

DESIGN ACADEMY EINDHOVEN

QUALITY AGREEMENTS PLAN 2019–2024



DESIGN ACADEMY EINDHOVEN

QUALITY AGREEMENTS PLAN

2019–2024

Name institute	Design Academy Eindhoven
BRIN	02NT
Visitation address	Emmasingel 14, 5611 AZ Eindhoven
Quality Agreement number	007893
Quality Agreement scheme	Individual evaluation (Zelfstandige beoordeling)
Visitation day	Tuesday September 24, 2019

Contents

content	page
Introduction	6
Establishment of the Plan	8
Goals and Strategy	10
Preamble	10
Educational Vision and Ambitions	11
Aims	12
Outcomes	13
Strategy	13
Monitoring and Progress	14
Pre-Investments 2015–2018	16
DAE Quality Agreements Plan per Theme	18
Intensive and Small-Scale Education	19
More and Better Guidance of Students	21
Study Success	22
Differentiation of Education	23
Appropriate and Good Educational Facilities	24
Improving the Professional Quality of Teachers	25
Executive Statement	26
Colophon	27

Introduction

“On 9 April 2018, the Minister of Education, Culture, and Science (OCW) made agreements with the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (VH), the Dutch National Students' Association (ISO), and the Dutch Student Union (LSVb) about the form that quality agreements for higher education for the period from 2019 to 2024 would take. The revenues that will be released as a result of the introduction of the student loan system will be linked to these agreements in the next few years. The parties are aiming to use the revenues to raise the quality of higher education. They agree that involvement on the part of the education community, in particular the participation bodies, with the quality agreements is essential, during the time that the plans are being devised and implemented alike.” NVAO 2019.

This document describes the plan Design Academy Eindhoven has formulated in consultation with students, teachers and staff in light of the quality agreements.

The intentions laid out in this document can be directly linked to the themes of the Strategic Agenda of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) and therewith the common agenda of the VSNU, VH, ISO and LSVB:

1. Intensive and Small-Scale Education
2. More and Better Guidance of Students.
3. Study Success.
4. Differentiation of Education.
5. Appropriate and Good Educational Facilities.
6. Improving the Professional Quality of Teachers.

The plans are consistent with the policy framework described in the Institutional Plan 2018, with the sharpening of the academy's vision. Financial backing is guaranteed by pre investments in 2015–2018 focused on the curriculum renewal of the BA programme.



Establishment of the Plan

The establishment of the Quality Agreements Plan has been fully intertwined with the process of positioning the academy in its Institutional Plan. The Executive Board presented a vision that has been sharpened by the input of the DAE community via our quality assurance tools, such as the Student and Teacher Potlucks and the Student Satisfaction Survey.¹

The yearly Student Potluck, for example, clearly revealed the students' wish for a more integrated curriculum, and a culture of diversity. Another recurring theme was the call for tools that can help students deal with stress and time management issues. The Student Satisfaction Surveys mentioned the need for more and higher quality feedback, as well as the wish to develop a better system for internal communication within the academy.

Such points of improvement from the Potlucks and Surveys are taken seriously and have therefore found their way in the recently published Institutional Plan ([designacademy.nl/Portals/0/www/Institutional Plan 2019-2024_1.pdf](https://designacademy.nl/Portals/0/www/Institutional%20Plan%202019-2024_1.pdf)), and in our Quality Agreements Plan.

This Quality Agreements Plan is drawn up by a project team consisting of representatives of the DAE community (including participation bodies): Teachers (BA and MA), Student Council, Works Council, Policy Desk, Executive Board and Supervisory Board.

The Quality Agreements Plan, including the budget, has been set up with formal approval and endorsement of the Student Council (July 9, 2019), Works Council (July 23, 2019) and Supervisory Board (July, 19, 2019), and under full responsibility of the Executive Board.

¹ In the future we plan to build on these tools with teacher assessment and training using study guide feedback.

Goals and Strategy

Preamble

As described in our Institutional Plan, the academy needs and wants to acknowledge that there is a change of attitude towards design, which has to influence the way we aspire to define our teaching. DAE gained its international reputation in an era when the autonomous, conceptual approach it taught became the foundation for the worldwide success of Dutch Design. And indeed, many of today's high-profile design professionals refer to the conceptual basis of their DAE training as an essential part of their current practice.

The range of positions explored by our students has always been much more diverse, but the public perception of DAE tends to be dominated by a focus on the hand-crafted material object that embodies a highly personal reflection on contemporary culture, society, science, or technology. There is an undeniable quality in this approach that supports students to carve out their own free space. Still, we feel it is time to supplement the school's mission as to incorporate a variety of current practices in which design can also function as a strategic and collaborative tool that helps humanity deal with urgent issues in today's global society.

The transition we are now capturing in our Institutional Plan and hopefully make operational through this Quality Agreements Plan is about designers who gain the necessary competences to act in such a strategic context, positioned at the convergence of all other fields of knowledge. We train designers as a kind of expert non-specialists who are capable of relating to a wide range of specialisms, and bringing them together in a meaningful, empathic and strategically relevant way. Design will always be about effecting change. DAE's track record can be read as living proof of this fundamental desire to alter conventions, perceptions and systems. Just like the generations before them, future designers need to be trained for that role in a way that braces the relevance of their work in the light of the many challenges our society faces.

These new perspectives, together with new values, are included in the Institutional Plan when we talk about our commitment to social causes, a commitment to represent diversity and a commitment to work on themes that are strategically important for collectivity.

As a result, our education will be less compartmentalised. Instead of committing to specialisation – such as food, wellbeing, mobility and so on – or to the different approaches to design, we aim to expose students to a broad spectrum of ideas. The 'pluri-doctrinal' academy we envision, invites students to experience many schools of thought, directed by various strong perspectives and experiences. This fusing of expertise and interests is what they will be exposed to for the rest of their lives. As future professionals they are going to necessarily be mediating between many views, social urgencies and technologies.

We wish to introduce a studio model, firstly in the Bachelor course. As described in our Institutional Plan, the studio is meant to place students in a temporary filter bubble. It develops a strong position and functions as a concise space in which students sharpen their personal views on a professional field with plural disciplines. Students will work in an environment that offers them dedicated guidance and support in this search. Bachelor students will no longer commit to one single department, as it is now. The studio model also introduces varying periods of teaching: some will last only a couple of days; others will cover a full semester. The diversity of subjects and approaches frees up the student's trajectory through the school, exposing them to a variety of themes and visions. Throughout their careers in DAE the students can move from one studio to another, which will expose them to different or even contrary views. They are thus encouraged to experience and explore a multiplicity of attitudes, and develop their own porous, fluid position in the societal and professional work field.

Educational Vision and Ambitions

The Quality Agreements Plan of DAE is aligned with the Institutional Plan 2019–2024. Since the full text of this last plan is readily published online, a short summary of some key notions might suffice to frame our vision and ambitions.²

Design Academy Eindhoven commits itself to an agenda of *Radical differentiation and impact*. Staying true to the approach and values that have formed the core of our identity, the fundamental shift that characterises today's position of design should be more strongly reflected within the structure of the curriculum and radical differentiation of the educational and research portfolio. The academy wants to be a catalyst of diversification. We need to reconsider the role and position of design, acknowledge its changing societal consequences and the way the social and cultural backgrounds of designers are to become part of the equation. In this context we have identified three main drivers:

Pluralism

We approach design as hybrid, conceptual, contextual and global. Instead of focusing on a single design discipline or medium, DAE chooses to underscore DAE's role as a platform for debate within the field. Our core values are those of an inclusive, cosmopolitan society that embraces diversity in every respect.

Social Agenda

What unifies our teaching and our research agenda is a shared understanding of design, as first and foremost a social and cultural practice. We teach design as a 'political instrument', a means to engage societal developments and problems and as a tool to explore and develop alternatives. A sensitive antenna for social phenomena allows us to act as an agent of change. The contribution of design to humanity and its social, cultural and natural environment is the most important mainspring for creating

² designacademy.nl/Portals/0/www/Institutional Plan 2019–2024 1.pdf. Our educational vision and ambitions – the most important in terms of quality agreements – are described primarily in page 5/6, in the chapter Core.

new concepts and alternatives. We train designers to be aware of the implications of their work. The link between an engaged, hybrid, and integrative approach on the one hand and professional autonomy based on expertise as a principle on the other, is characteristic of the academy, as a community, as an organisation and as an educational and cultural institute in which individual qualities of all members can prosper.

Design as Praxis

Design results in change. It is therefore never without consequences, which underlines the inseparable connection we draw between design, values and politics. We see the manual and analytical skills our students master as equally essential tools in the contemporary designer's tool chest. We train designers not to operate in isolation but at the nexus of a broad spectrum of specialisms: fluency in a broad spectrum of languages - technical, theoretical and philosophical - is a key attribute of the future designer.

Borrowing from a rich philosophical heritage, we retain and reiterate our understanding of design as praxis: a bridge between theoretical knowledge and insight on the one hand, and material creativity on the other. In this sense, DAE intentionally straddles and moves fluidly across the divide that has traditionally separated academia and skill-based design education. Praxis also indicates a way to engage with the world and all its inhabitants, both natural and artificial. It postulates the crucial role of the designer's intention and an understanding of what one wants to achieve, prior to any action. We ask students to reflect on their values and intentions and on the possible consequences of what they are about to make. Our teaching, therefore, is fundamentally contextual. Ethics – especially in the context of current discourses on technology and post-humanism, in which all forms of life, whether natural or artificial, animal or plant-based, demand equal attention – informs our understanding of design at every level. For this reason we appeal to the student's capacity to analyse ideas, wrestle with them and question them throughout the process of realisation. Praxis enables designers to combine reflection and action directed at the structures they want to transform.

Five domains within the academy are involved in bringing the transformation about:

Core: education and research;
Network: DAE community and partners, HR policy;
World: global context;
Home: home base;
Trace: relevance and impact.

Similar to the themes of the quality agreements, there is no sharp division between these five domains: they are integral parts of the same 'building'. The budget connected to the quality agreements will be primarily used to improve the quality of our 'Core' activities, but this will always be connected with prospected changes in other domains.

Aims

The major change towards a more flexible trajectory has its effect on different parts of our educational programme, primarily in the Bachelor course, including its organisation. This results in a new structure, a new way of teaching, intensified forms of study guidance, the introduction of a new assessment model and a matching set of assessment criteria. Diversification will also apply to the process of study guidance and the evaluation of assessment criteria and competencies, which need to mirror the wide variety and the constantly changing pallet of professional perspectives our students develop over the course of their studies.

DAE intends to strengthen the role of design research. Firstly this will be implemented by adding a third readership, starting in 2020, next to Places & Traces and Strategic Creativity. And by involving theory teachers in the academy-wide knowledge circle, invigorating our theoretical backbone and our learning continuity pathways, making a stronger connection with the design research that is already embedded within our readerships. Through this connection we will offer teachers the opportunity to increase their knowledge and experience in the field of research, which will also help us to further integrate the research of our readership in our education.

With regards to the Master course, the new Institutional Plan has different, less far-reaching implications. Flexibility and a prominent role for design research are already well integrated in the existing curriculum. Here, we will also focus on further diversification. The start of a new study path on Geo—Design in September 2020 is one of the outcomes:

In addition to the four study paths DAE currently has in place, in the respective department, GEO—DESIGN offers a new perspective: a platform to explore the social, economic, territorial, and geopolitical forces shaping design today. In this two-year master's study path at the Design Academy Eindhoven, students develop research and communication tools to facilitate a deeper understanding of today's reality and to make transformative interventions through design and its material, technical, social, and discursive possibilities. Design as an act can be defined as the innate human propensity to conceive and perform desired changes in their habitat, but design as a discipline is a historical phenomenon formed in relation to the Industrial Revolution and its paradoxical ideology. This manifestation of design introduced the notion of the universal human and the satisfaction of their needs through the visionary institutions of mechanisation, logistics, and mass media. In particular, the borderless reach of capitalist production seemed to offer a benevolent future of democratised middle-class affluence, the antidote to the atrocities of national and religious strife in modern warfare. But this vision was premised on the accelerating and infinite extraction of resources and their conversion into financial wealth, the externalisation of waste and environmental damage from the richest nations to the poorest, as well as the reinvention of the human as an assimilated consumer-labourer, as standardised and replaceable as the products they made and purchased. Design has been both the greatest emancipator and worst exploiter of communities around the world, at times improving the lives of citizens and at times subjecting them to the interests of the dominant economic and political forces.

Inevitably, design as a discipline has made obsolete the notion of design as a locally-situated act: as materials, energy, information, money, and people circulate rapidly around the world in search of favourable conditions, all design is GEO—DESIGN.



Irene Stracuzzi Custom printing 4-metre inflatable globe, GEO—DESIGN at Van Abbemuseum, 2018

The existing path on Design Curating and Writing will transform at the start of the coming academic year with the arrival of the new head.

Although the DAE Master departments already show a strong sense of community, we have to acknowledge that Eindhoven is a temporary stopover for students who fly in from all over the world. In order to strengthen their connections within and between the departments, their familiarity with Dutch culture and the field of design, DAE will actively encourage alumni to take part in projects, workshops, and to give guest lectures. This direct contact with their peers will help current and future Master students find their way in- and outside the academy. Following the changes in the Bachelor course, and only after thorough evaluation of the effects, (slight) changes in the organisation of the Master course could become part of the future agenda.

Outcomes

The choice for a more flexible trajectory in the Bachelor course, the ambition to create a pluri-doctrinal academy, and our wish to foster a stronger focus on the role of design research have all kinds of consequences for the way we will teach, guide and assess the work of students; the necessary training for our teachers; the selection process of students, teachers and staff; the physical infrastructure of the building and its workshops et cetera. Instead of describing the whole complex of outcomes in a separate paragraph, we have decided to present the major outcomes in direct relation to the six themes, laid down in the document 'Investeren in Onderwijskwaliteit', published by the ministry of OCW. You will find these outcomes in the chapter DAE Quality Agreements Plan per Theme (see page 18).

Strategy

Design Academy Eindhoven uses its Institutional Plan as a framework for the quality investments in the upcoming years. The plans for the years 2019, 2020 and 2021 are developed in detail. The lessons learned in year t-1 serve as input for the plans of year t and so on. As we progress, detailed plans for the years 2022, 2023 and 2024 will be formed. We plan to set them after the official evaluation of the progress on the plans in 2021.

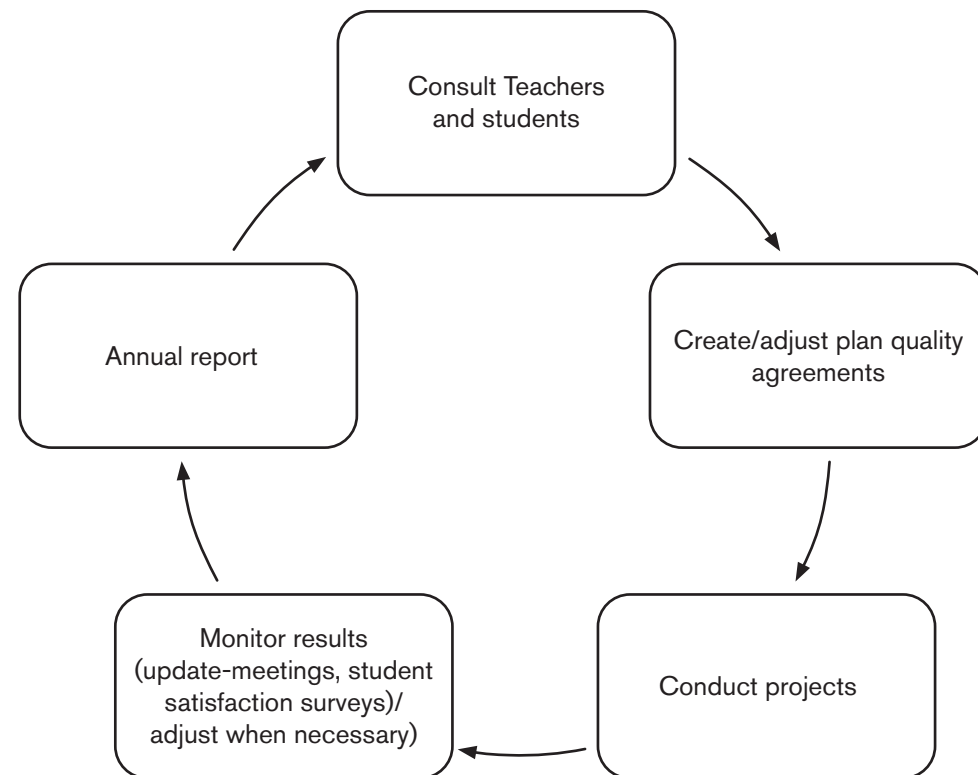
Progress of the Quality Agreements Plan will be monitored via:

- Ongoing dialogue with the DAE community;
- Structural agenda points within the different internal stakeholders;
- Involvement of participation boards (Student Council, Works Council, Advisory Board) in the decision making processes;
- Outcomes of evaluations (quantitative: Student Satisfaction Surveys, qualitative: Potlucks and ongoing dialogue).

Monitoring and Progress

The academy has developed a process of making plans, executing and readjusting them, and achieving results, all embedded in a yearly cycle. A central position in this cycle is reserved for self-evaluation, intervision and Potlucks, as well as for structural meetings between the Student Council, the Works Council and the Executive Board.

These instruments result in concrete plans with intended results that originate from and contribute to general policy plans of the Academy. It is self-evident that formal evaluations, like the National Student Surveys (NSE), internal Student Satisfaction Surveys, alumni surveys and evaluation conversations with students all provide valuable feedback. Most important is the goal of quality, the evaluation and – where needed – redirection of current practices. Making the results insightful for external parties (e.g. NVAO and CEKO) and for our students and staff is part of the same process.



To ensure proper monitoring of all aspects of the Quality Agreements Plan, discussion on the progress has a structural place on the yearly agenda of the different stake holding boards:

Who	When
EB and Student Council, Works Council	Twice a year
EB and Supervisory Board	Once a year
EB and Management Team (HR, Finance, Operations, Communication)	Quarterly
EB and Policy desk	Bi-monthly
Work group Quality Agreements*	Twice a year

* Representatives from the different internal stakeholders (student council, works council, staff, EB) will come together twice a year during the period of 2019–2024 to monitor and discuss the progress.

This set up not only provides the involvement of all internal stakeholders, it also assures that the feasibility of the project is always taken into account with the involvement of the financial and human resource aspect of the projects via the Management Team.

Pre-Investments 2015–2018

The academy has pre-invested in the quality of her education in anticipation of the quality agreements.

In the Bachelor programme, a curriculum renewal was initiated in the academic year 2015–2016. Its aim was to create more cohesion within the programme and to establish more collaboration between formerly separated design departments on the one hand, and supporting courses on the other. Teacher meetings, Potlucks of Thoughts with teachers and students, and several discussions during Student Council meetings gave input for these developments.

During the academic year 2016–2017 this renewal was further developed and effectuated.

In 2018 the renewal has been evaluated with teaching staff and students and – where necessary – was adjusted on the basis of their feedback.

The next phase of the renewal was sketched up in the first half of the academic year 2018–2019, will be further developed in 2019–2020 and implemented in 2020–2021. In this next phase the integration between the different parts of the curriculum shall be further expanded, education in design practice will be redefined and students are given more flexibility by means of individual study paths. These study paths will provide the student the room to develop their own positioning throughout the curriculum. To achieve this, the academy will further develop her competences and the assessment system into a holistic way of evaluating students' work. Growth and development of the individual student are crucial subjects of these evaluations.

The educational renewal initiated in 2016 included:

- Adjustment of the Propaedeutic year by introducing theme projects that connect to the vision of DAE on the design field, which in the meantime prepare students for a choice of one of the Design Departments in their second year.
- Development of the Basics (Crafts, Design Grammar, Humanities, SciTech), based on the abovementioned competences.
- New curriculum design based on the orchestration between Design Departments and Basics.
- Introduction of Electives as a first step towards making the curriculum more flexible.
- Clear positioning of Design Departments.
- Development of the Minor programme as part of a more flexible curriculum.
- Introduction of other, formative manners of assessment (such as Special Focus).
- Translation of the national competences into DAE competences.



Foto: Femke Rijkman

DAE Quality Agreements Plan per Theme

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has set out six themes for the Quality Agreements:

1. Intensive and Small-Scale Education
2. More and Better Guidance of Students.
3. Study Success.
4. Differentiation of Education.
5. Appropriate and Good Educational Facilities.
6. Improving the Professional Quality of Teachers.

All our prospected investments are to be seen in light of the ambitions laid out in our vision and the educational renewal that entails student centred learning, the introduction of a studio model and the implementation of a new assessment model, fitting the new educational structure and new competences.

In this section, we have taken the themes set by the ministry as a framework to elaborate on our plans. The following chapters provide detailed information on how we translate our ambitions into our year plans for the timeframe 2019–2021, and after.

Theme 1: Intensive and Small-Scale Education

“The relationship between teachers and students is crucial for effective education. That is why further intensification of the contact between students and teachers is important. This can be achieved, for example, by committing to smaller teaching groups and the formation of communities, and by making more time available for personal feedback and individual supervision. To achieve this, the student-teacher ratio needs to be reduced. Appointing more teachers also makes it possible to link the teaching content to societal themes and research, increasing curiosity among students and enhancing their research skills.”³

Design Academy Eindhoven has historically focused on community development and intensive contact between teacher and student in a range of relatively small Bachelor and Master departments.

We started the educational renewal in the Bachelor course in 2016, as part of the pre-investments towards the quality agreements. Central in the plan is a stronger emphasis on individual learning paths for the students and the creation of more opportunities for students to develop their own positioning as a designer. Our small-scale, hybrid, and non-medium bound approach to design remains the starting point, just as our values we have defined around the three key notions: pluralism, design as praxis and social agenda.

The current departments will be turned into Studios. In the Bachelor, studios will cover the broad spectrum of concerns in society and the current design world, each representing a specific set of perspectives, expressed in a theme or question, onto which a student can project their personal fascination. The further anchoring of societal themes will increase the investigative abilities of our students and the relevance of their personal paths to an increasingly hybrid international design field.

³ Description of theme 1, according to appendix 1 of the framework document *Investeren in Onderwijskwaliteit, Kwaliteitsafspraken 2019–2024*, published April 9, 2018 by the ministry of OCW

Our readerships play an important role in this as well. And by adding a third readership to our community, it will strengthen the connections of our education and research and by that enhance, the research skills of our students.

Studios offer a combination of theory, skills and design practice. Every semester, a student selects a new studio (or chooses to continue within the same studio), thus creating an individual portfolio. Continuity is assured by the competences, which are the backbone of a student's development. Over the course of their curriculum they will work on their own portfolio, developing their talent and fascinations in line with their professional ambitions.

September 2020 will clearly show the start of this gradual transition over a three to four-year period. New content and new studios will be introduced as we progress. The studio model will support even more individual trajectories for students and enhance critical reflection on the specialisations they develop. The new studio model will result in an intensified process of exchange between students and teachers/guides, which will lead to an increase in teaching hours. Starting from September 2021, we expect to gradually include an additional 2.530 hours per year (+15 %).

First year groups have significantly grown. In order to maintain and intensify the preferred quality of our small-scale education in our propaedeutic year, we will increase the number of teaching hours gradually with 1.200 hours (+16%).

We do not believe that simply increasing the number of teachers alone can magically improve the quality of our education. We do believe however, that this can be achieved by feedback based on various, sometimes contradictory view points from a pluriform academy community, of which the students themselves are an integral part. For real intensification and improvement of quality we also seek to attract teachers who represent different cultural, socio-economic backgrounds, continents, gender and able-bodiedness experiences as well as professional careers. And we look into alternative teaching methods: Through the exposure to a multitude of outlooks, students learn to consider a multitude of experiences and possible solutions

to complex issues the (design) world is facing. This will enable them to critically open up to a more empathic community with relevant insights.

Furthermore, within the new studio model, there is an emphasis on the learning process of the student and therefore on formative evaluation and feedback. We will continue to experiment with different work forms, including peer feedback, which will assure more teaching time for the students and multi-angle feedback. An external expert in the field (such as KaosPilot) might be our guide in this process.

In 2019 and 2020 the budget will be used to develop and prepare the full implementation of the new curriculum in 2021. In this next phase we will further integrate the different parts of the curriculum, redefine education in the design practice as currently taught in the Design Departments, and enable more flexibility for individual students by means of individual learning paths.

We will further implement the processes that were initiated during the pre-investment period namely, the further development of DAE specific competences and of an assessment model that agrees with DAE's holistic way of evaluating.

Theme 2: More and Better Guidance of Students

“It is the responsibility of universities of applied sciences/research universities to offer the same opportunities to all their students, regardless of background, origin, or prior education. This should not only be on an incidental basis, when things look likely to go wrong, but also proactively and structurally. One way of attaining this is through intensive supervision by and support from professionally trained tutors, for example, study advisors, psychologists, deans, and study-career supervisors. Better supervision prevents problems and ensures the best-possible development of every student.”⁴

Despite (or perhaps because of) all technological advancements in our age that promise us a life of leisure, many people in today's society will recognise the sense of being pressed for time. This paradox is ever-present. Our students are part of an “attention economy” in which they experience the far-stretching levels of screen-overload, a fear of missing out, and a high level of individual pressure. Mental health issues and the risk of burnout are not uncommon within this group. DAE being a small, but renowned academy can even put extra pressure on their achievements. Beyond their own future dreams and uncertainties, there are parents and peers expecting them to be successful, which only increases the relevance of these issues for our community. Practically all DAE students are young adults who often have left their home countries to study in Eindhoven. Loneliness, identity issues, and the need to find a place in an unfamiliar culture can all play a role here. We will investigate to what extent we need to develop extra care programmes that apply specifically to DAE's student body, so everyone can thrive. Focus points for study guidance therefore involve handling stress, resilience,

and constructive reflection. DAE wants to develop specific training for students to improve their flexibility and resilience.

In 2016 Study Guidance was introduced in our Bachelor programme. Students are guided in their professional and personal development. The guides are active designers, but they are not involved in DAE's educational programmes. Students are coached in making decisions during their studies and receive feedback on the development of their profile and positioning. The introduction of the studio model means that the guidance process will be both focussing on the study path and on the professional and business coach aspects. Students are guided in their choice of a studio, within a variety of outspoken views and approaches, which best fit their capabilities and ambitions. Overseeing the complete portfolio of the studio and matching it against the future profile a student wants to develop, needs to be part of the guidance as well.

The Quality Agreement budget will be used to analyse and evaluate the current system, and to create a clear positioning with respect to our care system (with mentors and student counsellor). Based on this analysis it will be decided whether to expand the hours of the guides and/or redefine the current system. The outcome of the analysis in the Bachelor course will also be used as input for the introduction of study guidance in our Master programme.

⁴ Description of theme 2, according to appendix 1 of the framework document *Investeren in Onderwijskwaliteit, Kwaliteitsafspraken 2019–2024*, published April 9, 2018 by the ministry of OCW

Theme 3: Study Success

“Every student with the right abilities should have the chance to start and complete their studies successfully. A focus on progressing from one study level to the next and accessibility to education for secondary education (VO) and secondary vocational education (MBO) students, equal opportunities, including higher education, preventing students from dropping out, and promoting student success rates remain important themes in higher education. Based on analyses of student success rates from among its students, an institute may decide to target its attention at certain groups of students and/or degree programmes and formulate objectives accordingly.”⁵

The community of students and teachers in DAE is already international and diverse, representing different countries and backgrounds. Yet, in line with our vision and emphasis on radical diversification as well as design as praxis, we see that our curriculum, student and teacher body, and communication of yet – and therefore our community of alumni – retain a strong emphasis on the Global North, white people, able-bodiedness and hetero-normative gender standards. International research and surveys show that students of minority ethnic groups are less likely to achieve a degree in higher education than their counterparts, despite entering with the same qualifications.⁶ As an academy within art education, Design Academy Eindhoven is allowed to select students based on artistic talent. Our current intake and selection shows that primarily Dutch students that come straight from high school, often lack in general awareness, knowledge and skills to successfully pass our intake process. We will look into ways of enhancing diversity amongst (Dutch) students, especially those with a bi-cultural background as well as people with physical limitations or a non-binary gender identity. Our search also includes other groups

⁵ Description of theme 3, according to appendix 1 of the framework document *Investeren in Onderwijskwaliteit, Kwaliteitsafspraken 2019–2024*, published April 9, 2018 by the ministry of OCW

⁶ see also Theme 4 on our plans for a diversity officer

that are more vulnerable and do not always have the experience of access and inclusion into design education; and what this may entail for study guidance and our care system. One of the ‘tools’ we envision is the possibility of a pre-academy (leading up to our Bachelor programme and/or a pre-master trajectory) for talented students to enhance the success rate of their application.

To further improve study success, the position of the study guides (theme 2) needs to be strengthened. The new studio model (theme 1) will assure that students are not stalled in their competency development. Thanks to the flexibility of the new system, we provide students who currently stall within a specific department the chance to develop their competences from within a different studio (and therefore a different approach/perspective). We ask students to play an active role in their study career by setting up specific learning goals each semester and to translate these goals into a conscious choice of Studio(s) and additional courses. Study delay will therefore be decreased.

Although the DAE Master departments already show a strong sense of community, we have to acknowledge that Eindhoven is a temporary stopover for students who fly in from all over the world. In order to strengthen their connections within and between the departments, their familiarity with Dutch culture and the field of design, and following the suggestions by our student body, DAE will actively encourage alumni to take part in projects, workshops, and to give guest lectures. This direct contact with their peers will help current and future Master students find their way in- and outside the academy.

We also foresee multiple graduation profiles within the further development of our competences (already started in the pre-investment period): Each student will need to acquire a base level on each competency. Next to that, the student will construct their own specific profile by excelling in one or more competences.

Theme 4: Differentiation of Education

“Universities of applied sciences/research universities respond to the different backgrounds and ambitions of students and the needs of the labour market. They do so by offering a varied range of educational programmes at different levels (AD, BA, MA). Investments are also being made in talent programmes, such as ‘honours’ programmes or those in the field of social involvement, for example, or business, art, or sport. Universities of applied sciences/research universities can also differentiate themselves in terms of teaching concepts.”⁷

Pluralism stands for diversity, not only within the curriculum. As part of the overall policy of the academy it also refers to diversity and inclusion within our community. Based on research and mapping of the required steps in 2019 and 2020, we will present a strategy that will lead to a more diverse intake of students, teachers and staff. Diversity, intersectional thinking, understanding and interrupting implicit bias will be topics within the curriculum, integrated in our lecture programme, and our selection procedures for students, teachers and staff. To this end, we are looking to learn from internal and external research how diversity policies – for instance by appointing a diversity officer – can be fully integrated and become a continuous factor of our daily operations.⁸ Next to the differentiation in diversity, with the introduction of the studio model and its graduation profiles and possibilities to excel, we structurally invest in the differentiation of talent.

⁷ Description of theme 4, according to appendix 1 of the framework document *Investeren in Onderwijskwaliteit, Kwaliteitsafspraken 2019–2024*, published April 9, 2018 by the ministry of OCW

⁸ ‘Draft paper: Inclusion & diversity within DAE, towards an action plan for radical equality in education and organization’, July 2019.

Finally, we will expand our educational portfolio. A fifth Master profile will be introduced in September 2020: Geo—Design. With the development and implementation of this profile we answer to the societal developments worldwide.

Furthermore, we will investigate the possibilities of adding academic education (WO) to our educational portfolio.

Theme 5: Appropriate and Good Educational Facilities

“It is important that study facilities and infrastructure promote intensive and small-scale education. Digital sources could be integrated into the education process even more effectively; students should be able to make optimum use of their educational environments, physical and digital alike, during the course of their studies. Study facilities and infrastructure should be relevant to the needs of education of the future.”⁹

Making the educational structure more flexible requires investment in the assurance of the insightfulness of the progress a student makes and the feedback the student receives. This applies to the students themselves, but also to the constantly changing tutorial teams, since the student has the possibility to enter a different studio each semester. Investing in a new Learning Management System (LMS) is therefore vital for the success of the curriculum renewal. This LMS will be directly linked to our new student registration system, which will register and show the summative achievements in the students’ individual trajectories.

We will also investigate the suitability of our physical educational environment. With student numbers increasing, the curricula becoming more flexible and our wish to rethink the workshops – like with a bio lab – we have to critically evaluate the current (im)possibilities of our building. We will seek partnerships, as we are already doing today with Beeldenstorm/ Daglicht, EKWC and Textiellab, to facilitate the need for specialised workshops and differentiated types of productional support for our students.

9 Description of theme 5, according to appendix 1 of the framework document *Investeren in Onderwijskwaliteit, Kwaliteitsafspraken 2019–2024*, published April 9, 2018 by the ministry of OCW

10 Powerful stationary machines for animation, film, rendering, heavy coding; and Software (Cinema4d, Maya, PyCharm, Tensorflow, a.o.)

There are several reasons why we also aim at a quality improvement of our existing workshops. In line with the Institutional Plan, it is imperative that we rethink the way the workshops should function within the new studio model.

What is the standard in order to match our plans in education? Does it mean conversion into ateliers? We should look into the possibilities of pluriformity, including external strategic partnerships.

Important feedback we received from students is to align the assignments more with the capacity of the workshops, and thus within the curriculum. Students should have more access to the facilities, starting with the Bio-lab in 2019. This was one of the ultra-clear outcomes of the recent student surveys and Potlucks¹⁰.

A substantial sum has therefore been budgeted to allow for a thorough overhaul of the workshops in the years 2019–2024.

The change in our educational organisation towards flexible study paths and the studio model demands more intensive operational management. Support systems will help provide information and tools for registration and evaluation, but the model itself also asks for more direction and coordination. We will expand our BA educational desk to cover this growing need for support.

Theme 6: Improving the Professional Quality of Teachers

“Good and involved teachers are key to high-quality education. Efforts could be made at improving the professional qualities of teachers. This should also include greater appreciation of the work of teachers, by placing greater emphasis on teaching performance at university level, for example. Teachers should also be kept up-to-date with the most recent developments from a substantive, didactic, and digital perspective. It would help here if they were able to share their own course material and to use that of others. Teachers should have more opportunities to work on their own development, by carrying out research, for example (in the case of university of applied sciences teachers).”¹¹

In recent years we developed a Didactical Skills course (BDB), of which the second group of twelve participants have just received their certificates. We will continue to offer this course on a yearly basis.

We will also start with offering training in didactical and pedagogical skills by an Academy internal expert in the field of Didactics. With the start of the new curriculum, specific knowledge and skills are required in the general didactical field and in evaluating formatively in particular, that make such a course a must for the teachers involved. The more flexible trajectory for BA students, will automatically translate in the way we teach and assess students. Teachers will need to adapt to a role with more focus on didactics and pedagogy and a formative way of assessing with an emphasis on feed-back, feed-up and feed-forward. Furthermore, we will start offering a Senior Qualification Examination (SKE). Prerequisite for this course is a successfully finished Didactical Skills course since SKE builds upon its skills and knowledge. Our aim is to at least certify all core teachers per studio in SKE. After all, those core teachers will safeguard the

11 Description of theme 6, according to appendix 1 of the framework document *Investeren in Onderwijskwaliteit, Kwaliteitsafspraken 2019–2024*, published April 9, 2018 by the ministry of OCW

continuity and didactical design of the education and assessment plan within their studios. The Learning Management System (theme 5) will make it easy for the participants of the SKE course to share knowledge and material. This helps us build a solid learning community.

DAE intends to intensify its focus on design research. Next to our readerships *Places & Traces* and *Strategic Creativity* we will add a third readership, starting in 2020. This will also serve theme 1 as it will strengthen the connection of our education and research and by that enhance the research skills of our students. Within the curriculum we have chosen to involve theory teachers in the academy-wide knowledge circle, which helps us strengthen our theoretical backbone and our learning continuity pathways, and better integrate the design research of our readerships. We also plan to offer teachers the possibility to increase their research capabilities.

Lastly, we believe that improving the professional quality of teachers is not only expressed in their diplomas and certificates. Broader and more inclusive future horizons are to be implemented in the curriculum – from courses, teachers, subjects, and canons to the relationships between teachers and students. Supplementing the perspectives in our current staff will also be reached by actively looking for teachers whose practice or outlook are currently missing or underrepresented, although they could be essential for a more inclusive approach to design in DAE.

The way forward both within and outside of the existing design field is a mentality and organisation that make space for individual differences. Where courses in didactics and pedagogy aide teachers design their education and assessments in formats and certified qualification, attention for multiplicity will provide the nourishment, mental enrichment and recalibration we believe are required in the culturally diverse and inclusive education environment DAE needs to be. The appointment of a diversity officer (see theme 4) would be a means to safeguard this multiplicity.

Executive Statement

Design Academy Eindhoven is one of the smallest independent HEI's in the Netherlands, with two courses, one bachelor and one master course, and approximately 700 students. These limitations – both in scope and size – were deliberately chosen, and in the light of the current Quality Agreements policies they make perfect sense. The value of small-scale, intensive education has always been the corner stone for the way DAE defines its position. The range between 700 and 750 students gives us a solid guarantee for effective supervision and guidance of our students, which also translates into their success rate. We see our independence as an important condition that allows us to attract dedicated teachers who combine their educational task with the knowledge and experiences they derive from their active practices in and around the field of design.

In other words, we think DAE thrives because of its small scale and independence. They give agility and flexibility to the organisation, enabling our educational programme to adapt swiftly to changes in society, culture, and technology; an important quality for the content of our curricula and the quality level of the works of students.

DAE sees the quality agreements as an important and necessary possibility to underline our vision and to enhance the quality of our education.

Nevertheless, we are aware of recently suggested changes in the OCW budget such as by the Commissie van Rijn, and other measures that may be taken by OCW¹³. We assume that these measures will not affect our overall multi-annual budget in a way that it may also affect our Quality Agreements Plan.

¹³ Science Guide, June 28, 2019, <https://www.science-guide.nl/2019/06universiteiten-lopen-nog-meer-geld-mis-dan-gedacht/>

Colophon

DESIGN ACADEMY EINDHOVEN QUALITY AGREEMENTS PLAN

EXECUTIVE BOARD (EB)

Joseph Grima,
Raf De Keninck,
Mechtild van den Hombergh

WORKING COMMITTEE QUALITY AGREEMENTS

Willemien Boot (for Advisory Board),
Mechtild van den Hombergh (for EB),
Peter van Casteren (tutor Propedeuse, teamleader workshops, member Works Council),
Floor van der Wal (student BA, member Student Council),
Mieke Meijer (designer studio Mieke Meijer, tutor design department BA),
Ilga Minjon (curator bk Stroom, tutor Propedeuse BA),
Gert Staal (independent writer/editor, tutor design department MA),
Jurriëne Ossewold (for EB until April 2019),
Jet Broeken (sr policy officer),
Yolande Hezemans (sr policy officer, project leader Quality Agreements)

EDITED BY

Gert Staal, Jet Broeken, Mechtild van den Hombergh, Yolande Hezemans

DESIGN

Wibke Bramesfeld

TYPEFACE

Akzidenz-Grotesk Pro

PHOTOGRAPHY

Femke Rijerman, Peter Cox

PUBLISHER

Design Academy Eindhoven
Emmasingel 14
Postbus 2125
5600 CC Eindhoven
T +31(0)40 239 39 39
www.designacademy.nl
info@designacademy.nl

This publication is made for the Quality Agreements of Design Academy Eindhoven. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without prior permission from the publisher.

Design Academy Eindhoven

Emmasingel 14
5611 AZ Eindhoven
Postbus 2125
5600 CC Eindhoven
T +31(0)402393939

info@designacademy.nl
www.designacademy.nl