interdisciplinary projects, hold positions in national organisations, and initiate their own academic and media undertakings. Such an approach supports the comprehensive formation of the young scholar and artist.

An additional asset of the Doctoral School is its concern for the working conditions of doctoral students, including the adaptation of its offer to the needs of persons with disabilities and those who are parents. The forthcoming programme “The Master and the Apprentice” is intended to support the mutual relationship and personal development of doctoral candidates.

- **The reliability of the midterm evaluation:**

Based on the analysis of the documentation, it must be concluded that the system of conducting the mid-term evaluation complies with legal regulations and good academic practices. The evaluation process has received positive opinions from the University Council for Academic Excellence and the Doctoral Student Council. It is carried out within the timeframes specified in the regulations, with the participation of a committee composed of members with appropriate qualifications, including the obligatory involvement of an external member.

The plans for further development of the system are to be assessed positively, particularly the introduction of discussion panels and the establishment of a Quality Assurance Committee. The analysis of the procedure confirms a high degree of formal organisation, while also revealing specific areas in need of improvement, which are significant in terms of doctoral candidates' rights, institutional transparency, and full access to information.

The evaluation is based on precisely defined criteria, including the implementation of the Individual Research Plan (IRP). Although the report indicates that a standard IRP form is in use, this document is not publicly available. It is recommended that it be made accessible on the Doctoral School's website. Similarly, the evaluation results, currently placed in a poorly navigable section of the Public Information Bulletin (BIP), should be published in a separate and easily accessible section.

It is also advisable to expand the Regulations for the mid-term evaluation to include provisions on the voting procedure (e.g. open/secret ballot), extraordinary situations (e.g. absence of a committee member or the doctoral student), accommodations for persons with disabilities, and the detailed appeal procedure. Regulating these issues would contribute to greater transparency and inclusiveness of the entire process.

The analysis of the documentation presented during the site visit shows that the justification of the mid-term evaluation results focuses mainly on the substantive value of the doctoral candidates' activities. It is recommended that the evaluation be more explicitly linked to the implementation of the IRP, particularly with regard to the timeliness and quality of tasks carried out according to the dissertation preparation schedule.

- **Internationalisation:**

Internationalisation at the Doctoral School is implemented through the composition and activities of the academic staff, the curriculum, and the academic and artistic activity of doctoral students. Among the academic teachers are individuals who are not Polish citizens, including one faculty member who is also employed at a foreign university. The staff is actively engaged in the international academic and artistic community – they undertake artistic activities, publish in foreign languages, review English-language articles, organise international events, are members of foreign academic societies, serve as supervisors for international doctoral candidates, act as jurors in prestigious international music competitions and festivals, and teach masterclasses abroad.

The curriculum includes a compulsory English language course and monographic lectures that require doctoral students to participate in international conferences and masterclasses. The obligation to engage in academic activity also stems from the format of the Individual Research Plan. In their doctoral dissertations, candidates refer to international artistic output, collaborate with foreign artists, contextualise Polish art in the global perspective, and participate in international:

academic conferences (4 individuals),

courses and festivals held abroad and in Poland (8 individuals),

concerts organised in collaboration with foreign artists/ensembles/orchestras (9 individuals),

masterclasses/workshops, including those led by foreign artists, held both in Poland and abroad (5 individuals).

Some doctoral students have recorded albums for foreign labels, conducted music workshops abroad, co-organised international conferences, and participated in the Erasmus+ programme. Despite the declared openness to international candidates, the Doctoral School has so far educated only Polish doctoral students. The requirement of proficiency in the Polish language constitutes a significant barrier to accessibility. There is also a lack of structured solutions to support doctoral student mobility.

- **The effectiveness of the doctoral education:**

The analysis of this criterion was hindered due to inconsistencies concerning the number of doctoral students, graduates, and awarded doctoral degrees. During the site visit, accurate data were presented, and it was clarified that the discrepancies resulted from compatibility issues between the POL-on system and the internal USOS system. Thus far, six individuals have completed their education at the Doctoral School, of whom three obtained the doctoral degree and were subsequently employed at the Academy. In this way, the School has fulfilled the procedure for monitoring the professional careers of its graduates.

Among the six graduates, one completed the programme on time, one ahead of schedule, and four within the statutorily extended period, due to illness or other circumstances beyond the doctoral candidate's control. In all cases, appropriate support was provided.

Doctoral students conduct research at the highest academic and artistic level. In the "Description of achievements" section, the accomplishments of three graduates and one current doctoral student were presented, highlighting the high scholarly standard of their doctoral dissertations, their relevance to the development of the artistic discipline, academic activity confirmed by publications and participation in conferences, success in national and international competitions, as well as an intense concert activity recognised internationally.

The Doctoral School does not have a formal internal system for evaluating the quality of education, the performance of supervisors, or academic staff. Doctoral students may submit their comments and suggestions directly to the School's Directorate, which is positively received by both parties; however, without the implementation of anonymous surveys, such a model does not constitute an objective and repeatable mechanism for collecting feedback.

V. FINAL OPINION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Final Assessment: Positive

The team does not request an earlier scheduling of the next evaluation.

The Doctoral School of the Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz carries out its educational, artistic, and scholarly activities in a reliable and highly committed manner. Based on the conducted visitation and analysis of documentation, it is evident that the School ensures high-quality education appropriate to Level 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework (PQF).

Particularly positive aspects include:

the high substantive and artistic level of the teaching staff, consisting of renowned representatives of the field of musical arts, including artists and educators of national and international standing;
comprehensive supervisory support, enabling the individualization of doctoral students' research and artistic pathways;
active participation of doctoral students in academic and artistic communities, including on an international scale;
the high quality of doctoral dissertations and their significance for the development of the artistic discipline;
support for the social and professional development of doctoral students.

Recommendations

In order to further enhance the quality of education, it is recommended to:

Provide financial support to the Doctoral Student Council to facilitate its operations;

Introduce regulations allowing the Doctoral Student Council to issue opinions in the procedure for appointing the Director of the Doctoral School;

Adapt the description of learning outcomes to Level 8 PQF standards:

Apply consistent and legally compliant nomenclature, in accordance with the standard PQF formulations ("knows and understands" / "can" / "is ready to");

Increase the number of teaching hours for the specialized seminar to ensure adequate didactic support, prevent volunteer-based work, and achieve the intended learning outcomes;

Revise the Study Programme to improve clarity;

Harmonize documentation and improve its accessibility:

Provide document templates (e.g. Individual Research Plan, course syllabus), and relocate key information (e.g. interim evaluation results) to intuitive locations on the website and in the Public

Information Bulletin (BIP);

Establish a Quality Assurance Team dedicated to the Doctoral School or extend the competencies of the existing university commission to include doctoral education;

Implement formalized and anonymous internal evaluation tools to systematically collect feedback from doctoral students on the quality of education and supervisory work;

Define and publish the Doctoral School's Admission Conditions and Procedures as well as the Education Programme no later than 5 months before the recruitment process;

Clarify regulations and procedures for interim evaluations, particularly in relation to:
the voting process,
extraordinary situations (e.g. absence of a commission member),
appeal procedures and accommodations for individuals with special needs.

Internationalization development:

Increase accessibility of education for international students (e.g. introduction of English-language documents, an English version of the website, consideration of offering courses in English);

Introduce mechanisms supporting international mobility of doctoral students (e.g. grants, individual study paths).

VI. ASSESSMENT AND REASON

Final assessment
positive

Reason:

After reviewing the self-evaluation report and conducting the site visit, the evaluation team concluded that the Doctoral School of the Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz provides education for doctoral students in the discipline of musical arts at the highest scientific and artistic level. Confirmation of the high quality of education is the fact that three (out of six) graduates have obtained the doctoral degree. Its strengths significantly outweigh the observed formal shortcomings, which can be addressed within a relatively short timeframe. The implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations will contribute to the further improvement of the quality, transparency, and accessibility of the educational process, thereby strengthening the position of the Doctoral School both nationally and internationally. All criteria subject to evaluation were assessed positively.

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