



**HDK-VALAND**

**PM**

K2FOT, Master of Fine Arts Programme in Photography

**Anna Strand/The Film, Photography and Literary Composition Unit**

**PM: 2023:05**

## Introduction

As part of the systematic quality work of the University of Gothenburg and the Faculty of Fine Arts, the programme K2FOT, Master of Fine Arts Programme in Photography, was audited during the academic year 22/23. In accordance with instructions, the review referred to the academic year, VT21/HT22. The assessment group consisted of Björn Larsson, chairman, Cecilia Järdegar and Edith Pasquier. The report was submitted to HDK-VALAND, University of Gothenburg on 15 May 2023.

The basis for the assessment team's evaluation included written documentation and site visits. The written documentation consisted of policy documents such as education and course syllabi, documentation of development work and changes in the education, student evaluations, annual development and action plans, statistical material regarding student completion rates, information about teachers in the programmes, course guides (Canvas pages) and a selection of assignments and independent work. During site visits, the assessment team conducted interviews with students, alumni, teachers, programme director, head of unit, deputy head of education, head of department, education officer, HR and technical manager.

The work of the assessment team was concluded with a report whose content was agreed with the institution before finalization. Based on this assessment report, this memorandum and an action plan have been formulated in the form of a matrix. The action plan has been developed by the programme director.

The process of writing an action plan started with a draft by the programme director. This was followed by a processing phase where the programme manager, teachers, head of unit and deputy head of education discussed the draft.

Before the action plan was approved by the Faculty Board, it was presented to the department's education council, the department's management group, the department council and further to KF BUGA (the Faculty Board working group for preparations for education at the undergraduate and advanced level). On **xx.xx.xx**, the action plan was approved by the Board of the Faculty of Arts.

## Conclusions from the assessment report

Based on the assessment report, HDK-VALAND concludes that the following measures should be taken to fulfil the eight evaluation criteria set by GU for external assessment of education (see next section).

- Preserving the unique study environment and knowledge that exists in the programme and at the same time develop the programme in relation to new photographic technologies and new areas for usage of photography within current frameworks.
- Make more visible that we operate in an environment where both artistic and scientific aspects are strongly present.

Comments and suggestions for measures by the assessment team

The assessment groups comments and proposals for action are summarised below, based on the eight evaluation criteria. A comprehensive list of the measures to be taken by the institution is presented in the appendix. The action plan will be followed up annually at the quarterly conferences within each unit at HDK-VALAND.

### **1: That the actual study results correspond to the learning objectives and the degree objectives of the Higher Education Regulation**

*Comments and suggestions from the assessment team:*

The assessment team considers the program, as well as the actual study results, to be in correspondence with the learning objectives and degree objectives in the Higher Education Ordinance.

The assessment team wonders however how the balance between practice and theory in the programme is affected by the stated purpose formulated in the curriculum, where the emphasis is placed on the student's ability to speech and writing critically reflect on their own and others' artistic work.

They are also questioning if the current subject description for Photography encompasses a broad-enough field of photographic practices and developments.

*They suggest:*

- *Reflect on how the learning trajectory and progression is affected by students applying with a project which is then developed during the program.*
- *Photography is increasingly a complex medium without any singular characteristics, and with this in mind, it may be useful to revisit and rework the subject description.*

*Current situation:*

In the curriculum we would like it to be clearly stated that the individual photographic work of the students is in the core of the programme, in a subordinate clause it is stated that emphasis is also placed on the student's ability to, in speech and writing, critically reflect on their own and others' artistic work. In parallel with discussions and analyses on their photographic work, we have found that knowledge of theoretical references and the ability to write and express themselves verbally on their practical work helps our students to develop and deepen their practices'. After the programme, it is of great importance for them to be able to contextualise and describe their work in order to apply for, for

example, exhibitions and grants. And to be able to work in other artistic fields such as curator, pedagogue or intendent. We will review the curriculum to clarify our intensions.

In the Application process, as a part of a letter of intent, applicants are asked to describe a project to be developed during the program. It has been a way for us to understand where the applicants are heading, not a contract for what to be performed if being accepted. With that said a majority of applicants has chosen not to include a project description, instead they tend to write on an area of interest. For that reason, it is not possible to fully evaluate how the learning trajectory and progression has been affected by students applying with a project. We however have come to realise that using the term project description has been understood as more binding than intended by the assessment team, as well as some applicants.

*What measures should be taken?*

- A retake on instructions for applicants. Shorten the letter of intent. Instead of a project description ask applicants to write on an area or areas of interest. Themes, materiality's or questions they wish to explore within the program. Keep the instruction to; Explain your reasons and objectives for applying to the MFA in Photography.
- Review the program curriculum.
- Rewrite the subject description for photography together with the BA programme, with awareness of the plurality of characteristics and areas of application of/for photography.

## **2: That the teaching puts students' learning at the centre**

*Comments and suggestions from the assessment team:*

The assessment team questions if the annual cross-departmental elective course programme is truly elective.

*They suggest:*

- *Evaluate the upcoming change in the cross-departmental elective courses, to make sure they are relevant for students and give access to skills that are not currently part of the curriculum.*

*Current situation:*

VT23 the courses \*Decolonialism in Contemporary Art and Film\*, \* Museum Studies - Current Research\* and \*Artist Book\* was offered as a selection to the master students at the MFA Photography, Fine Art and Film.

Students are required to take 7.5hp + 7.5hp of elective courses which in this case equates to two out of three courses, raising the question of choice when options are limited. The institution recognises this issue and is implementing a new plan for elective course development.

Instead of basing electives on the individual subjects, they will be derived from research clusters and centres that operates within and with the institution. This means that the research conducted at our institution will shape the available elective courses, providing greater intentionality and context. The foundation in the research clusters will provide a context outside of the respective programmes while maintaining ties with traditional subject areas. These courses offer the students a broader context to operate within, applying and developing their respective subject specific knowledge in relation to the different sets of knowledge bases that the students bring with them.

While remaining elective the focus will shift from *making* to *skills acquiring and application* in the courses respective research field. Since all courses will be constructed from the research clusters they will hopefully be seen as more 'equal' and similarly attractive as well as offers a wider selection for the students.

*What measures should be taken?*

- Director of Studies will, in dialogue with the Programme Directors, develop the elective courses.
- Programme Director takes the elective courses in to consideration when developing the programme courses to make sure there is an interplay between the courses.
- Director of Studies develops a new method and system in regard to the elective courses.

*Comments and suggestions from the assessment team:*

The assessment team identifies a demand from students and alumni for more practical and experimental workshop-based short courses or classes within the practical courses in order to develop their individual photographic work.

*They suggest:*

- *Can there be more short courses to allow for more experimental practical approaches where students can work alongside peers from other departments?*
- *Consider how the students can acquire practical knowledge and explore new technologies and photographic approaches. Would it be possible to offer joint courses for both BA and MA*

*students? Is Practical Fridays the right format, or do the workshops/courses need to be more extensive?*

- *Make sure all teaching is accessible to international students.*

*Current situation:*

The MA program is based on and prioritizes the students' individual or collaborative work, access to workshops, teachers and technicians, that are not introduced to the whole group, happens in line with what a student or a small group discovers in their processes'. Access to additional workshops can be applied for via the program director. Additional tutorials that happen with teachers and technicians, not connected to the programme, also happens informally. Last semester one of our graduating MA students had tutorials with two teachers from film, another one with a teacher from fine art and one student worked with the laser cutter in the 3D scanning and printing workshop with guidance from a technician. One of our teachers had tutorials with a student from the Fine art Master programme. This is exchanges between subjects that we are aware of; further exchanges have probably occurred.

Shorter technical, practical and collective workshops are not our main priority on MA level and within Photographic Work I-IV courses. With that said, some thematic, and to some extent, practical workshops and seminars' have been implemented the last couple of years, for example on collages, the poster format and titles.

We have discovered a recurrent need among our students to work with a range of equipment in the 3D lab and model workshop, such as the 3D printer, equipment for photogrammetry and the laser cutter. Since we agree with our students that this is a workshop of high relevance, when working with photography, we will look into the possibility of giving all students in the MA program a formal introduction.

*What measures should be taken?*

- In the new building, the workshops will be organised differently, with each technical area having a section with a low entry level that requires no prior knowledge. We hope that these places will enable meetings across disciplines. In connection with this, we will explore the possibility of simple introductions to the equipment used in the workshop.
- For autumn 2024 the elective course "Artist book" are being reworked and will become part of the programme. The new course "The photographic publication", will involve several short workshops on making and printing booklets and books, book binding and digital programming and publishing.
- Give all students in the MA program a formal introduction to the 3D workshop.

- Examine, with head of unit, the possibility for a visible and formal system with a pool of hours for individual tutorials, workshops and exchange between teachers from photography and teachers from all other subjects within the institution.
- Inform new MA students, that all teaching on MA-level is given in English. The BA programme is however given in Swedish. Students in the MA programme, that understand Swedish, will be invited to join open artist talks etc. )

*Comments and suggestions from the assessment team:*

The assessment team describes the project spaces as an important area for testing ideas and showcasing work in progress. Although the students involved in the review demonstrated a range of media and approaches to photography (prints, extended photography with sculpture, moving image), it became apparent to them that the spaces were primarily suited to prints and 'dry work. Moving image work could be jeopardised (the difficulty of making the rooms dark) and they wondered how much these spaces leads to the development of a certain type of work, at the expense of work that challenges the nature of the rooms. Both students and alumni testified to this. Another space-related issue affecting the choices made within the students' practice is the lack of storage space for works, which in practice makes larger installations impossible to realize.

*Current situation:*

All project spaces differ in size, windows or not, possibility to make dark, access to water, etc. With that said most of them are clean white spaces. We are acknowledging that the characteristics of the spaces might affect development of work. Projects spaces are shared with fine art and in discussion with them we have decided to try to have two "dirty" spaces from autumn 2023. That means that these rooms must be cleaned after use, but not repainted. Both dirty project spaces will eventually have water.

How to think about production and storage is part of discussions on artistic and professional practice within photographic work I- IV and Professional development I and II. With that said we will look into the possibility of closing out light in all project spaces and, based on further feedback from students, other minor changes. After HT23/VT24 we will also evaluate if two or more dirty project spaces were and would be of benefit for students in photography.

*Comments and suggestions from the assessment team:*

To the Assessment team the milieu at HDK-Valand appears somewhat closed to the exterior, with both students and alumni speaking of a lack of opportunities to have tutorials and critiques with external practitioners before their final examination.

*They suggest:*

- *Consider the importance of giving students the opportunity to have tutorials and/or crits with external practitioners before the exam.*
- *Explore the possibility to find a framework for swapping hours and share guest speakers across departments.*
- *Re-establish a positive staff relationship with the fine art department.*

*Current situation:*

We agree with the description above, we have fewer guests and guest tutorials with artists and others active outside the academy within Photographic work courses I–IV compared with theory courses. In that sense we are somewhat closed to the exterior. This year we have tried to mitigate the situation by circling photo teachers, that are hired on artistic grounds, on part-time contracts and active outside the academy as artists, between year groups. We also need to prioritize external guests in our planning and operating budget. It is of great importance to express and maintain a balance between artistic research and artistic work outside the university as possible outcomes of the programme.

We do not see a particular problem in our relationship with fine art. It is important to develop relationships and find possible areas for collaboration and exchange with all subjects at HDK-Valand. Our focus, the last couple of years, has been put on film and literary composition since we are in a relatively new unit. Exchanges has on MA level mainly happened within theory courses and elective courses but will also be considered in practical courses.

*What measures should be taken?*

- Examine the possibility of exchanges with other art schools / universities with teachers who are active as artists with photography as a main medium or area of interest.
- Prioritize external artist guests (within the current operational budget and in balance with guests in theory courses) in Photographic work II – IV courses.



*Comments and suggestions from the assessment team:*

The assessment team points out that theory courses seem dynamic and very well-functioning with an approach that supports the view that the master's program is a preparation for artistic research and doctoral studies. On the other hand, they question the outcome of the theory – asking if students can formulate their project as artistic research at the end of the master's program?

*They suggest:*

- *To give more support to prepare students who want to follow a research path to doctoral studies.*

*Current situation:*

Artistic work is in the core of the MA programme in photography, as well as the starting point and engine for all artistic research. In theory and professional development courses we are providing an understanding of the field for artistic research, conditions and frameworks are discussed. Our ambition is to give our MA students capacity to develop their artistic work and their writing towards artistic research, if that is their chosen path. In the course Professional Development students are presented to opportunities and requirements to apply for a PHD position both in Sweden and abroad. In MA forum they meet and interact with artists researchers based in and outside Sweden.

During spring 2023 there has been a call for applications for PHD positions at HDK-Valand. Three of our former MA students in photography have submitted high quality applications. Leading up to the deadline Mick Wilson, Professor of Art. and Director of Doctoral Studies, at HDK-Valand, had public online workshops on how to write an application.

*What measures should be taken?*

- We are developing a research-preparatory reading module for all master's programs at the department to start 2026. Responsible is director of studies BA/MA and VP education

*Comments and suggestions from the assessment team:*

The assessment team has the impression that guest lectures from the research field easily and often without cost has been integrated into the theory courses of the MA program, but visiting artists are "put on hold" due to lack of funding. Management noted that this was a remnant of the pandemic when lectures were on zoom, but the groups impression from teaching staff was that they did not have the opportunity to invite visiting artists for lectures, critiques, and studio visits.

*They suggest:*

- *To investigate how the teaching theory model affects the priorities and structures of the overall content.*

*Current situation:*

In theory courses guests are most often invited to present their artistic work or research for an hour + preparation time. If they are researchers, their presentation might happen as part of a collaboration or an exchange with our researchers and for that reason without cost.

If the presentations happen within MA forum, which is part of theory courses, we share costs for guests with film.

When we invite artist, curators, critics etc in Photographic Work I – IV courses it is more often for tutorials or as opponents in examinations, sometimes in combination with a presentation, in other words more time-consuming tasks.

Economic factors and the amount of work hours explain why we have fewer guests in Photographic Work I- IV courses, but it can easily be miss-read by students as artistic work being less prioritized within the programme (even if some of the presentations within theory courses are by artists).

*What measures should be taken?*

- Rethink the format for guest tutorials, can they be shorter, in group etc.
- Also see: What measures to be taken on page 10

### **3: That the content and format of teaching are based on scientific and/or artistic principles and proven experience**

Comments and suggestions from the assessment team:

The Assessment team writes.

*“The content and form of the teaching is well rooted in artistic foundations and proven experience with the teaching methods developed to adapt to the specific conditions of*

*photographic practices and their different relationships with society. All teachers in the program are prominent and active artists from a range of photographic fields and have adequate pedagogic education and experience.”*

But they are also identifying a risk based on the course programme; that photography falls into a clear canon, with a definition of photography as a singular and stable medium that dissolved long ago.

*They suggest:*

- *Consider how to develop possibilities for collaborative practices or collaboration amongst the students and support interdisciplinary practices. For example, to create a forum where students from different disciplines are able to meet and share ideas.*
- *Consider how to broaden the conception of photography to include numerous canons of photographs, and support diverse practices and ways of working, through dialogue and co-teaching with other programmes, eg. The fine art programme with their guest lecturers, artist talks.*

*Current situation:*

We already have interdisciplinary elective courses that will gradually include all subjects at the department. The course content will also be developed with thematic research-related courses where you meet across subject boundaries in a common theme.

There is always a risk of canonisation – explicit or not. We try to avoid this by continuously working with problematisation of canonisation in our programme and course planning, and in our ongoing conversation with students. The varying references that our students contribute with in for example critic class is another constructive starting point for this work. Our partaking in the lecture series Global Photographies is an additional example.

What is unique about the MA programme in fine art of photography is that we are a separate subject, but with a fine art focus. Since we are working within an artistic framework, collaboration with fine art is not more necessary than with other subjects, rather it is other practices and applications of photography that we would like to emphasize even more further on.

Other photographic fields are in other words introduced, while most students' field is the artistic, with the photographic or something photographic as a starting point.

At the same time, we have identified a growing number of applicants with BA exams in other, relevant subjects, such as sociology, comparative literature and visual communication, in combination with experience of practical photographic and artistic work and strong photographic work samples. They bring knowledge to the programme that further help us avoid canonization.

*What measures should be taken?*

- We will continue to develop elective courses and co-reading between all the department's subjects as a way for students to meet across disciplines.
- Continue to actively work against canonization in our programme and course planning, and in conversation with students.
- Continue and strengthen existing collaborations with for example Global Photographics, Hasselblad Center, Fotogalleriet Format and Landskrona Photo.
- Extend coteaching with other subjects at HDK-Valand is being planned, from 2026 at least 7,5 hp per semester.

**4: That teaching staff have up-to-date and adequate subject-specific, higher education pedagogical and subject didactic skills, and that teaching staff numbers are in proportion to the scope and content of the education**

*Comments and suggestions from the assessment team:*

*They suggest:*

- *Consider how to include course and pedagogical development time alongside photographic and artistic practice development.*
- *Review pedagogical forums with the aim that they include all forms of learning within the programme.*
- *Considering the development of the discipline through plans for competence supply.*

*Current situation:*

Regarding course development, the time for regular course development, such as yearly updates of each course, is included in the allocation of time for the course responsible. If there are larger revisions of a course or a program, or if we develop a new course, a teacher or a team of teachers can be allocated extra time.

When it comes to pedagogical development alongside photographic and artistic practice development, all teachers are allocated development time: lecturers (adjunkter) have 10% development time, senior lecturers (lektorer) have 15% development time and professors have 20% development time. It was identified through the ARK-survey (work environment survey) in 2023 that the development time often is not prioritized in scheduling working tasks and then there is a risk that the development time is eaten up by teaching or administrative tasks. Therefore, the unit manager together with the research representant and the education representant in the unit have mapped out different forms of ongoing

development work to bring forward good examples in how to organize development work, to inspire colleagues to think strategically about the development time. New ideas are emerging on how to collaborate on projects that lead to competence development, pedagogic development and development in photography and artistic practice. In parallel the leadership group are working on structures that enable teachers to meet across disciplines, to ensure that there are structures supporting colleagues to meet around different kinds of development ideas. Another part of that work is to ensure that development time is taken into account in the scheduling process. As an example, we can cluster development time for teachers to be able to focus on the development project, if possible in conjunction with the schedules of the courses. All teachers and researchers are also encouraged to engage in the four research clusters and existing research platforms in the department and faculty, that organize around different research themes and fields of research.

There are currently two teacher-driven pedagogical forums per semester where each unit is responsible for the content. The purpose of the forums is to enable teachers to meet across subject boundaries to discuss, develop and share experiences and pedagogical issues. It remains for two units to implement their forums during HT23. After this, the forums will be evaluated and the education council will decide on how to develop it for the future. For fall 2023, we will introduce activities for pedagogical training and workshops in connection with the department's staff meetings. At faculty level, we are exploring the possibility of starting thematic groups for pedagogical development work for those teachers at HSM and HDKV who have chosen this area instead of research or artistic development work.

When it comes to competence supply, we need to work with long term plans alongside with the vision for the subject in Photography. We see today that the Ma and the Ba program, as well as the research within the Photo subject, is aiming towards new digital technologies. If we look at the larger context surrounding the Photo discipline, we see that within the institutions HDK-Valand and Steneby and HSM, many other disciplines aim towards the same development. There is an ongoing investigation on institutional level mapping out the common interests in this development. All this taken together opens up for possibilities to recruit teaching and research staff that can work across disciplines. Another way to ensure competence supply is for staff taking part in competence development in this field.

What measures should be taken?

- The needs of the operation is what guides the use of the development time, hence the priority should be put where the needs of the operation; education is
- Introduce competence development possibilities connected to the staff days
- Formulate a vision in the photo subject to guide competence supply

*Comments and suggestions from the assessment team:*

The Assessment team noted that the individual teachers' time and opportunity for research varies greatly, as does the availability of research time within their contracts, where several testify that the time available is not enough. They are unsure how much development time technicians have, and if they are encouraged to participate in the development of research projects. They also detected some separation between research and education, and between education and technical staff that may stand in the way for subject development on all levels of the educational program.

*They suggest:*

- *Introducing, for example, interdisciplinary and collaborative artistic research methods.*
- *Review opportunities for research and development time for all teacher categories, technicians included.*
- *Consider how to bridge divisions between technicians and teaching staff, and between research and education*

*Current situation:*

Today the institution has four research strands under which colleagues organize in collegial exchanges around research projects, research applications and discussions. We also have two research platforms on faculty level, functioning as collegial meeting spaces where experience and knowledge is shared. All colleagues are encouraged to engage in these groups. Another important resource is the research platform Parse, also on faculty level, where research is published on a website. Parse also arranges biannual conferences and other events that all colleagues are welcome to. Locally in the unit, we have Image Text which is an online series of conversations around artistic practice, which is a very valuable contribution to the discussion on interdisciplinary and collaborative research methods. *The conversations are accessible also as teaching material.*

The Research Council and the Education Council at HDK-Valand have set up a working group to map the way in which research and artistic development work is currently integrated into teaching, to suggest which parts need to be developed. The report should, among other things, provide answers to the questions:

- What different forms of teaching are currently used to integrate research and artistic development work in teaching? What are the pedagogical challenges in integrating research with education?
- What is needed to create a good environment where education and research interact and influence each other? (Can the research clusters constitute such a bridge?)

Regarding technicians it is difficult to implement research for technicians based on the nature of the organisation. Technicians do not have time management and are given the opportunity to spend time on competence development/exploratory work when it suits their regular activities - this may involve familiarising themselves with a new technology or compulsory training in new systems.

To better the communication we are implementing the role of area responsables that will be operating on the same level as program responsables with the objective to bridge the understanding/expectations between educators and educational support.

*What measures should be taken?*

- Ensure that all colleagues are aware of the possibilities to engage in research clusters and platforms and encourage them to engage in them
- Discuss the working group's report on research-based education in the Education- and Research councils to create activities for the department's action plan for 2024.
- Establish working structure for the technique area responsible's that enables good communication between technical departments and teachers

## **5: That the education is relevant to the needs of students and society**

*Comments and suggestions from the assessment team:*

The assessment team points out that as the sole MA course in photography in Sweden, the potential for national and international societal connections could/ be exploited further to integrate a more robust outreach strategy and deepen the discourse.

*They suggest:*

- *Integrate the research group in discussions around courses based on new imaging techniques. Is it possible to build on the existing collaborations with Visual Arena Lindholmen?*
- *To think strategically about collaboration in relation to the curriculum, to strengthen input from various commercial actors and other educational institutions where photographic technologies operate.*
- *To allocate time within the department and among students to explore interdisciplinary collaborative projects within the University and with potential partners.*

*Current situation:*

The VP Research and Research representant in the unit and three more researchers are part of the collegiate, two of them teaches at MA level and are well integrated in discussions on courses and activities around new image techniques, as well as program development.

Spring 2023 our MA1 students was introduced to Visual Arena, Lindholmen in a short workshop. With that said more extensive collaborations with them are nor realistic at this point. Visual Arena activities are project-based, they are working on commission and on projects initiated by their partners. What Visual Arena bring to these collaborations are new ways of visualizing.

Our collaborations with other subjects at GU are mainly within the film, photography and literary composition unit, looking ahead we would like to broaden that, see under “what measures should be taken” below.

With that said the MA programme has a fine art profile and students are mainly aspiring artists. At this point most of our collaborations, including students, are within the art or research field, among our partners are Galleri Format, Landskrona Foto, Dunkers Kulturhus and Hasselblad Center.

Looking ahead we suggest an investigation on unit and faculty level on how research performed at HDK-Valand including collaborations with other fields or including new technology, in additional ways, could be integrated in our teaching and in line with the fine art profile of many of our programmes.

*What measures should be taken?*

- Think strategically when inviting opponents and other guests to strengthen existing and initiate future collaborations.
- Keep the collegiate and students updated on other relevant institutions, groups and researchers within and outside GU, for example the Competence centre in artistic research at HDK-Valand, doctoral students, and GRIDH, The Gothenburg Research Infrastructure in Digital Humanities.
- Look into the possibility for regular overviews with other subjects at HDK-Valand and GU on research activities, lectures, guests etc. to share
- Formulate a vision for how to profile the subject photography at HDK-Valand as well as the MA programme in relation to the broad field of photography within all sectors of society.



*Comments and suggestions from the assessment team:*

The Assessment group stresses that new photographic techniques are constantly being developed, as are their uses in society. The public's photography and media awareness are also changing, and the artist's role is likewise towards a more diversified view of what an artistry can look like. They are underlining that the programme should be in the forefront and integrate new, relevant photographic equipment and techniques in workshops and teaching.

*They suggest:*

- *Important to retain the analogue techniques as it is both unique and magnet for applicants. But build in flexibility when conceiving the new workshops so that space can be made to include new techniques.*
- *Consider how the structure of the workshops and technical staff can meet the vision of open workshops in the new building. How can these new open workshops be supported in terms of equipment and staff workload?*

*Current situation:*

Analog and digital labs are included in the new building, and they are comparable to those we have today. In parallel, an investigation in new technologies for the entire department is underway, which includes an overview of what we already have, what we would need to invest in, what we can share between programs and possibly gain access to through collaborations.

For open workshops to function, we need good communication between teachers and technicians. The way the department is structured where teachers and technicians have different managers, makes communication difficult at times. Onward there will be technique managers for the different technical areas, in order to facilitate communication in the future. This will enable detailed planning in terms of setting up structures to share technology between subjects and programs.

*What measures should be taken?*

- There is currently an ongoing investigation in new technologies for the whole institution that includes what we already have, what we would need to invest in, what we can share between programs and possibly access through collaborations.
- Program directors and technology area managers will work more closely to balance the different programs' need for technology throughout the academic year for teacher-led course elements and students' individual projects within courses.

**6: That students have an influence in the planning, implementation, and follow-up of the education**

*Comments and suggestions from the assessment team: None*

**7: That a study and learning environment exists which is accessible and appropriate for all students**

*Comments and suggestions from the assessment team:*

*They suggest:*

- *Communication in many channels and late schedules makes it extra hard for students with diverse needs - rethink what communication channels are used.*

Today, we follow GU's rules regarding the student having the schedule at least two weeks in advance. There is also often a preliminary schedule a few weeks before. In cases where late changes occur it is usually due to either a late job planning/new hires, or alternatively that we work with an external partner who does not have the same planning horizon as us, but whose contribution to the education is still deemed to be important enough because we need this partner. In order to achieve this, either service planning and possible new hires should be done in such a time that these can be synchronized with the next semester's schedule, or alternatively, we set aside when hiring which days, you are expected to be available.

If the students feel that information is available in many different places, all course managers should talk to each other about what applies. All information should be collected on canvas with link to the Time Edit schedule. In cases where traces of old systems or more informal paths remain, these should be cleared away in favour of Canvas in particular.

*What measures should be taken?*

- Help students navigate in the systems we have.

*They suggest:*

- *To review existing guidelines for scheduling and communication to enable students to plan and be able to participate given the challenges of a small faculty*

*in a large university.*

*Current situation:*

We believe that we have clear guidelines for scheduling and communication, but we can be better at communicating these to teachers and students.

*What measures should be taken?*

- Emphasise the importance of following the guidelines and where to find information during inductions for new staff and students.
- Updates at programme director meetings so that they can pass on the information to their teachers.
- Update the teacher's handbook

*They suggest:*

- *Consider a transparent method for communicating the contents of the equipment store, perhaps with various layers of access depending on the courses students have undertaken.*

*Current situation:*

Such a model would be interesting to look at, but is systemically very complicated in such a large environment as we operate in. We need to provide technical resources based on prior knowledge and actual educational goals - not everything can be available to everyone all the time, but we should endeavour to make what is possible available to those who need it.

*What measures should be taken?*

Review the possibility of an open database of available equipment in connection with the development of the equipment store in the move to the new building.

*They suggest:*

- *Lack of signage makes space hard to navigate - is it possible to signpost the space better?*

*Current situation:*

- Signage of premises is handled by Campus Service

*What measures should be taken?*

- The question is taken up with Campus service.
- Inform students that they can find maps on the student portal.

*They suggest:*

- Consider how to support teachers dealing with an increased workload due to support work.

*Current situation:*

We have specific challenges in the artistic programmes as the teaching methods often differ from the rest of the university. We see that the remuneration we receive is not in proportion to the special teaching efforts that need to be made.

We are working on a project on inclusive teaching with the aim of providing support for teachers to design their teaching to suit heterogeneous groups to avoid individual adaptations. The project will run during autumn 2023 and the final report will be submitted at the beginning of 2024.

We have also appointed a working group that will clarify the routine regarding NAIS in the department and develop a plan for measures and communication to both students and staff. The group will look at what the most common recommendations are to HDK-V students. How they are handled and what effect it has in practice. Are we meeting the students' needs? Why/why not? Identify commonly used support activities and create shared routines for how the support can be designed and provide staff with further training in these areas.

*What measures should be taken?*

- Train staff in teaching and designing courses for heterogeneous student groups based on the working group's recommendations.
- Clarify the procedure regarding NAIS at the department and develop a plan for measures and communication to both students and staff based on the working group's recommendations.

*Comments and suggestions from the assessment team:*

The Assessment group writes that the number of qualified applicants is too limited and that the subjects wish to work with active outreach to prospective applicants for the photography programmes have not been heard.

*They suggest:*

- *That the university supports more outreach activities and analyses how to communicate to reach wider groups of qualified prospective students.*
- 

*Current situation:*

Gothenburg University and HDK-Valand work with student international recruitment in various ways, primarily through different digital channels. GU is also participating in various international fairs where the fine arts subjects also are represented.

However, a significant workload rests on the department. In recent years, HDK-Valand has experimented with various digital information and inspirational events. It's challenging to reach out and, in some cases, difficult to precisely locate the most promising prospective students. We continue to strive to find sustainable and successful methods for outreach activities.

In the past three years, the MFA program in photography has had approximately 100 applicants, with around 47 submitting portfolios. At first glance, this might seem like a good number of applicants for 12 spots, but looking at the applicants' portfolios the jury has struggled to fill the spots. However, a more in-depth analysis is needed regarding the applicants and those who do not apply for the program.

*What measures should be taken?*

- GU will launch a new recruitment campaign for international applicants during the fall of 2023. It will be used on social media and at international fairs where GU is represented.
- During 2022, HDK-Valand developed a student recruitment strategy, and during the fall of 2023, action plans related to this will be implemented.
- A closer analysis of all our international master's programs will be done.  
The aim is to pinpoint geographic regions and educational institutions that are relevant to each program. The work will be carried out in close collaboration between Program directors, education- and communication officers.

## **8: That continuous follow-up and development of the education are carried out**

*Comments and suggestions from the assessment team:*

The assessment team describes that follow-up and development is well functioning, however they noted that the response rate for written evaluations were low.

*They suggest:*

- *That the teachers make time during the classes to fill in the written evaluations, in order to increase the response rate.*

*Current situation:*

The current situation is as described by the assessment group, in the summary above.

*What measures should be taken?*

- Written course evaluations during classes will be implemented in all courses from HT23.

*Comments and suggestions from the assessment team:*

It is clear to the assessment group from conversations that teachers' time is mostly spent on the day-to-day work of teaching and university work, with little or no time for programme planning and development. It is unclear whether this is due to understaffing or something else. But they see clear risks that the situation in the long run risks being detrimental to the development of the programme and thus the quality of the education.

*They suggest:*

- *Make sure enough teacher time is allocated so the management's vision can be realised, and the merger successful.*

*Current situation:*

Today all teachers have time allocated to meetings. A teacher working more than 49% have today 60 hours allocated for meetings in one semester. That is almost 7% and compared to other institutions that is more than normally is offered in terms of meeting time. Still there is a common sense in the department that there is not enough time. We then need to look into how we are using the time. The Photo collegiate have subject and program meetings on a regular basis where the full collegiate participates. If a larger development project is necessary, there is a possibility for the unit manager to allocate more time, with regards to the budget framework.

*What measures should be taken?*

- Secure meeting and work structure that enable development work.
- Secure a written down vision for the program with an action plan for development over time in line with the managements vision for the institution.

Action plan for programme K2FOT, following external assessment (dnr GU xxxx/xxxx)

Criteria	Proposed measure	Action	Responsible	Timetable	Comments	Priority
1. That the actual study results correspond to the learning objectives and the degree objectives of the Higher Education Regulation	Reflect on how the learning trajectory and progression is affected by students applying with a project which is then developed during the program.	A retake on instructions for applicants. Shorten the letter of intent. Instead of a project description ask applicants to write on an area or areas of interest. Themes, materiality's or questions they wish to explore within the program.	Program director and collegiate	HT23	A majority of applicants does not included a project description, instead they tend to write on an area of interest. For that reason, it is not possible to fully evaluate how the learning trajectory and progression has been affected by students applying with a project. We however have come to realise that using the term project description has been understood as more binding than intended, by the assessment group, as well as some applicants.	
C.1	Photography is increasingly a complex medium without any singular characteristics, and with this in mind, it may be useful to revisit and rework the subject description.	1. Rewrite the subject description for photography together with the BA programme. 2. Review the program curriculum	Program director and collegiate	1.HT23 2.HT24		
2. That the teaching puts students' learning at the centre	Evaluate the upcoming change in the cross-departmental elective courses, to make sure they are relevant for students and give access to skills that are not currently part of the curriculum.	1. Director of Studies will, in dialogue with the Programme Directors, develop the elective courses. 2. Programme Director takes the elective courses in to consideration when developing the programme courses to make sure there is an interplay between the courses. 3. Director of Studies develops a new method and system in regard to the elective courses.	Director of studies BA/MA and VP education / Program director and collegiate			High
C.2	Can there be more short courses to allow for more experimental practical approaches where students can work alongside peers from other departments?	In the new building, the workshops will be organised differently, with each technical area having a section with a low entry level that requires no prior knowledge. We hope that these places will enable meetings across disciplines. In connection with this, we will explore the possibility of simple introductions to the equipment used in the workshop. See action row 14	Program director and collegiate	/	see comment below	
C.2	Consider how the students can acquire practical knowledge and explore new technologies and photographic approaches. Would it be possible to offer joint courses for both BA and MA students? Is Practical Fridays the right format, or do the workshops/courses need to be more extensive?	1. For autumn 2024 the elective course "Artist book" are being reworked and will become part of the programme. The new course "The photographic publication", will involve several short workshops on making and printing booklets and books, book binding and digital programming and publishing. 2. Give all students in the MA program a formal introduction to the 3D workshop. 3. Examine, with head of unit, the possibility for a visible and formal system with a pool of hours for individual tutorials, workshops and exchange between teachers from photography and teachers from all other subjects within the institution.	1-2. Program director and collegiate 3. Unit manager	1-2 HT24 3	Shorter technical, practical and collective workshops are not our main priority on MA level and within Photographic Work I-IV courses. With that said, some thematic, and to some extent, practical workshops and seminars' have been implemented the last couple of years, for example on collages, the poster format and titles. The MA program is based on and prioritizes the students' individual or collaborative work, access to workshops, teachers and technicians, that are not introduced to the whole group, happens in line with what a student or a small group discovers in their processes'. Access to additional workshops can be applied for via the program director. Additional tutorials that happen with teachers and technicians, not connected to the programme, also happens informally.	
C.2	Make sure all teaching is accessible to international students.	Inform new MA students, that all teaching on MA-level is given in English. The BA programme is however given in Swedish. Students in the MA programme, that understand Swedish, will be invited to join open artist talks etc. )	Program director and collegiate	HT23 and forward		
C.2	Consider the importance of giving students the opportunity to have tutorials and/or crits with external practitioners before the exam.	1. Prioritize external artist guests (within the current operational budget and in balance with guests in theory courses) in Photographic work II – IV courses. 2. Examine the possibility of exchanges with other art schools / universities with teachers who are active as artists with photography as a main medium or area of interest.	Program director and collegiate	VT24 and forward		
C.2	Explore the possibility to find a framework for swapping hours and share guest speakers across departments.	1. The question on swaaping hour in the institution needs to be discussed in the leadership group. 2. Develop routine for sharing guest lecturers within the unit.	1. Leadership group and Prefect 2. Unit manager and program directors	HT23	There is an ongoing discussion on sweeping hours.	High

C.2	Re-establish a positive staff relationship with the fine art department.	None	Program director and collegiate	/	We do not see a particular problem in our relationship with fine art. It is important to develop relationships and find possible areas for collaboration and exchange with all subjects at HDK-Valand. Our focus, the last couple of years, has been put on film and literary composition since we are in a relatively new unit.	
C.2	To give more support to prepare students who want to follow a research path to doctoral studies.	We are developing a research-preparatory reading module for all master's programs at the department to start 2026.	Director of studies BA/MA and VP education	VT26		High
C.2	To investigate how the teaching theory model affects the priorities and structures of the overall content.	Rethink the format for guest tutorials in Photographic Work Courses, can they be shorter, in group etc. Also see action row 9	Program director and collegiate	VT24 and forward	The proposed measure is made in relation to a impression that the assesment group had; guest lectures from the research field easily and often without cost has been integrated into the theory courses of the MA program, but visiting artists are "put on hold" due to lack of funding.	
3. That the content and format of teaching are based on scientific and/or artistic principles and proven experience	Consider how to develop possibilities for collaborative practices or collaboration amongst the students and support interdisciplinary practices. For example, to create a forum where students from different disciplines are able to meet and share	We will continue to develop elective courses and co-reading between all the department's subjects as a way for students to meet across disciplines.	Director of studies BA/MA and VP education / Program director and collegiate			High
C.3	Consider how to broaden the conception of photography to include numerous canons of photographs, and support diverse practices and ways of working, through dialogue and co-teaching with other programmes, eg, The fine art programme with their guest lecturers, artist talks.	1. Continue to actively work against canonization in our programme and course planning, within the unit and in conversation with students. 2. Continue and strengthen existing collaborations with for example Global Photographies, Hasselblad Center, Fotogalleriet Format and Landskrona Photo. 3. Extended co-teaching with other subjects at HDK-Valand is being planned, from 2026 at least 7,5 hp per semester.	Program director and collegiate	1-2. Continuesly 3. VT26		
4. That teaching staff have up-to-date and adequate subject-specific, higher education pedagogical and subject didactic skills, and that teaching staff numbers are in proportion to the scope and content of the education	Consider how to include course and pedagogical development time alongside photographic and artistic practice development.	The needs of the operation is what guides the use of the development time, hence the priority should be put where the needs of the operation; education is.	Prefekt and Unit manager	Annual review and continued follow up		
C.4	Review pedagogical forums with the aim that they include all forms of learning within the programme.	Introduce competence development possibilities connected to the staff days	Vice prefect education			
C.4	Considering the development of the discipline through plans for competence supply.	Formulate a vision in the photo subject to guide competence supply	Unit manager and Program director	VT24		
C.4	Introducing, for example, interdisciplinary and collaborative artistic research methods.	Ensure that all colleagues are aware of the possibilities to engage in research clusters and platforms and encourage them to engage in them.	VP Research, Research rep in the unit and Unit manager			
C.4	Review opportunities for research and development time for all teacher categories, technicians included.	1. Discuss the working group's report on research-based education in the Education- and Research councils to create activities for the department's action plan for 2024. 2. GU have a work time agreement that outlines the development time for teachers. The technicians skills development should be tuned to the demand of the operation.	Prefekt, Unit manager and Technical Manager	At the yearly education conferences the needs of the education in terms of technical support can be disussed.		
C.4	Consider how to bridge divisions between technicians and teaching staff, and between research and education	Establish working structure for the technique area responsables that enables good communication between technical departments and teachers	Prefekt, Unit manager and Technical Manager	At the yearly education conferences specific needs can be addressed and followed up.		
5. That the education is relevant to the needs of students and society	Integrate the research group in discussions around courses based on new imaging techniques. Is it possible to build on the existing collaborations with Visual Arena Lindholmen?	None	Program director and collegiate	/	The VP Research / Research rep in the unit and three more researchers are part of the collegiate and already integrated in discussions on courses and activities around new image techniques, as well as program development.	
C.5	To think strategically about collaboration in relation to the curriculum, to strengthen input from various commercial actors and other educational institutions where photographic technologies operate.	Think strategically when inviting opponents and other guests to strengthen existing and initiate future collaborations.	Program director and collegiate	continuously		



C.5	To allocate time within the department and among students to explore interdisciplinary collaborative projects within the University and with potential partners.	1. Keep the collegiate and students updated on other relevant institutions, groups and researchers within and outside GU, for example the Competence centre in artistic research at HDK-Valand, doctoral students, and GRIDH, The Gothenburg Research Infrastructure in Digital Humanities. 2. Look into the possibility for regular overviews with other subjects at HDK-Valand and GU on research activities, lectures, guests etc. to share	1. Program director and collegiate and VP Research 2. Unit manager			
C.5	Important to retain the analogue techniques as it is both unique and magnet for applicants. But build in flexibility when conceiving the new workshops so that space can be made to include new techniques.	There is currently an ongoing investigation in new technologies for the whole institution that includes what we already have, what we would need to invest in, what we can share between programs and possibly access through collaborations.	Unit manager and Program director			
C.5	Consider how the structure of the workshops and technical staff can meet the vision of open workshops in the new building. How can these new open workshops be supported in terms of equipment and staff workload?	Program directors and technology area managers will work more closely to balance the different programs' need for technology throughout the academic year for teacher-led course elements and students' individual projects within courses.	Prefekt, Unit manager and Technical manager			
6. That students have an influence in the planning, implementation and follow-up of the education	No proposed measures from the assesment group.	/	/	/	/	
7. That a study and learning environment exists which is accessible and appropriate for all students	Communication in many channels and late schedules makes it extra hard for students with diverse needs - rethink what communication channels are used.	Help students navigate in the systems we have	Director of studies BA/MA and VP education			Low
C.7	To review existing guidelines for scheduling and communication to enable students to plan and be able to participate given the challenges of a small faculty in a large university.	1. Emphasise the importance of following the guidelines and where to find information during inductions for new staff and students. 2. Updates at programme director meetings so that they can pass on the information to their teachers. 3. Update the teacher's handbook	Director of studies BA/MA and VP education			Low
C.7	Consider a transparent method for communicating the contents of the equipment store, perhaps with various layers of access depending on the courses students have undertaken.	?	Technical manager	?	?	
C.7	Lack of signage makes space hard to navigate - is it possible to signpost the space better?	?	Technical manager	?	?	
C.7	Consider how to support teachers dealing with an increased workload due to support work.	1. Train staff in teaching and designing courses for heterogeneous student groups based on the working group's recommendations. 2. Clarify the procedure regarding NAIS at the department and develop a plan for measures and communication to both students and staff based on the working group's recommendations.	Prefekt and Unit manager and educational board rep			
C.7	That the university supports more outreach activities and analyses how to communicate to reach wider groups of qualified prospective students.	1. GU will launch a new recruitment campaign for international applicants during the fall of 2023. It will be used on social media and at international fairs where GU is represented. 2. During 2022, HDK-Valand developed a student recruitment strategy, and during the fall of 2023, action plans related to this will be implemented. 3. A closer analysis of all our international master's programs will be done. The aim is to pinpoint geographic regions and educational institutions that are relevant to each program. The work will be carried out in close collaboration between Program directors, education- and communication officers.	Education officer	1. HT23 2. HT23 3. ?		
8. That continuous follow-up and development of the education are carried out	That the teachers make time during the classes to fill in the written evaluations, in order to increase the response rate.	Written course evaluations during classes will be implemented in all courses from HT23	Program director and collegiate	HT23		
C.8	Make sure enough teacher time is allocated so the management's vision can be realised, and the merger successful.	1. Secure meeting and work structure that enable development work. 2. Secure a written down vision for the program with an action plan for development over time in line with the managements vision for the institution.	Prefekt and Unit manager			