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2023-2027

DOCTORAL SCHOOL

EDUCATION QUALITY REPORT

Szkoła Doktorska

Akademia Sztuk Pięknych im. Jana Matejki w Krakowie

Name and seat of the doctoral school

Szkoła Doktorska

Evaluation period

10/1/19–5/11/25

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

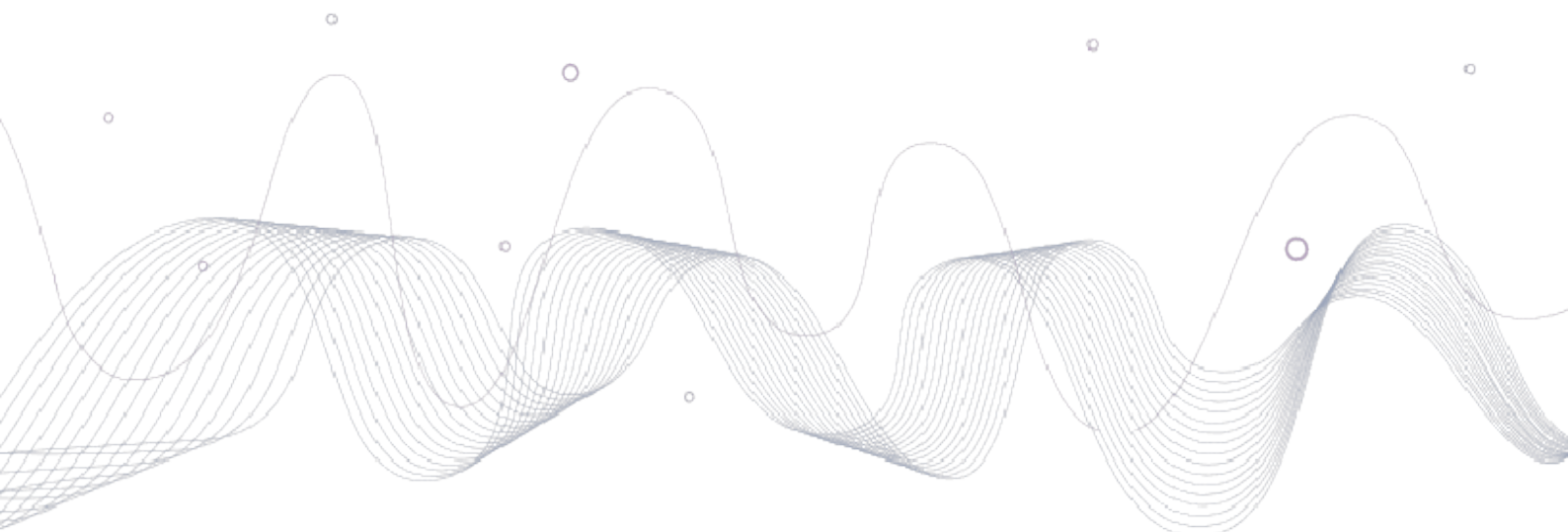
Akademia Sztuk Pięknych im. Jana Matejki w Krakowie

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

-

Date of report

7/22/25



Composition of the evaluation team:

Chairman:

Bartosz Frączek

Secretary:

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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	fine arts and art conservation (from: 01-01-2018)
Name/scope of the education programme	designe arts fine arts conservation and restoration of works of art Doctoral School
Number of instructors	45
Number of doctoral students undergoing training at the doctoral school (as of 5/12/25)	39
Number of supervisors in terms of guidance in preparing doctoral dissertations (as of 5/12/25)	23
Number of auxiliary supervisors in terms of guidance in preparing doctoral dissertations (as of 5/12/25)	8

II. INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION AND ITS COURSE

On November 27, 2025, from 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM, a visitation was conducted at the Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts Doctoral School in Krakow, focusing on doctoral education within the discipline of fine arts and art conservation. The visitation, carried out in accordance with a previously established schedule, took place in premises provided by the evaluated unit.

The procedure was initiated by a meeting between the evaluation team and the Rector's College along with the authorities of the Doctoral School. During this meeting, a detailed action plan was presented, and the strategic role of the discipline in the context of the institution's objectives was discussed. The commission deemed this meeting exceptionally significant, substantively rich, and instrumental in structuring knowledge about the school's operations. The subsequent stage involved a session with the team responsible for preparing the self-assessment report and the school's administration, including individuals preparing specific criteria of the report. The discussion covered key aspects such as the adequacy of the educational program and individual research plans in relation to Level 8 learning outcomes of the Polish Qualifications Framework, methods for verifying these outcomes, the qualifications of the teaching staff, the quality of the recruitment process, the system of scientific supervision and support, the conduct of mid-term evaluations, internationalization policy, and the overall effectiveness of education. This interaction enabled the evaluation team to gain a comprehensive perspective on the structure and mechanisms of doctoral candidate education.

Next, consultations were held with the teaching staff, research supervisors, and representatives of the Scientific Discipline Council, aiming to gather opinions on the school's functioning from the perspective of those directly involved in the teaching and research process. Concurrently, an analysis of randomly selected documentation was performed, encompassing individual research plans and mid-term evaluation protocols, which allowed for practical verification of the adopted procedures. A subsequent session featured a meeting with doctoral candidates and representatives of the student government, dedicated to assessing the quality of education, the school's functionality, and cooperation with the university authorities. Attendance at all meetings was satisfactory. The visitation process concluded with an internal debriefing meeting of the evaluation team and a final meeting with the authorities of the Doctoral School, during which the next stages of the evaluation procedure were discussed.

The Doctoral School ensured full access to the required documentation, and meeting participants provided exhaustive answers to the commission's questions. As part of the on-site verification, the team reviewed a broad spectrum of materials, including individual research plans, mid-term evaluation protocols, recruitment documentation, evidence of internationalization, confirmations of infrastructure availability, and information regarding staff selection. This enabled the evaluation team to gather comprehensive information, allowing for a reliable assessment of all key criteria. These criteria include: the adequacy of the educational program and research plans to Level 8 PRK learning outcomes and their implementation, methods for verifying the aforementioned outcomes, the qualifications of academic teachers, the quality of the recruitment process, the level of scientific supervision and support, the reliability of mid-term evaluations, the degree of internationalization, the effectiveness of education, and the quality of cooperation with the doctoral student government. The descriptions

prepared by the School for the assessment of these criteria were complete and thorough. Following the conducted analysis, all specified criteria were assessed positively by the evaluation team, with no significant deficiencies or shortcomings noted. Any suggestions aimed at the further development of the unit have been formulated in a separate section. Overall, the activities of the Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts Doctoral School in Krakow merit a positive evaluation, offering doctoral candidates solid organizational and substantive support, and operating in compliance with prevailing formal and academic standards.

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

The Doctoral School of the Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków has developed an institutional, systemic model for engaging doctoral candidates in the life and governance of the unit, which serves as an example of good practice in democratizing the academic environment and dialogue-based management. The foundation of this model is a close, institutionally embedded collaboration with the Doctoral Students' Council, which extends beyond formal obligations, transforming into an effective instrument for enhancing the quality of education and strengthening the academic community.

A key aspect is the full, active representation of doctoral candidates in all key decision-making bodies of the university. The presence of representatives of the doctoral community in the ASP Senate, the Doctoral School Council, the Recruitment Committee, Committees on Study Structure and Curriculum, Statute and Programs, as well as in disciplinary committees, ensures a continuous flow of information and enables direct influence on shaping scientific, teaching, and organizational policies. This multi-faceted participation guarantees that the voice of doctoral candidates is heard and considered at every stage of decision-making processes.

Dialogue mechanisms are complemented by cyclical meetings for information exchange and consultations in key areas, such as the curriculum, learning outcomes, teaching staff, and regulations. The procedure for the Council's review of key documents related to the teaching process is not only formal but also substantively effective. Proof of the real effectiveness of this mechanism is the allocation of additional teaching hours in copyright law as a direct response to a formal request from the Council. This fact clearly indicates that submitted comments and proposals are analyzed and, when substantively justified, successively implemented, which builds trust and a sense of agency among doctoral candidates.

The relationship between the School's Directorate and the Doctoral Students' Council is characterized by openness and engagement, translating into a high level of cooperation. This culture of dialogue is also reflected in the constructive approach to resolving occasional difficulties related to the implementation of Individual Research Plans (IRPs), where the school's administration offers support. Furthermore, the school actively supports the development of doctoral candidates through collaboration with external institutions, enabling the realization of IRP objectives within the broader context of the artistic-research environment. The creative and research activities of doctoral candidates are recognized and valued by the school's authorities, which motivates the community. Incidental conflict situations are resolved through mediation, further confirming the maturity of the adopted communication model based on consensus-building. The positive climate of cooperation is confirmed by the proactive attitude of the doctoral candidates themselves, who willingly engage in joint initiatives, thereby emphasizing the quality of teaching and support activities.

Despite these numerous strengths, a significant systemic gap has been identified within the school's internal evaluation structure. There is no formalized, cyclical mechanism for evaluating courses by their direct participants—the doctoral candidates. Introducing such a tool (in the form of surveys, regular discussion forums, or evaluation panels) would constitute an essential complement to the existing participation system. It would allow for systematic, anonymous, and data-based feedback on the quality of individual courses, teaching methods, and collaboration

with lecturers.

In summary, the Doctoral School of the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków presents a governance model based on deep, institutional participation of doctoral candidates, which effectively serves to enhance the quality of education, strengthen the role of doctoral candidates in the academic community, and build transparent, trust-based relationships.

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:**

Level 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework represents the highest tier in the hierarchy of academic competences. It is defined by the possession of advanced and critically grounded specialist knowledge, full mastery of complex research skills, and highly developed social competencies. An individual attaining this level demonstrates a comprehensive capacity for entirely independent, autonomous design, initiation, and conduct of original scholarly and artistic work aimed at generating new cognitive value.

The learning outcomes appropriate at level 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework are achieved by completing classes within the curriculum and Individual Research Plans (IPB), formulated in accordance with the requirements under the Law on Higher Education and Science (art. 201, section 3). According to the regulations of The Doctoral School of the Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków, study programs are established by the Senate at the request of the Director. The draft and any amendments thereto are developed by the School Board, and consultation with the Doctoral Student Self-Government is required. The curriculum provides for education over 6 semesters. Classes are distributed more frequently throughout the first 4 semesters, with the last 2 devoted to completing the IPB and preparing the dissertation. The entire teaching cycle is 532 hours. Subjects are divided into three modules: theoretical (112 h), practical (338 h), and doctoral seminars (82 h). 288 h are obligatory and 244 are facultative. Module 1 contains monographic lectures and faculty courses covering a broad range of philosophy, aesthetics, art theory and history, etc. Module 2 contains 158 h with issues related to modern communication methods, research methodology, copyright law, etc., and 180 h of practice. Module 3 consists of doctoral seminars, as well as the students own work (unspecified in teaching hours). During the visit, the Committee noted the small number of seminar hours. Despite this situation, all participants considered this arrangement sufficient, simultaneously emphasizing the possibility of ongoing, unregulated contact with promotors. Everyone realized that the necessary increase in the number of hours might be difficult to achieve due to financial constraints. Concerns were expressed that the change in regulations would result in underfunding of the SD and therefore its uncertain future. The low rates for teaching hours were also noted. Despite these difficulties, this educational plan provides the conditions for achieving the learning outcomes appropriate for 8 level of PRK. They incorporate knowledge, skills, and social competencies and are appropriately formulated for the discipline. They are specific and measurable, assigned to specific modules and/or subjects, and tailored to the educational goals and methods of their assessment.

The curriculum and timetable have been modified over the years. It appears that there is ongoing substantive discussion among all entities within the SD program, and importantly, the voice of doctoral students is often taken into account. Extending doctoral studies beyond the 6-semester program requires consideration. At the SD, decisions in this regard are made on an individual basis, taking into account the specific, personal circumstances. Generally, this is unfavorable (as students will be aware), extending the study period for some may result in a reduction in the next recruiting for the PhD program. The regulations of the of the ASP, precisely define the content and principles of the Individual Research Plan. The IPB is prepared by the doctoral student in consultation with their supervisor, and optionally with an assistant supervisor. The form contains all these elements and complies with the requirements of the Act (Article 202 of the PSWiN). The selected IPBs made available for review during the Committee's visit confirmed the correctness of their design, validity, and completeness of these documents.

The doctoral student submits the IPB to the School Board within 3 months of the appointment of the supervisor. The Council may issue recommendations to improve the project. The student, with the supervisor's consent, may also submit a revision of the IPB. Changes are always subject to a vote by the Council. The selected IPBs analyzed during the visit met the required criteria and were of high quality. Appropriate procedures were followed, both substantively and organizationally.

In view of the above information, criterion 1 has been satisfied.

- **The method of assessing the learning outcomes for qualifications at level 8 of the PQF:**
In the context of ensuring the highest standards of educational quality at the doctoral school level, a precisely defined and appropriately implemented process for verifying achieved learning outcomes, corresponding to qualifications at level 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework, is an aspect of utmost importance. A detailed description of the procedures adopted in this regard is contained in section 4.2 of the relevant unit's Self-Assessment Report. The Doctoral School of the Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow implements and continuously refines a multifaceted, integrated assessment system, whose fundamental premise is the comprehensive and multidimensional measurement of doctoral candidates' progress. This system purposefully and complementarily combines two key evaluative modules. The first encompasses standard formal verification, conducted through course credits and examinations within the mandatory curriculum. The second, parallel and equally significant module, focuses on the systematic, critical evaluation of the development of the research pathway and the progress in creating the individual doctoral candidate's scholarly work. Such a dual structure of the verification system enables a holistic perspective on the competencies of an individual aspiring to the doctoral degree, assessing both the mastery of advanced theoretical and methodological knowledge and the practical skills of its creative application in independent scholarly activity.

The learning outcomes are consistent with the requirements of level 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework and cover three complementary areas: knowledge, skills, and social competences. They have been developed taking into account the specific nature of the discipline in the field of arts education and divided into three modules.

Module 1 is an analysis of contemporary visual culture, philosophy of culture, aesthetics, and art theory. The methods of verifying learning outcomes in this module are varied and appropriate to the content of the classes; in addition to written work, they allow for the use of design skills (website, presentation).

Module 2 is devoted to research practice, cooperation with institutions, the methodology of scientific texts, and arts education. The varied methods of verifying learning outcomes in this module are appropriate to the content; the methodology of theoretical texts prepares students to write a description of an artistic work in accordance with the criteria of scientific style, which is the final form of verification. Verification based on observation is justified in the case of acquiring teamwork skills (preparation of a curatorial project) and conducting discussions. Module 3: consists of major seminars, doctoral seminars, and independent artistic and research work. Verification is based on reports on the implementation of the Individual Research Plan. The IRP form is well designed. The doctoral student's annual report allows for the assessment of various aspects of research development.

The information obtained through precisely formulated recommendations allows for a concise presentation of the status of the IRP implementation. Artistic activity is documented through the attached portfolio, and the publication of works is documented through a detailed list. Presentations at domestic and international conferences as well as organizational activities are documented in the same way. The doctoral student's annual report form is a well-thought-out and precise tool showing the status of the IRP implementation. During the meeting with doctoral students there were reservations about the overly formal language of the forms, but , the willingness of the administration to provide assistance was also emphasized. Compared to the doctoral student's report form, the supervisor's opinion is less labor-intensive; it is limited to choosing one of two options: satisfactory/unsatisfactory state of research work (justification applies only to unsatisfactory assessment – max. 500 characters) and

confirmation of the compliance of the research with the IRP. The supervisor provides a more detailed assessment/justification of consent to changes, revisions, or clarifications of the topic (max. 500 characters) and/or confirms the need for long-term research in the case of a request for an extension of education.

The doctoral school declares that doctoral students have access to the university's resources. Verification is provided by the form "Information on participation in faculty courses" confirmed by the supervisor. The supervisor in consultation with the tutors, also assess (as satisfactory/unsatisfactory) the teaching practice. The form is precisely designed; it distinguishes between forms of independently conducted classes (lectures, seminars, exercises, workshops, consultations) and participation in conducting (exercises, workshops, consultations). The DS website, in the Our Research tab, contains very well-prepared materials – short films presenting the topics and degree of advancement of the IRP of individual doctoral students, and the opinion and recommendations of the mid-term evaluation committee, which are an excellent means of verification.

In summary, the verification of learning outcomes at the Doctoral School is systematic and multifaceted, and the report forms are transparent and adequate for the content being verified. The examples of documentation reviewed during the visit confirm this opinion.

In view of the above information, criterion 2 has been satisfied.

- **Qualification of academic teachers and academic staff employed at the doctoral school:**
The assessment of the qualifications of the teaching and research staff responsible for doctoral education at the Doctoral School of the Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków constitutes one of the key elements in the evaluation of the quality of education. The competences of academic teachers and practitioners form the basis for the implementation of a programme consistent with the requirements of Level 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework. Those conducting classes are expected to demonstrate high substantive and artistic-research qualifications, experience in working with doctoral candidates, and the ability to operate within an interdisciplinary environment that integrates scholarly research with creative practice.

The academic staff of the Doctoral School of the Academy of Fine Arts consists of recognised professors, habilitated doctors, experienced researchers, and practitioners whose achievements are confirmed by scholarly publications, participation in national and international projects, exhibitions, conservation of works of art, and curatorial activity. The team includes both individuals who combine intensive artistic practice with theoretical reflection and specialists developing advanced technologies for the study of works of art. The diversity of represented disciplines and research areas—ranging from conservation and technologies of artworks, through visual arts, performance, and new media, to theory, philosophy, and aesthetics of art—gives the educational process a distinctly interdisciplinary character. The staff actively participate in international academic and artistic circulation, implement research projects financed from national and European funds, and serve as supervisors and academic mentors to doctoral candidates. In teaching, emphasis is placed on the development of creative autonomy, critical thinking, experimentation, and high methodological and ethical standards.

The Director of the Doctoral School of the Academy of Fine Arts conducts a systematic evaluation of the work of the teaching and research staff, which includes:

1. evaluation of the quality of classes based on anonymous doctoral candidate surveys,
2. availability of teaching staff and the quality of consultations,
3. scholarly, artistic, conservation, and project-related activity,
4. organisational engagement in the life of the Doctoral School,
5. effectiveness of supervisory care, including joint publications, exhibitions, and research projects.

In view of the above information, criterion 3 has been satisfied.

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

The recruitment procedure for candidates to the Doctoral School has been presented in detail in Chapter 4.4 of the Self-Assessment Report. It is characterized by a multi-stage structure, and its foundation lies in the principles of competitiveness and full transparency. The entire process is conducted in strict accordance with published internal legal acts, particularly Senate resolutions. To ensure transparency and equal treatment of all participants, the documents governing recruitment are made publicly available both in the Public Information Bulletin and on the University's official websites. This mode of operation guarantees adherence to the standards of equal opportunity and openness of procedures.

The recruitment process for the Doctoral School at the Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow, regulated by the relevant Senate resolutions of the University, is cyclical and takes place every year. The rules and detailed conditions of admission are established and announced publicly six months in advance of the start of the procedure. The website serves as the central, reliable information resource for candidates, enabling them to prepare thoroughly for all stages of the recruitment process. In the downloadable materials section, categorized as "for candidates" and "for doctoral students," the necessary application documentation is available, which must then be attached in the Akademos system when submitting the application. To accommodate the needs of international candidates, English-language versions of the applicable documents have been provided; however, it must be emphasized that the educational program itself is not conducted in a foreign language. A significant advantage of consolidating information in one portal is that applicants can review the course program and schedule from the previous academic year, which allows them to gain insight into future educational requirements and adjust accordingly.

The entire recruitment procedure is carried out by the Admissions Committee, which assesses candidates based on a competitive examination. During this examination, candidates present their artistic documentation and a plan for their research-artistic program. Both the interview assessment and the analysis of submitted materials were subject to scoring, covering the subject matter and scope of the project, as well as a portfolio illustrating artistic and scientific achievements. The sum of the points obtained constitutes the final recruitment result. In the case of several candidates obtaining an identical number of points, the ranking position was first determined by the score for the topic and scope of the research-artistic project, and then by the level of the presented achievements. Starting in 2025, a two-stage selection process is in effect for recruitment to the Doctoral School. In the first phase, only documents submitted by candidates are assessed, and the achieved point score determines qualification for the second stage, which is the qualification interview. The Committee evaluates both the portfolio and the research project concept. The final recruitment result is the sum of points from both stages.

Regarding the Admissions Committee, it should be noted that its composition has evolved over the years. It has always been appointed by the Rector upon the request of the Head, and later the Director of the Doctoral School. Initially, in 2019, the committee operated within three separate teams corresponding to the educational programs: Fine Arts, Design Arts, and Art Conservation. The final list of admitted candidates was determined based on separate rankings of results from the three examination groups. In 2020, a modification was made, creating a single team composed of academic staff representing each field of study at the Academy and a staff member with theoretical competencies. In 2021, the number of committee members was reduced to five: three specialists in the fields of fine arts, design arts, and conservation and restoration of artworks, one theoretical scientist, and a

representative of doctoral students. Currently, under a new Senate resolution, the committee's composition will be expanded. The new structure will include 14 members, comprising one representative from each of the seven fields of study, three external experts, one scientist with theoretical competencies, and a representative of doctoral students. From this group, the Doctoral School Council will select a seven-member examination team, which will be formally appointed by the Rector. The remaining members will serve as reserves in case unforeseen circumstances prevent the participation of any examiner.

It should be noted that the number of applicants to the Doctoral School significantly exceeds the established admission limit each year. This limit has been 6 places so far, but in the upcoming recruitment, it will be reduced to 4 places. In 2019, 62 candidates applied (with one appeal), while in 2020, only 31 applied. The number of applications increased in 2021 to 66 (with 2 appeals and 5 discontinued proceedings). In 2022, 50 persons submitted applications (3 appeals, 5 discontinuations), and in 2023 – 64 candidates. Last year, 2024, saw a significant increase in popularity, with as many as 100 applicants; 2 appeals were filed, one of which was upheld, resulting in the admission of the candidate.

Regarding the specific pathway of the implementation doctorate, it is governed by the same recruitment Resolution. According to its provisions, a person participating in the "implementation doctorate" program or other scholarship programs, including external ones, may be admitted to the Doctoral School after obtaining the Rector's consent for their implementation at the Academy. Candidates interested in this pathway first contact the Director of the Doctoral School and the Fundraising Office, which handles the preparation of the application in the OSF system. The candidate is also required to simultaneously participate in the standard recruitment process for the School, thus being under the care of two administrative units. Currently, two beneficiaries of the implementation doctorate program are studying at the Doctoral School, who achieved some of the highest scores during recruitment. Summarizing the recruitment procedure for the Doctoral School of the Academy of Fine Arts, it should be stated that it is characterized by a high level of organization and a clear structure aimed at ensuring fair and transparent competition among applicants. The foundation of this process remains the transparency of the rules, manifested in the broad availability of information and the openness of announced results, as well as the possibility of filing an appeal. A significant added value is the multi-stage assessment system, which, combined with attention to equal opportunities for each candidate, including adapting procedures to the requirements of persons with special needs, enhances its reliability and objectivity. Nevertheless, the analysis indicates some potential imperfections, which may include the dynamics of modifying criteria and a certain procedural complexity. Identifying these aspects thus outlines directions for potential improvements, the implementation of which in the future could contribute to further optimization of the entire process, increasing its user-friendliness for potential participants while maintaining existing substantive and ethical standards.

In view of the above information, criterion 4 has been satisfied.

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

A detailed description of the quality of supervisory care is provided in Chapter 4.5 of the Self-Assessment Report. The supervision offered within the evaluated entity is characterized by exceptionally high standards, reflected in its substantive, organizational, and ethical dimensions. This profile indicates its comprehensive level across all key aspects, constituting a significant marker of the quality of the educational process in the doctoral school.

The Jan Matejko Doctoral School of the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków emphasizes high-quality scientific and artistic supervision that supports the development of research, creative, and teaching competencies in line with PQF level 8. Supervision is based on partnership, an individual approach, and creating optimal conditions for independent research and artistic practice.

Supervisors are appointed in accordance with Doctoral School regulations and statutory criteria, taking into account the thematic alignment of the dissertation with the supervisor's profile, their achievements, teaching experience, and availability. Candidates are evaluated for substantive, organizational, and interpersonal competencies and approved by the Doctoral School Council. Doctoral students actively participate in the selection process and may request a change of supervisor if necessary.

Supervision is closely linked to the implementation of the Individual Research Plan (IPB). Supervisors support doctoral students at all stages of IPB execution, including scheduling, planning exhibitions and publications, outreach activities, grant applications, and research trips. Consultations are systematic and progress is assessed based on both outcomes and timely completion of planned tasks. Supervisors prepare periodic reviews that form the basis for annual and mid-term evaluations. The IPB may be modified during the program, allowing flexibility in response to evolving research and artistic projects. The quality of supervision is monitored through doctoral student surveys and analyses conducted by advisory bodies. Doctoral students have access to specialized workshops, laboratories, libraries, and digital tools, as well as opportunities for collaboration with cultural and scientific institutions in Kraków and internationally. The University also offers flexible solutions and institutional support for doctoral students facing parenthood, disabilities, or temporary life challenges. Additionally, cooperation with external and international experts through consultations, workshops, and guest lectures supports the internationalization of doctoral projects and network building.

Overall, the Doctoral School provides a comprehensive and transparent supervision system tailored to the specific character of an art university and individual doctoral needs, ensuring high-quality support at PQF level 8.

In view of the above information, criterion 5 has been satisfied.

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

Evaluation constitutes a significant and rigorously implemented mechanism for ensuring the quality of education in doctoral schools, playing a key role in monitoring the progress of individual research plans. It serves a dual function: on the one hand, a diagnostic one, enabling the identification and analysis of potential substantive or organizational difficulties in the process of preparing a doctoral dissertation; on the other hand, a monitoring function, serving to verify the compliance of the course of study with established standards and objectives. Simultaneously, the evaluation procedure is of a supportive nature, allowing the evaluation committee to formulate detailed recommendations, the implementation of which may significantly contribute to the further scientific development of the doctoral candidate. Through the application of clear and systematized procedures, the entire process is characterized by a high degree of reliability and impartiality, thereby ensuring its legitimacy within the academic community and establishing a foundation for continuous institutional improvement.

The Mid-Term Evaluation conducted at the Doctoral School of the Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow takes place during the 4 semester of doctoral studies (April and May). Its scope includes verifying the degree of implementation of the Individual Research Plan (IPB), as outlined both in the regulations and in information provided to doctoral candidates. It is emphasized that achievements not included in the IPB will not be respect. The low basis is the Act 2.0, as well as the Regulations of the Doctoral School and the Order of the Rector of the ASP. The documents are available on the DS website and in the Public Bulletin (BIP) – the concise and factual presentation in the appropriate website bookmark is commendable. This allows students to clearly understand the procedure and prepare properly. The DS also organizes meetings for them. At the end of the 4 semester, a deadline is set for submitting the following documents via the IT system: an IPB implementation report (an illustrated text considering points from the IPB and specifying the degree of their completion), an audiovisual statement (from IPB), confirmation of achievements included in the IPB, and the opinion of the supervisors. Additional technical instructions allow for proper preparation of the documents. Failure to submit is equivalent to not proceeding with the evaluation. In the years 2021-24; 5, 6, 8, and 6 students had participate at the evaluation, respectively. All results were positive, except for one; some students took advantage of the deadline extension. The evaluation, takes place shortly thereafter. The Committees were selected correctly and its process deserves praise for the selection of experts, both in terms of their competences and the representation of communities outside the ASP (sometimes entire committees are formed). In accordance with the Act, the Appeal Committee is assembled as a new group of experts. The entire process is transparent and objective. The Committee meeting is held in person or online. It involves an analysis of the doctoral documents, made available digitally in the electronic system of the ASP. It may be extended to include an interview with the doctoral student. The Committee makes decisions by a simple majority vote. The Committee members may not abstain from voting, but they may submit a dissenting opinion. Decision and a resolution are prepared, along with the justification for the evaluation. The written opinion is particularly important – it provides the doctoral student with feedback on their achievements to date and may also serve as recommendations for further development. The evaluation documents are submitted by The Committee Chair to the Office of the DS within 7 days of the meeting. The doctoral student may then review them. In the event of a negative result, an appeal procedure

is available. Publication of the Mid-Term Evaluation is required by law; the ASP has gone beyond this requirement and also publishes source materials on the Academy's website and its Public Bulletin. In the case of a negative final result, only the committee's outcome and justification are published. The entire strategy, including the preparation and documentation of the progress of the IPB, the evaluation procedure, and the subsequent processing of the results, simultaneously achieves multiple goals: openness, transparency, social oversight of the fairness of the procedure, and also serves to promote the achievements and artistic attitudes of doctoral students. This is worth emphasizing as a good practice. In summary, the mid-term evaluation system at the Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts stands out thanks to its transparency, the involvement of external experts, the comprehensive work with doctoral students' source material, and the public disclosure of its results.

In view of the above information, criterion 6 has been satisfied.

- **Internationalisation:**

In the context of the comprehensive evaluation of the Doctoral School of the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków, the aspect of internationalisation, as detailed in Chapter 4.7 of the Self-Assessment Report, merits a markedly positive assessment. The analysed and presented activities convincingly document the unit's commitment to fostering a research environment of an international character, which constitutes a significant component of its developmental strategy and scientific potential.

Internationalisation constitutes one of the key pillars underpinning the functioning of contemporary doctoral schools in the field of art. The Doctoral School of the Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków consistently implements a strategy focused on the development of international cooperation, which is tangibly reflected in the activities of doctoral candidates, academic staff, and external partners.

Strategic approach to internationalisation

Internationalisation is treated as an integral element of artistic and research-based education. It encompasses both individual development pathways of doctoral candidates (mobility, scholarships, residencies) and institutional activities (international projects, conferences, partnerships). This strategy creates conditions enabling doctoral candidates to operate within the global environment of art and academia and enhances the quality of research through the exchange of knowledge and experience.

International projects and programmes

Key activities include participation in the project *Interweaving Structures: Textile as Material, Carrier, Method* (2022–2024), implemented in cooperation with the Central Museum of Textiles in Łódź and the University of Bergen.

An important element of internationalisation was also the organisation, on two occasions, of Blended Intensive Programmes (Erasmus+) in Budapest (2023) and Kraków (2024), with the participation of partner institutions from Hungary and Sweden. These programmes promoted interdisciplinarity, intercultural dialogue, and reflection on artistic research.

Noteworthy is also the CODS – Conference of Doctoral School (2023), prepared by doctoral candidates, which constituted an international platform for the exchange of experiences in an online format.

Academic mobility and doctoral candidates' achievements

An important aspect of internationalisation consists of international scholarships and residencies, including the Fulbright Junior Research Award (2024–2025) and artistic residencies financed from international funds. Doctoral candidates also participate in international exhibitions, conferences, and mobility programmes, confirming their active presence in the international circulation of art.

Systemic character of internationalisation

The activities described above are systemic in nature and encompass research projects, mobility, conferences, residencies, and language policy. An important element is the bottom-up initiative of doctoral candidates, demonstrating the effective internalisation of the internationalisation strategy.

Strengths

- a coherent internationalisation strategy,
- diversity of forms of international activity,
- presence of doctoral candidates in prestigious programmes and institutions,
- high quality of cooperation with international academic staff.

Areas for further development

- expansion of cooperation beyond Europe,
- systematic monitoring of the outcomes of internationalisation,
- further development of full teaching modules conducted in English.

The internationalisation of the Doctoral School of the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków is assessed very highly. These activities effectively integrate the doctoral community into the global circulation of art and academia, strengthen the prestige of the institution, and build its lasting position among international doctoral schools.

In view of the above information, criterion 7 has been satisfied.

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

The Doctoral School of the Krakow Academy of Fine Arts admits 6 individuals annually, with the educational program spanning 6 semesters. According to the submitted report, during the evaluation period, 80% of doctoral candidates applied to initiate proceedings for the conferral of a doctoral degree, while 40% successfully obtained the degree.

The report indicates that candidates apply for an extension of their studies every year.

Doctoral researchers have access to a catalogue of reasons permitting an extension of the deadline for submitting a doctoral dissertation—these are listed in the regulations published on the Doctoral School's website. Provisions for taking a leave of absence from studies, in case of circumstances preventing or hindering the continuation of education, are regulated by the internal regulations (study regulations) of the Academy of Fine Arts—the entity operating the Doctoral School.

In the opinion of doctoral candidates, expressed during meetings, the 6-semester period is insufficient for conducting research. Supervisors share this view, particularly in the field of art conservation, where research is often time-consuming.

The authors of the report do not present a clear opinion on whether they consider this fact concerning or requiring remedial action.

With the exception of one case (the 2019 cohort, removal from the list of doctoral candidates), all cases are justified and meet the conditions listed in the regulations, such as health reasons, maternity leave, or the need for long-term research confirmed by supervisors. The report's authors present an analysis of these cases and emphasize the right and legitimacy of applying for an extension, considering the nature of the research and the possibility of research trips.

This is a convincing explanation, provided it translates into artistic quality.

The presented selected examples of doctoral candidates' achievements attest to their research activity and the high level of education. These are measurable successes in international competitions (Pola Komarowa), the completion of a permanent public space installation (Karolina Hałatek), the presentation of work at prestigious film festivals (Kinga Syrek), or participation in an international biennale (Jakub Świącicki). These achievements align with the individual research plans of each candidate, as confirmed both by information on the Doctoral School website (doctoral candidate profiles) and a review of documentation. The report does not provide data concerning career monitoring, nor does it include information on the internal system for assessing the quality of education, operating formally, i.e., as outlined in the Doctoral School regulations. However, information on cooperation with the student government indicates that doctoral candidates are present in the university's decision-making bodies (e.g., the Doctoral School Council, the Admissions Committee, the Committee for Structure and Study Programs, the Committee for Statute and Programs, and disciplinary committees). Cyclical meetings with doctoral candidates create an informal opportunity to respond to the needs of doctoral groups, which, as the report authors state, "serve to exchange information and consult on the educational program, learning outcomes, teaching staff, and regulations." An example of a response to suggestions for change is the allocation of additional hours for Copyright Law following a formal request from the student government. Although the report does not provide information on assessing the quality of education through surveys, during the meeting with doctoral candidates, the possibility of expressing critical opinions about the teaching in this form was raised. The Director of the Doctoral School emphasized that such remarks are taken into account when making decisions about hiring or continuing the employment of teaching staff.

The absence of data on graduate career monitoring is partly mitigated by the fact that the

website and social media effectively document the achievements of doctoral candidates. Their presence in the gallery circuit, participation in ambitious and large-scale projects initiated by lecturers at the Doctoral School—bodes well for the development of artistic careers after graduation. The effectiveness of the education is evidenced by the participation of doctoral candidates in thematic exhibitions at prestigious cultural institutions. In addition to the examples given in the report, these include, for instance, the exhibition summarizing the participation of doctoral candidates in the international project *Structures of Interlacing: Fabric as Material, Method, Carrier* (SECOND SKIN Encounters at the Central Museum of Textiles in Łódź, 2023), *Antipodręcznik. Jak zbudować niewidzialne miejsce* at the Kronika Center for Contemporary Art in Bytom in 2023 (doctoral candidates: Jagoda Dobecka and Paweł Błęcki, curator: Marta Lisok), the exhibitions *SUSTAINABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY* at the Polish Institute in Vienna (doctoral candidates: Olga Konik and Jakub Świącicki, 2024), exhibitions by Ala Savashevich at Cricoteka in Krakow and at OP ENHEIM in Wrocław (2024), by Katarzyna Wyszowska at Cricoteka (2023), and by Agata Jarosławiec at the Museum of Warsaw (2024). Doctoral candidates receive prestigious scholarships, such as: Jakub Świącicki's artistic scholarship in Shanghai (ICCI Art Valley 2024), Yuliya Kryvich's in the USA (ARTSLINK INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS, 2024), and Kat Zavada's (Fulbright Junior Research Award 2024).

In view of the above information, criterion 8 has been satisfied.

V. FINAL OPINION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This evaluation report, prepared by the Assessment Team, unequivocally confirms that the education process conducted at the Doctoral School meets the requirements assigned to level 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework. This conclusion is substantiated by a detailed verification of the self-assessment report submitted by the unit, a thorough analysis of the complete documentation, as well as direct observations and information obtained during the site visit to the Doctoral School's headquarters. It should be emphasized that the remaining evaluation criteria have been met in a similar manner, the detailed description and discussion of which are presented in this report.

The Assessment Team recommends:

Enhancing Research Synergy in the Supervisor-Doctoral Candidate Relationship.

It is recommended to intensify efforts towards initiating and implementing joint research ventures between supervisors and doctoral candidates. Systemic incentives and formal-organizational facilitation should be created for coordinating projects resulting in co-authorship of scientific publications, curation of exhibitions, or the realization of art-research projects.

Implementation of an Institutional Support Programme for Newly Appointed Supervisors.

To enhance the teaching and methodological competencies of the academic staff, the introduction of a formal, mandatory mentoring programme for new supervisors is advised. This programme should specifically cover the methodological specifics of artistic research and the principles of doctoral-level tutoring.

Expansion of the Training Offer in Advanced Pedagogy and Research Management.

It is necessary to increase the availability and diversity of high-specialization workshops and courses for supervisors, focusing on refining tutoring skills, managing research projects, and securing external funding.

Internationalisation of the Research Quality Evaluation Process.

To strengthen objectivity and raise standards, it is recommended to expand the internal system for verifying doctoral candidates' achievements by including mandatory, external qualitative assessment by recognized experts from leading foreign centres.

Optimisation of the Mid-Term Evaluation Procedure.

It is recommended to analyse the mid-term evaluation model with a view to increasing the frequency and mandatory nature of direct consultations between the doctoral candidate and the Evaluation Committee. Such a modification would allow for in-depth, substantive discussion, providing comprehensive feedback and strengthening the Committee's influence on the individualisation, potential correction, and effective finalization of the Individual Research Plan (IRP).

Stabilisation and Internationalisation of the Teaching Staff.

It is advisable to develop and implement a long-term strategy for collaboration with distinguished foreign scientists and artists, by offering long-term research and teaching contracts or regular, recurring visiting appointments.

Creation of International Teaching Modules.

It is recommended to gradually introduce into the School's curriculum joint, interdisciplinary modules conducted in a tandem format by supervisors from Polish and foreign institutions, which will strengthen the comparative dimension and networking during the education process.

Increased Language Immersion in the Scientific Environment.

Efforts should be made to systematically increase the share of teaching classes and seminars conducted in English by international staff, which is a necessary condition for the full integration of doctoral candidates into the global scientific arena.

Systemic Promotion of Participation in European Consortia.

It is necessary to implement an active policy encouraging and supporting doctoral candidates and their supervisors in applying for funding for participation in long-term, international research projects, particularly within European Union framework programmes.

Mandatory Internationalisation of Individual Research Plans.

It is recommended that an international component (e.g., a research internship abroad, participation in an international conference, collaboration with a foreign institution) becomes a mandatory, verified element of every Individual Research Plan (IRP).

Institutional Support in Securing International Grants.

It is necessary to institutionalize periodic, specialized training on the preparation and management of international research projects and grant applications, led by experienced experts.

Increase in the Financial Allocation for the Doctoral School's Activities.

For the full implementation of the aforementioned strategic objectives, particularly those related to internationalisation and enhancing the quality of education, it is essential to secure an increase in the unit's funding by a minimum of 10% compared to the current level.

Adjustment of the Education Period.

In light of the analysis of the Doctoral School's documentation and the requirements set by international grant programmes, it is recommended to consider extending the nominal duration of education in the Doctoral School from 36 to 48 months. Such a change would enable doctoral candidates to carry out more ambitious research projects, including mandatory international components, without compromising the quality of their dissertations.

During the evaluation process, the assessment team conducted a comprehensive analysis of the operation of the Academy of Fine Arts Doctoral School, confirming that all specified evaluation criteria have been met. The result of this study is a positive assessment of the School's activities. It should be emphasized that the observed imperfections and formulated comments are not fundamental and do not negatively affect the overall, proper dynamics of the unit's functioning. Importantly, the evaluation team also formulated specific recommendations, indicating ways to utilize the identified areas for improving the quality of education, which may constitute a valuable developmental impetus for the AFADS. It was unanimously acknowledged that the doctoral education process at this School deserves high recognition and a positive assessment. It is characterized by high organizational coherence, a very good substantive level of the courses conducted, and significant engagement of qualified academic staff. These attributes create a conducive environment for the effective realization of individual research projects by young scientists and contribute to their comprehensive scientific and artistic development.

Final Assessment:

The evaluation team rates The Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow very positively in all assessed areas and recommends the next external evaluation in six years, in accordance with Article 259(2) of the Higher Education and Science Act of 20 July 2018 (Journal of Laws 2024, item 1571, as amended).



VI. ASSESSMENT AND REASON

Final assessment
positive

Reason:

The evaluation team provided a highly positive assessment of the Doctoral School of the Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków and its recruitment and doctoral student education process. To ensure clarity and transparency, detailed comments and assessments regarding individual criteria are included in the report. This document provides a detailed analysis of every aspect of the Doctoral School's operation, including comments on the recruitment process, educational organization, and cooperation with the academic community and the doctoral student self-government. As a result, the report serves not only as a basis for conclusions but also as a useful tool for supporting further improvement of the Doctoral School's activities.

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