



center of accreditation and quality assurance
of the swiss universities

Evaluation procedure in the UAS domain

MAS - Luxury

Executive summary



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1 Introduction

The present report is the executive summary relating to the evaluation of the MAS-Luxury of the ECAL/Ecole d'arts cantonale de Lausanne (HES-SO¹). It summarizes the background of the evaluation procedure, the self- and external processes as well as the procedure's results. The report is based on the self-evaluation report, the expert report and the statement of the programme.

The OAQ evaluation procedure is conform to the ENQA² references and guidelines. The evaluation is based on the UAS³ accreditation standards⁴ and carried out according to the three common stages: i. self-evaluation carried out by the programme, ii. external appraisal by an independent group of experts iii. decision (by the scientific advisory board).

The evaluation of the MAS-Luxury was mandated by the HES-SO governance.

2 MAS in Luxury Design

The MAS-Luxury is a full time continuing education programme lasting one year (2 semesters of 16 weeks, 60 ECTS). The programme is conceived and organised by the ECAL. The students (10 to 15) must have undergone training attested by diploma (Bachelor level) from a university and submit a convincing portfolio showing aptitude in creative and innovative design.

„The aim of the programme is to give students the skills and understanding required to work at a high level within this booming sector:

- *a good understanding for the problems and special features that determine design and the process of creating products, services and environments in prestige market*
- *an in-depth knowledge of the different materials, approaches and technologies specific to this sector*
- *practical experience in the development and realisation of appropriate design work*⁵.

The graduates can aspire to a position of senior designer.

The programme is structured in 5 modules: luxury and complexity, luxury and expertise, luxury and contemporary culture, luxury and concept and diploma project. The practical orientation is undeniable; all projects are made in close cooperation with industrial partners, which allows the students to build an amazing network and to complete their CV with projects realised and recognized by the Luxury industry.

¹ Haute Ecole Spécialisée de Suisse Occidentale

² European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

³ Universities of applied sciences

⁴ Published on: http://www.oaq.ch/pub/fr/documents/QStandards_FH_Studiengaenge_FR_000.pdf

⁵ Reference: website ECAL

3 Evaluation procedure in the frame of UAS

3.1 Self-evaluation report

The self-evaluation phase began in October 2009. The self-evaluation report was sent to OAQ in January 2010. OAQ then forwarded the report to the experts, according to the schedule, one month before the on-site visit.

The experts highlighted the high quality of the self-evaluation report, which provided all required information. The report was very clear and well presented. The report could be used by the experts as an helpful instrument to evaluate the programme. The experts have then collected complementary data during the on-site visit in order to make their final report.

3.2 On-site visit

The experts group was composed of three members:

- Mr Philippe Cramer (peer-leader), director of Cramer & Cramer in Geneva
- Ms Chantal Prod'Hom, director of mudac (Musée de design et d'arts appliqués contemporains) in Lausanne
- Prof. Nikolaus Wyss, former rector of the Hochschule Luzern – Arts and Design

The on-site visit took place on 11 - 12 February 2010. During the visit, the experts group met different representatives of the programme: direction, programme manager, teaching staff, students and alumni, industrial partners.

The visit was perfectly organized. The atmosphere was pleasant and the experts particularly appreciated the punctuality, the frankness and the collaboration with the interviewees and the representatives of ECAL.

Following the on-site visit, the experts wrote an evaluation report. Every quality standard was analyzed and suggestions for quality improvement, as well as recommendations, were made.

4 Expert evaluation

The experts attest unanimously the high quality of the MAS-Luxury and confirm that the level corresponds to international standards. The experts estimate that the programme fulfils all quality standards (see attached table).

4.1 Strengths of the MAS-Luxury

The learning objectives are clearly defined and well communicated. These objectives are understood and well accepted by all people met by the experts

The experts notice that the MAS-Luxury is a very innovative and dynamic programme. Especially the structure of the programme is original; the first semester consist of workshops, each of a three-week period, in which the students prepare a project (given by an industrial partner) under the supervision of external speaker. During the second semester the students

have the possibility to develop one or more projects of the first semester. This approach seems to be unique and fills with enthusiasm all the people met during the on-site visit.

An important strength of the programme is the choice of the teaching staff and external speakers. They all come from the labour market and are world-famous in their field. Most of them are relatively young, and therefore reflect the current vision of product design.

The biggest strength of this MAS-Luxury is the strong relationship between the programme and famous industrial partners. The partners involve themselves in the programme for several years, financially on one hand, but they also propose real projects to the students on the other hand. Some of these projects are sometimes commercialised by the industrial partner (after further development in which the student is involved). The experts met during the visit the following famous industrial partners: CEO Bernardaud, France – CEO Christoffe – Director centre of excellence, Nestlé – Artistic Director Audemars Piguet. Working with such luxury industries is an amazing opportunity for the students, to build their network and also to create an interesting portfolio, which is so important in this field.

The infrastructures at ECAL are on the cutting edge of technology and are available for the MAS students. The interactions between the Bachelor – Master students and teaching staff and the MAS students are also rewarding.

The financial resources are available for the next three years. The ECAL director established a foundation through which the industrial partners indirectly participate in the financial resources of the programme. Thanks to this foundation, the students pay only 8'000CHF for the MAS-Luxury and grants can be awarded on demand.

4.2 Weaknesses and recommendations/suggestions

The organisation and communication is mostly informal. The experts recommend to keep written record in order to guarantee the continuity. Moreover, the experts notice that the feedback of the students, teaching staff, external speakers and industrial partners according to the programme are gathered, but only orally. The experts recommend therefore to integrate a written questionnaire, which has already been implemented at the time of the visit according to the students and programme manager.

The MAS-Luxury collaborates with the EPFL through the joint EPFL+ECAL Lab research laboratory. The experts estimate that the students do not use this great opportunity and therefore recommend to encourage this cooperation in order to help the students to familiarise with the current research finding.

The experts acknowledge the importance of the grants. However, the experts suggest that their allocation should be regulated.

5 ECAL statement

The ECAL has made a brief statement on the expert report. They agreed with the expert report and made two formal remarks that were taken into account in the final version of the expert report.

6 Final evaluation of the OAQ

On the basis of what has been exposed in the previous chapters the OAQ considers that the MAS-Luxury meets high qualitative standards. The MAS-Luxury shows several important strong points, especially regarding the quality of teaching staff and external speaker and the strong interaction between the programme and famous industrial partners.

However the OAQ invites the MAS-Luxury to take into account the recommendations and suggestions given in section 4, especially the one concerning the written record.

Annex 2 – Summary table

Quality standards		Compliance	Recommendations (R) – Suggestions (S)	Comment(s)
1	Implementation and teaching objectives			
1.01	The programme of study focuses on the learning objectives defined in the guidelines and strategic plan of the university of applied science, which generally prepare students for a diploma attesting to their professional qualification.	Fully		
1.02	The programme of study is in principle determined according to international – and particularly European – criteria for the recognition of academic diplomas.	Fully		
1.03	The programme's feasibility is demonstrated.	Fully		
1.04	Equal opportunity for men and women is assured.	Fully		
2	Internal organisation and quality assurance measures			
2.01	The decision-making processes, competencies and responsibilities have been established and implemented accordingly.	Fully	(R) The experts recommend to keep written record defining the decision-making processes and responsibilities.	
2.02	Teaching staff and students are appropriately consulted on decisions	Fully		

	affecting their respective activities.			
2.03	The practical orientation and quality of the programme are verified regularly. The results are used for future programme development.	Fully	(R) The experts recommend to integrate a written questionnaire in order to gather written internal and external feedback.	
3	Curriculum and teaching methods			
3.01	The programme has a structured curriculum which corresponds to the coordinated implementation of the Bologna Declaration in universities of applied science.	Fully		
3.02	The programme focuses on teaching and learning objectives and a qualification, which is generally professionally oriented with a clearly determined profile.	Fully	(R) The experts recommend to encourage the cooperation with the EPFL through the joint EPFL+ECAL Lab research laboratory in order to help the students to familiarised with the current research finding.	
3.03	The programme has a modular structure which uses a system of credits and exams during the course of study.	Fully		
3.04	The conditions for acquiring certificates of achievement and diplomas are regulated and made public.	Fully		
3.05	The competencies that must be acquired (learning outcomes) during the bachelor's and master's programmes are clearly distinguished (progressive competence profiles).	Not relevant		

3.06	The conditions for admission to the university of applied science ensure internal coherence between the competencies acquired during a bachelor's programme and those required for admission to a master's programme.	Not relevant		
4	Teaching staff			
4.01	Courses are taught by educationally competent and academically qualified teaching staff, who are graduates of a higher education institution and have several years of professional experience.	Fully		
4.02	Most teaching staff are also active within a more extensive service mandate.	Fully		
4.03	Both men and women are fairly represented within the teaching staff.	Fully		
5	Students			
5.01	The qualifications required for admission to the programme and those to be awarded on graduation are defined, communicated and verified.	Fully		
5.02	Equal opportunity for men and women is assured and the principles of non-discrimination are applied.	Fully		

5.03	The programme of study encourages student mobility. Study achievements (credits) attained in other higher education institutions are recognised.	Fully		
5.04	Appropriate guidance and support are available to students.	Fully		
6	Facilities and premises			
	The programme has adequate resources available to attain its objectives. These resources are provided on a long-term basis.	Fully	(S) The experts suggest that the allocation of grants should be regulated.	
Global evaluation		Fully		