

# Master of Education in Arts

Course Profile/  
Student Handbook

Experimental  
and Engaging  
Practices of  
Art and Design  
Education



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## Introduction

we educate  
we support  
we challenge  
we critically reflect  
we reinvent

The Piet Zwart Institute is a centre for postgraduate study and research that offers six Master programmes: Interior Architecture: Research + Design (MIARD), Fine Art (MFA), Lens-Based Media (LB), Experimental Publishing (XPUB), Education in Arts (MEiA) and Master of Design (MD).

Some 50 practitioners/tutors and 150 students come together in the Piet Zwart Institute. Our small size allows us to be flexible, modular and responsive, both to current developments in the artistic and design fields and to the urgencies of our times. As an alliance of makers and thinkers, we are deeply invested in questioning what constitutes practice and research in an art and design context at the graduate level today, and are a key voice in these debates, both in the Netherlands and internationally. Our two-year programmes, currently consisting of four full-time and two part-time programmes, offer support structures for practical exploration and risk-taking, as well as rigor and in-depth theoretical inquiry. At the same time, we actively support experimental practices in transition and/or transformation. Our students form sustainable learning communities that they can draw upon in their future practice. Being part of the Piet Zwart Institute community means sharing meaningful professional relations across programmes, as well as fostering direct relations with the team of tutors in a horizontal model of exchange. After two years of sustained research and practice, our students graduate with the resilience and resources to make vital, ongoing contributions to their fields, as well as the capacity to redefine those fields.

### Experimental and engaged practices in art and design education

The MEiA programme is called 'Education in Arts', but in essence it is multidisciplinary. We pay attention to contemporary developments in art and design education, considering it to be an expanded and interdisciplinary field that also includes socially engaged practices in art. The programme pays attention to education inside schools as well as outside of them; the curriculum is designed for educators in the fields of secondary, vocational and higher arts and design education, educators in museums and community arts, as well as artists and designers with an interest in pedagogical practices. The course prepares graduates to engage with formal educational structures as well as with informal learning environments.

## A learning community

Peer learning and being part of a learning community is a key feature of our programme. Our uniquely tailored curriculum combines collective learning with individual tutorials and practice-based research with theoretical inquiry. The seminars are led by a team of tutors who combine their passion for education with professional grounding in the cultural scene. In our current and future society, transgressing boundaries and collaborating is key; therefore, we have founded a learning community in which participants learn from each other, no matter whether they are teaching at a secondary school, working in museum education, engaged in activist workshops or affiliated with a design academy.

## Transformative

How can educators help to define the vital role of art and design in society? Our programme explicitly connects theory and practice, focusing on contemporary issues that span different practices and discourses: the artist as educator; critical and feminist pedagogy; transdisciplinarity; decolonialization; embodiment; the ecological crisis; art, science and technology; et cetera. Unlike any other discipline, art education is bound to societal challenges, cultural urgencies and ethical questions. How do these play out on a micro and macro level within pedagogical practices? Participants are encouraged to reflect upon their practice and teaching methodologies from an engaged and critical perspective.

## Taking time: deepening and expanding existing practice

We are a part-time programme, designed for students who combine their study with their working practice. The programme has a modular structure of seminars that take place every two weeks on Fridays and Saturdays. During the two-year study, participants develop a research project that deepens their existing educational, artistic practice or opens new directions within it. Our course is a fully English-taught programme and admits students from the Netherlands as well as the EU at large. It is structured as a 60-credit, part-time course spread over two years.

1 An expanded notion  
of art education,  
transgressing  
boundaries

2 *Philosophy behind  
the programme*

3 *Structure and  
content of the  
programme*

4 *Evaluating research  
and practice*

Students who enrol in the master's programme come from different directions and professional levels. Participants in our programme often already have a career in education, art or design and/or aspire to develop one or develop new perspectives within it. Their graduation projects are archived and made available to the public through a Master of Education in Arts – Archival Website (<http://meia.pzwart.nl>). Broadly speaking, art education is divided into five categories, which reflect the expanded notion of the field that our programme adheres to:

- Art and design education within secondary or vocational education;
- Higher art and design education (BA and MA level);
- Museum education and public programming
- Maker spaces, lab settings;
- Socially engaged, participatory practices.

Educational professionals and scholars alike have acknowledged that in our present-day society, learning takes place both *inside* as well as *outside* of institutional learning environments. New and alternative forms of learning and practice take place at different levels of society: museums and cultural institutions, serious gaming, labs, learning communities, informal communities of practices and so forth. In order to stay up to par with societal changes and the particular knowledge and theoretical frameworks connected with each discipline, it is important to develop the ability to renew one's educational practice and pedagogical skills through research and a critically reflective attitude. In addition, there is a thriving and dynamic independent cultural educational sector *outside* the institutional framework.

The philosopher Marta Nussbaum made a powerful plea to maintain the liberal arts (*'cultuuronderwijs'* in Dutch) as an essential part of education in order to give students the capacity to be true democratic citizens.<sup>1</sup> The educational philosopher Gert Biesta has gained influence in the international educational sector with his argument against the tendency toward measurability in education, advocating instead for engagement with the openness and unpredictability of education.<sup>2</sup> These are stances that underline the need for an emancipatory view of present-day education. The historical heritage of 'critical pedagogy' seems to be more alive than ever, and museums and cultural institutions are experimenting with a wide variety of participatory formats, projects and modes of presentation, extending their range of influence outside the walls of the institution and into the neighbourhood. Learning takes places inside as well as outside of schools. Being involved with art education nowadays means taking into account the current interdisciplinarity of the field and structurally involving professional debates in art education as well as the adjacent fields (community arts, socially-engaged participatory and collective practices experimenting with pedagogical models and tactics, lab settings, maker education spaces).

Most recently, the blurring of boundaries between science, art and technology has come to the fore. Nowadays the relevance of creativity and entrepreneurial skills in education is taken for granted, alongside an emphasis on digital literacy, collaboration and problem solving. In the future, though, in a society impacted by the ecological crisis and migration, skills derived from the ethical domain should be regarded as equally important, including a post-humanist perspective on education that teaches students the complex entanglements they are part of, both on a political, societal and ecological level.

1 Marta Nussbaum, *Not for Profit. Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*, Princeton University Press, 2010.

2 Gert J.J. Biesta, *The Beautiful Risk of Education*, Paradigm Publishers, 2015.

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## Our vision of learning and the pedagogical context

Theory, practice and self-direction are the three pillars of the Piet Zwart Institute's educational framework. Additionally, education at the Piet Zwart Institute is also based on a so-called 'concentric curriculum'. This means that the modules are structured as meaningful wholes, such as themes and projects. The tutor designs and executes his/her specific part within the educational programme, and the course director guides the overall structure and programme. Peer reviews and tutorial feedback are essential learning tools within all seminars. These evaluations take the form of an exchange in which the students advance their thinking against a developing critical framework. This concentric module<sup>1</sup> of the curriculum is based on a constructive view of teaching and education.

<sup>1</sup> As opposed to a linear curriculum – an educational programme split up into different parts in a fixed order – in which the teacher uses pre-described methods and learning paths.

The underlying rationale of the Master of Education in Arts is to create an inspiring and interdisciplinary learning community for students, consisting of a strongly profiled staff, an elaborate programme of guest tutors and speakers, and a cycle of professional peers. Given the fact that the majority of students already have an existing professional practice, peer feedback and the mutual exchange of experience and knowledge within the group of students as a whole is important. Facilitating, organising and guiding peer feedback is therefore a structural part of the didactical underpinnings of the programme, as well as combining theoretical and experiential learning. Education is clearly both individually and collectively orientated; students develop an individual learning path, but do so in close relation to the learning community that they are part of.

Another central feature of the programme is the concept of the 'reflective practitioner'. The central philosophy of the programme is to build the expertise around the participant's particular research question/theme. Here the master offers the student the possibility to upscale both their pedagogical and research skills in art and design education, with the clear intention of deepening and strengthening their existing practice or developing new directions. Students are challenged to share their interests and concerns with fellow students, develop them into professional graduate-level research, and carry them out in practice in a self-directed graduation project. The different backgrounds of the students are seen as added value in this respect. Within the programme, practice and theory are regarded as being completely intertwined. This is reflected in the graduation trajectory, in which practice-based and theoretical research are closely connected.

### Signature pedagogies

Another central feature of the programme is its strongly profiled choice of staff members, who are nationally as well as internationally orientated, and who all bear a very close relationship to contemporary developments in art and design through their work as educators *and* artistic practitioners (whether as an artist, designer, theoretician or curator). We have consciously chosen to select a staff that is profoundly connected to these new developments in the field. Education has an inherent tendency to become institutionalized, meaning that while contemporary developments in the practice of art and design often progress at a steady pace, constantly interacting with societal developments, education moves slowly.

Our curriculum is not based on a fixed top-down model, but strongly relates to the expertise, talent and passion of the tutor and his/her theoretical ethical, moral compass and inner motivation of what needs to be taught. As Lee Shulman explains, a *signature pedagogy* has three dimensions: a surface

structure, deep structure, and implicit structure. Surface structures consist of concrete, operational acts of teaching and learning, while deep structures reflect a set of assumptions about how best to impart a certain body of knowledge and know-how. The implicit structure includes a moral dimension that comprises a set of beliefs about professional attitudes, values, and dispositions.<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to exactly pinpoint the different positions and qualities of the individual staff members, but they all share an interest in critical theory/pedagogy and education philosophy, in viewing art and design education as part of a larger social and societal fabric, in resisting bureaucracy and neo-liberalization in education, and in being very closely connected to contemporary research practices in art and design education. Each seminar has developed a programme in which content and pedagogical underpinning/format are closely interrelated. The seminars represent the core skeleton of the programme, and also the belief that, ultimately, it is the teacher who has the capacity to inspire the student and create an *event* in which the student is capable of opening up a new horizon of learning that transgresses his/her/their own boundaries or belief systems of existing knowledge. This also includes accommodating students with dyslexia or other special needs related to neurodiversity, and helping them to find their way within the course, as well thinking together with them about what kind of research methods or ways of working are right for them.

<sup>2</sup> Schulman, L.S. (2005). "Signature Pedagogies in the Professions". *Daedalus*, 134 (3), pp. 52–59.

### Working methods

The curriculum is conveyed through seminars, group lessons, group critiques/peer feedback, writing, tutorials and individual work and study.

### Seminars

Our programme is offered as a series of two-day seminars that are held once every two weeks. This allows students to immerse themselves in an intensive learning trajectory for a few days each month, but also to determine their own timetable and study in the days between. The seminar structure allows for collaboration and exchange between tutors and Seminars are often co-taught and we invite guest tutors on a regular basis to provide students with different perspectives.

### Group lessons

Group lessons take place in the form of workshops, lectures, excursions, guest lectures, presentations and seminars. Given the seminar structure, group lessons are naturally the most frequent working method, but it is important to balance this out with enough space for individual tutorials.

### Peer feedback

Group critiques serve to test ideas and question practices within the context of a group. The method of peer feedback goes a step further, in that it entails a mutual exchange of perspectives, expertise and ideas, and in that sense, it is more experience-based than group critiques. Within a long trajectory, a peer also always functions as a mirror. Developing and experimenting with peer feedback models is a continuing learning process within the master's programme, in which students themselves also participate.

### Tutorials

Tutorials are carried out by tutors and guest tutors, and serve as a basic point of reference throughout the course. Tutorials are useful in that they:

- are tailored to meet the specific needs of students;
- enable regular, sustained and targeted contact between staff, visiting specialists and students;
- are a flexible format for discussing and learning theory and practice;
- require preparation, as well as a degree of self-management of the students' learning process.

### Individual work and study

At the master level, students are generally expected to work on their own research, creating a set of guidelines for themselves in terms of aims, methodology and time planning, and also how to implement these in their professional practice.

## Research within the master

Our overarching philosophy on research is that it is insufficient to only refer back to the 'traditional' research methods derived from the educational social sciences (empirical research with an emphasis on collecting objective, qualitative research data). Art education is a combination of two words: art and education – two disciplines with different histories, ontologies and research areas. We find it important to stress the fact that what we are dealing with fundamentally is the reciprocity of a pedagogical relationship.

Education theory and philosophy, critical theory and the exploration of contemporary developments in art and design education, as well as lectures and symposia comprise an important part of the curriculum of our course, but it is just as important to learn by doing: experimenting, observing and documenting educational practice, and thinking through how a writing practice might intersperse with other media/methods within a research. Research practices in art education can be considered an *art of inquiry* (Ingold, 2013) where knowledge grows from the multiple practices and interconnected ways of thinking - making - doing (Springgay & Truman, 2017). For the researcher-artist-designer-educator-teacher, qualitative practice-based research is the primary research paradigm. They listen to the views and opinions of participants. Research takes place in the setting of the event, field or in-context.

We have developed an overarching research methodology of practice-based research, in which the reciprocal relationship between theory and practice is a key feature. Students are instructed in the basic method of a practice-based research cycle. This means that they learn the different stages and steps involved in this cycle – from defining a research topic, contextualizing it, reflecting on the appropriate research method, scrutinizing underlying assumptions, and developing a theoretical framework to designing, testing and evaluating an education project in practice. In addition to this basic research cycle, students are encouraged to choose their own research method(s) at hand. This might vary from action research, interviews, design or artistic research, to a comparative case study, et cetera.

We encourage students to find their own position, rather than teaching them one prescribed scientific research paradigm. Handbooks about research

methodologies in art education have widely adopted this principle of mixed methods, also acknowledging the relevance of arts-based artistic research and other experiential research methods. We are noticeably a Master of Education in Arts, not a Master of Fine Arts – this means that while we welcome pedagogical experimentation that transgresses the boundaries of art, design and education, ultimately, any research subject should be able to provide grounds for its feasibility within the context of an educational programme. In addition to that, any research project should present evidence of systematically and structurally executed research, report on this, and draw conclusions.

### Exchange of knowledge

Students are encouraged to attend national as well as international conferences in the field of art/design education. We organize events and lectures and collaborate on a regular basis with the department of Social Practices and the Research Station at the Willem de Kooning Academy and with the following research professors:

- Michelle Teran, Practice-oriented Research Professor of Social Practices  
Her research areas encompass socially engaged and site-specific art, counter-cartographies, social movements, feminist and critical pedagogy.
- Florian Cramer, Research Professor 21<sup>st</sup> Century Visual Culture, Autonomous Practices  
His work focuses on multidisciplinary communal art practices.
- Aymeric Mansoux, Research Professor of Commercial Practices  
His research focusses on alternative economic models and the climate crisis in the context of art and culture production. How can artists and designers contribute to a sustainable economy?

### The school and its facilities

The Piet Zwart Institute has two locations: a school building on the Karel Doormanhof, which at the moment houses the studios and offices of the Master of Fine Arts, and the 4th floor of the Willem de Kooning Academy, which houses the other master's programmes: the Master of Education in Arts; Interior Architecture: Research + Design; Media Design – Experimental Publishing; Media Design – Lens-Based; and the Master of Design. The Master of Education in Arts, being a part-time programme, does not offer studio spaces to its students, but there is a joint classroom/project space available for them.

For students of Education in Arts, it is relevant in an overall interdisciplinary setting to take notice of adjacent fields like social design, design research, social practices, collective practices, community arts, et cetera with respect to their current ramifications in art and design education. The Willem de Kooning Academy, with its so-called stations (thematically orientated workspaces and labs where students can work or follow courses) provides an interesting working environment. The following stations are relevant for our students: Interaction Station, Image & Sound Station, Publication Station, Material Station, Fabric Station, Drawing Station, Research Station and Education Station.

## Admission requirements

We expect students to master basic academic skills in writing and thinking, and to possess a sufficient degree of self-direction in the ability to focus, plan and give shape to their studies and to formulate the direction of their research.

The admission criteria are as follows:

- a bachelor's degree in the field of art education or a related field;
- provable experience in art/design education or an adjacent field;
- provable affinity or experience with research in art education;
- the intention to combine one's study with one's professional practice in a meaningful way, and in the case of an absence of a structural professional practice in art education, the intention to further develop this throughout the study;
- proof of sufficient command of English; foreign students must provide a sufficient TOEFL or IELTS score; Dutch students are interviewed.

Admission is based on a review of the student's letter of motivation, CV, portfolio and an open interview in which compatibility with the programme on both sides will be discussed.

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## Overview of the programme

The Master of Education in Arts is a two-year, part-time master of 60 ECTS. The study load is 16 to 20 hours a week. Students have classes at the Piet Zwart Institute every two weeks on Friday and Saturday and are able to make use of all the facilities (stations) at the Willem de Kooning Academy. The weeks in between the classes are designated to preparing for the seminars through reading, writing, research and working on a self-directed research trajectory, which can also encompass gaining practical teaching experience in education, pedagogy and curriculum development. The ECTS are awarded at the end of each module. All modules should be passed and students are required to follow the entire module in order to earn the required ECTS.

### *Course Structure Master of Education in Arts / part time*

Course name	ECTS
TRIMESTER 1	
Contemporary Issues in Art & Design Education Seminar	5
Practice and Research Seminar	5
TRIMESTER 2	
Pedagogies of Study Seminar	5
Practice and Research Seminar	5
TRIMESTER 3	
Making Things Public Seminar	5
Practice and Research Seminar	5
TRIMESTER 4	
Graduation Project Seminar	10
TRIMESTER 5	
Graduation Project	
TRIMESTER 6	
Graduation Project	20
Total amount of ECTS	60

Above: Linear overview of all the trimesters and the number of ECTS assigned to each module.  
Next page: Concentric overview providing information about the basic structure of the programme.





1-6 Trimester 1-6

CIADE Contemporary Issues in Art and Design Education Seminar

A, B, C, D Module Evaluation  
 E Mid-Term Evaluation  
 F Preliminary Evaluation  
 G Graduation Presentation/Exam



## The curriculum in focus: module descriptions

Below is a brief overview of the modules that are taught at present. Please note that the curriculum may change in response to current issues and practices within the field of art education. Rather than being fixed or canonical, the modules within our course are tailored to meet the challenging demands of a constantly changing cultural and educational environment.

### YEAR 1

#### Practice and Research Seminar (Trimester 1–2–3)

The *Practice and Research Seminar (PRS)* is a central module offered in the first year of the course. Its main emphasis is on the student's development and positioning as a practitioner/educator in the broad field of arts education. *PRS* entails developing skills, experience and knowledge about critical reading, writing and research methods as well as practical experimentation with pedagogical approaches. Sessions are composed of tutorials, group discussions, workshops and exercises. The overall goal is to complete a preparatory research trajectory in the first year, which allows students to:

- develop an integral perspective on what it means to do practice-based research;
- write a research proposal for their graduation project.

At the Master of Education in Art we believe that practice and research are completely interconnected. A research-oriented, practice-based MEiA requires experimenting with art/design education and adjacent experimental fields, as well as learning how to apply research and writing skills. This seminar thus has two strands: firstly, developing a growing body of practice-based research and secondly, developing critical reading, writing and research skills. It is important to discuss and explore ways in which educational practices can be informed by theoretical investigation (and close observation) and vice versa. Throughout the year, various individual and collective exercises are designed to set up a dialogue between all participants in the course, in which experience and knowledge about every aspect of doing research can be shared. Not only does this offer new approaches to the students' questions, it also contributes to creating common ground for communicating ideas and knowledge between people working in a widely dispersed professional field. The approach to this *PRS* module is based on the close interrelation and overlapping of these two strands. Hence, it has one team of course tutors who are closely in touch with each other.

In the first year, the programme offers three thematic seminars that explore and discuss themes and topicalities relevant to the field of art and design education. The goal of these seminars is to develop an understanding of research and teaching practice in relation to a broader artistic, educational, pedagogical and theoretical context. The students are encouraged to relate the contents of these seminars to their own evolving research and positioning.

#### Contemporary Issues in Art and Design Education Seminar (Trimester 1)

Discussions about art education are constantly in flux and are much related to developments in other sectors – artistic as well as societal. This seminar taps into recent debates by exploring a central contemporary thematic/discussion in art education, allowing students to explore it from their own angles and professional backgrounds.

The latest edition of the seminar, called *Learning with Others*, focused on the topical issue of how the current ecological crisis raises questions for education in the future. How do educational practices take into account the perspectives of others, both human and non-human? How might educational practices in art academies, primary/secondary schools, museums, and communities relate to environments and contexts outside their institutional frameworks, thinking from a multi-scalar, multi-species, interwoven perspective? While this topic might sound abstract, students will find out that it is closer to their own contexts and practices than they originally had thought. It might mean challenging the prevailing idea of learning spaces, such as traditional classrooms, workshops and studios. It could entail addressing disciplinary divisions and specializations and reaching out to other bodies of knowledge. It might mean promoting embodied, artistic, experiential, and more open and vulnerable approaches to learning. Through observation, documentation, and note-taking, students will be engaged in a collective research process and collaborate in creating a shared glossary. This seminar questions disciplinary divisions in art education and foregrounds an interdisciplinary, collaborative way of working and studying.

### Pedagogies of Study Seminar (Trimester 2)

The underlying ‘philosophy’ of this seminar is to encourage students to investigate different educational and pedagogical theories and insights in areas adjacent to their specific discipline, educational field and research theme. The seminar revolves around exploring the following question: How can we study together? The returning focus of the seminar will be the tension between the institutional setting of education and the transformative possibilities of the pedagogical encounter.

Through frameworks such as study, critical pedagogy and decoloniality, this seminar pays attention to how education can in certain fundamental ways be at odds with learning and unlearning, thinking critically and relating to each other. *Pedagogies of Study* will engage this meta-level of education by foregrounding conceptualization, experience and collaboration. The seminar offers frameworks around which the students come together and partake in collective study in both improvisational and situated ways. The ultimate aim is to increase the ability of participants to understand and act within their various artistic, pedagogical and professional contexts. The key issue is that students know how to position themselves and be politically well aware of the multiple situations in which they operate.

### Making Things Public Seminar (Trimester 3)

This seminar deals with the public dimension of art education outside the institutional environment of the school or academy and discusses the latest developments in this field. This includes educational strategies and programmes in museums and galleries (from regular educational programmes to the public outreach projects of museums with a community-arts-like character) and those adopted by artists/designers who develop projects that are affiliated with educational or pedagogic strategies.

What is ‘the public’ or ‘publicness’ and how is it approached by artists, museums and art educators? How does one make things ‘public’ within these contexts? The notion of publicness has changed over time, as has the response to it by contemporary artistic/design practice. The museum or gallery setting no longer dictates how publics are conceived or how artists/designers should engage with them. Within and outside of arts institutions, new experimental

strategies and media are constantly being explored, and the notion of participation seems to play a more central role than ever before. But how do we deconstruct the notions of participation, collaboration, inclusion or collective practices and what are the consequences of ‘making things public’?

Stimulating dialogue and exchange between theory, research and practice in art education, this seminar presents examples from different art institutions, artists and arts educators and discusses art education as a critical practice. How do various arts educators conceive of their publics? How can educational projects and programmes be developed in different settings? Which skills and tools are needed to work with different audiences? Using the student’s own educational projects as a departure point, this seminar aims to help students conceptualize different approaches for different publics and to develop and test strategies for their educational projects through a final assignment.

## YEAR 2

### Graduation Project Seminar (Trimester 4)

The Graduation Project Seminar supports students during the early phase of their graduate research. It consists of a series of thematic workshops with course tutors and guests. These are meant to provide students with significant insights into the feasibility and potential of their graduation project. This seminar examines the various positions students may occupy as a researcher in art education. This process of positioning themselves as a practitioner is different from the first year, in that it dives deeper and takes into account their current role as researcher and practitioner at the same time. We will work with the different roles that students ‘embody’: researcher, observer, art educator, artist/designer and/or initiator of change. Students are invited to reflect on their own particular way of thinking and working. The specific challenges of practice-based research are also examined: What does it mean to document and observe pedagogical experimentation through different media and source materials? How can we deal productively with the gaps between our intentions and our actions? What strategies help us get the most out of the institutional realities we face during our research? There are two main assignments connected with this seminar: a pilot study and peer observation exchange.

### Graduation Project (Trimesters 5 and 6)

The last two trimesters of the course are set aside for individual research and the implementation of the student’s graduation project. Students have regular tutorials with their supervisors and are engaged in peer-feedback groups. In Trimester 5, the course organizes a moment of collective exchange with peers, supervisors and external critics. Trimester 6 is geared toward the finalization and (public) presentation of the graduation project.

## Team profile and online platform

Within our staff we strive to have a balanced representation of the different fields of expertise, levels and disciplines in art education. On our website you can find a detailed overview of our staff: <https://www.pzward.nl/master-education-in-arts/staff-and-tutors/>

The course makes use of an internal online portal/website, part of *MyWdKA*, that is accessible to staff and students. Students can find and download all the relevant information about the course there, and also share and post their work as it progresses. The platform is a central hub for information and the exchange of course content as well as of student work.

## Programme evaluation

Student quality assurance involves procedures for monitoring and evaluating the level and quality of the WdKA's master's programmes. The formal activities in this regard are a quality assurance questionnaire and a meeting organized by the WdKA.

Our course also organizes frequent course evaluations in which the course director, students and tutors jointly participate. This allows the students to provide informed feedback directly related to the content and structure of the study programme, and gives the course director an opportunity to implement feedback from students. Furthermore, students can meet individually with the course director or coordinator at any time for questions or issues regarding their individual needs or urgent matters.

Due to the compact managerial structure at the Piet Zwart Institute, there is no specific PZI Curriculum Committee, but the course directors individually, and operating as a team within the structural Course Directors Meetings, play a vital central role in constantly evaluating the content and quality of the curriculum together with students, staff and relevant committees. In the case of the Master of Education in Arts, structural staff meetings are held every few months to evaluate the curriculum as a whole and to evaluate other more detailed aspects of the different seminars/modules. In addition to that, the course is evaluated in the advisory board, consisting of:

- Yoeri Meessen, Head of Education & Interpretation at Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam
- Loes Bogers, Creative practitioner/researcher/educator based in Rotterdam. Coordinator and senior lecturer of ArtechLAB at the Amsterdam University of the Arts (AHK)
- Jules Sturm, teacher and researcher at the MA Education in Arts at the ZHdK in Zurich and at various art schools in the Netherlands in the fields of art education, critical studies and transdisciplinarity.

The graduation procedure (rights, rules and obligations for students and staff) is monitored by the Exam Board.



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## Our vision of student-centred assessment

It is important to emphasize that the advanced level and quality of master programmes are based on an assumption of maturity and self-assessment skills. In addition to the formal assessments made by tutors, it is imperative to remember that, through the dialogue-based learning within each module, the students are assessing and reflecting upon their work and research together with their peers and tutors. Within the Master of Education in Arts, we adhere to a student-centred assessment model in which self-assessment, peer-assessment, individual and group assessment and tutor assessment go hand-in-hand. We adhere to the following principles:

- *Assessments are for learning (not of learning)*  
Assessments should not just be used to provide evidence that learning outcomes have been achieved; they should be student-centred, placing the emphasis on student engagement, self-assessment and feedback. This means making different kinds of assessments (self, peer, group, staff), as well as foregrounding formative assessment and summative assessment.
- *Assessments are tailored to fit the situation*  
Assessments should be aligned with the content and pedagogical foundation of each seminar, and be formulated in specific, clear and transparent language. At the same time, it should be acknowledged that learning is a transformative experience that goes beyond the parameters of assessment.
- *Dialogue & integrating assessment literacy into the course design*  
We try to foster a common atmosphere of mutual trust and learning and an active engagement with evaluation standards in order to allow students to develop their own, internalized concepts of standards and to supervise their own learning. Assessment and feedback processes should actively engage both staff and students in dialogue about the standards.

## Modes of assessment

We use two modes of assessment to monitor and reflect upon the student's progress.

### Seminar evaluations

These evaluations are a mixture of individual and collective self-assessment, peer and tutor assessment and are conducted on the basis of assignments (collective and individual), presentations, and written (research) reports. These modular assessments function as indicators of the student's progress and development within the course. The seminars in the first year are concluded with a non-numerical summative assessment, related to a set of evaluation criteria that are communicated beforehand. In addition, students receive extensively written holistic feedback. We have developed a trajectory running through both years in which participants are guided step-by-step in formulating their own criteria for self-evaluation.



### Integrated evaluations

These assessments take place four times during the programme, in Trimesters 3, 4, 5 and 6. It is crucial that students are able to integrate skills, experiences and knowledge into their developing practice. In other words, the focus is not on a set of separated skills and aspects of knowledge, but on the ability to use and integrate experiences and knowledge as an independent learner and practitioner. From Trimester 3 onward, collective moments of presentation and integrated work evaluations are built in. In Trimester 3, students present their graduation project proposals. In Trimester 4, they present a pilot study of their graduation research and a peer observation. Self-assessment and peer-assessment play an important part in these presentations. The Mid-Term evaluation in Trimester 5, when the students present their research to peers, staff and external guests, is completely led by peer feedback. The Preliminary Evaluation and the Graduation Exam are summative. That having been said, self-assessment is a central feature of these evaluations as well.

### Competencies: guidelines & incentives for experimentation

The competencies within the Master of Education in Arts follow two sets of guidelines: those described by the KDVO (Kunstvakdocentenoverleg), and the Dublin Descriptors. On the national level, the five main competencies are defined as Artistic Ability, Pedagogic and Didactical Ability, Ability to Act (originally called Cultural Entrepreneurship Ability), Researching Ability and Ability to Reflect Critically. In order to make these five main competencies relevant for staff and students, we have translated them into ‘competency indicators’: a set of clear incentives, guidelines and keywords which are closely related to the content of the course and which are formulated such that they are comprehensible for the students and speak to the students’ evolving body of research. The complete overview can be found in the *MEiA Competencies & Grading Chart* (see pp.25).

We familiarize participants with the competencies from the start of the course, and gradually they are guided in the process of appropriating them as criteria to evaluate their research. It is important to recognize that competencies are intertwined and practiced from different perspectives throughout the course, certainly in the first year. It is equally important to open up and discuss them with the students, so that the competencies can be transformed from abstract terms into useful tools and guidelines that students make their own. The course has developed a *Curriculum Overview* which provides an insight into the relation between the course structure, competencies and assessment/evaluation criteria.

### Education at the master level

Given the current complexity and interdisciplinarity in the fields of art and design, it is not possible to provide students with a complete overview of recent developments in art education, museum education, or pedagogical theory within the given timespan of two years. It is possible, however, as the Dublin Descriptors also stipulate, to train students to develop an independent, critical, ethically grounded, research-like attitude and an interdisciplinary mindset. Extrapolating this to the practice of our master’s programme, three additional arguments may be stated:



- Students at the master level are able to contextualize and conceptualize their practice and to relate both to its specific institutional context *and* to its larger cultural, societal and ethical context.
- Students reflect on, and engage with, their teaching practice at an increasingly conceptual and theoretical level, by theorising their practical knowledge and experience and applying theoretical knowledge to their daily practice.
- An important notion within the Master of Education in Arts is that of the ‘learning community’ – a small community of professionals coming together from different disciplines. This learning community advocates the idea of peer learning and the ability to see things from different perspectives and disciplinary contexts (national/international; inside/outside school; public/private; academy/school; formal/informal; art/design; media/analogue). This ability to develop and master a transdisciplinary viewpoint is a distinctive master level qualification.

### *MEiA Competencies & Grading Chart*

Grades and descriptors					
Fail (4) Near Pass (5)	Pass (6)	Good Pass (7)	Very Good Pass (8)	Pass with Merit (9)	Pass with Distinction (10)
Limited & inadequate abilities	Sufficient, but not well-developed abilities	Clearly articulated & skilled abilities	Strongly articulated & well-developed abilities	Outstanding & highly developed abilities	Superb & distinctive abilities
<b>Competencies</b> Required for the Master of Education in Arts		<b>Competency indicator</b> Upon graduation, students will have acquired the final competencies listed below. It is important to recognize that competencies are intertwined and practiced from different perspectives throughout the course.			
<b>Artistic Ability (A)</b>		<p><b>A1: media, materialization</b> The ability to show an experimental attitude and inventiveness in choosing the appropriate expression and materialization for their research/practice.</p> <p><b>A2: proficiency, interdisciplinarity</b> The ability to demonstrate proficiency in the creative process within a broad educational, social and artistic context, and when relevant, draw on insights in collaboration with others and from other disciplines.</p> <p><b>A3: art &lt; &gt; education</b> The ability to give shape to and direct artistic and educational/pedagogical positions and processes, meaningfully connecting the two.</p> <p><b>A4: positioning and contribution to the field</b> The ability to actively participate in discussions on art education (may include formal as well as informal settings) and to contribute to these discussions, while being able to articulate their position in the field.</p>			
Based on a personal and distinctive vision, the student designs (interdisciplinary) artistic and/or design processes and situates these within contemporary art-education contexts.					
<b>Pedagogical and Didactical Ability (P)</b>		<p><b>P1: research &lt; &gt; application of pedagogy</b> The ability to observe and investigate pedagogical insights and theories, experimentally applying these insights, and contributing to new developments within their field.</p> <p><b>P2: context &lt; &gt; application of pedagogy</b> The ability to define the context as well as audiences, participants or students they want to work with, and to develop specific pedagogical working methods suitable for the intended setting and situation.</p> <p><b>P3: communication &amp; reflection with regard to pedagogical foundation</b> The ability to attentively describe and reflect on the choice of their underlying pedagogical/didactical framework.</p> <p><b>P4: vision &amp; ethics</b> The ability to use their own vision and professional ethics as guidelines for their practice.</p>			
Based on a personal vision of both art and/or design and of education, the student initiates, designs, guides and evaluates processes and projects in the field of art education, and implements these processes and projects within a contemporary context.					

### Ability to Act\* (E)

The student bases their practice on their ability to act, or "culturally entrepreneurial attitude", while demonstrating a professional attitude grounded in social and ethical engagement.

E1: implementation within broader ethical, societal dimensions

The ability to engage with the on-going debate on the public, social and ethical dimensions of art/design education and to create sustainable learning environments and communities.

E2: ability to act, agency

The ability to anticipate new developments and challenges in their field, and to identify their ability to act and realize ambitions within the given circumstances.

E3: find or create suitable context

The ability to actively explore the field and to find a suitable context for their practice/research, contacting relevant parties while reaching out and expanding their network.

E4: organizational skills

The ability to communicate, consult and negotiate on organizational matters, as well as on content-related aspects of their project and practice.

### Researching Ability (R)

Based on a well-grounded methodology, the student designs and conducts practice-oriented research and is able to report, critically evaluate and communicate the results of this research.

R1: research — focus, situatedness

The capacity to bring focus, depth and situatedness to their research in ways that are relevant to the expanded field of art/design education.

R2: research — contextualization

The ability to critically assess and analyse national and international sources and practices, in order to contextualize and provide a theoretical framework/preparatory research for their educational practice.

R3: research — gathering and structuring material

The capacity to conduct practice-based and/or artistic research and to develop a pedagogical practice within a relevant context, evaluating and test-casing this practice while collecting and structuring relevant documentation material.

R4: methodology research < > practice

The ability to connect theory and practice-oriented and/or artistic research, through the framework of well-defined research methodologies and/or working methods.

R5: research — reflection, communication, dissemination

The ability to reflect upon and communicate their research in written, oral form or with the use of other media, and to share and disseminate their research to relevant publics.

### Ability to Reflect Critically (C)

The student demonstrates an auto-didactic and critically reflective attitude that is grounded in an awareness of artistic and pedagogical visions as well as complex social and ethical issues.

C1: self-direction, self-criticality

The capacity to independently shape their own learning process in a relevant way.

C2: self-reflection, collective reflection

The ability to critically assess and discuss research and working methods in order to develop their work further and to survey the implications of choices and decisions, which concerns the engagement in processes of reflection on their own and in dialogue with others.

C3: critical reflection

The ability to critically reflect on their knowledge of theories and core concepts and the sources they study within their research.

\* The original name of this ability, within the nationally set competencies, is cultural entrepreneurship. It has been translated to make it more applicable to the course while remaining compliant with the national guidelines.

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