

Course Feedback at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

CONCEPT FOR THE PILOT PROJECT
AT THE INSTITUTE FOR ART AND ARCHITECTURE
(IKA)

(SHORT VERSION)

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FOREWORD

The Academy of Fine Arts is planning to implement course feedback provided by students as a continuous instrument accompanying quality assurance and the improvement of teaching. Therefore, the first step will be to carry out a pilot project at the Institute for Art and Architecture in the winter semester 2013/14.

The project aims to try out various approaches to and methods of student feedback in order to find out whether the method planned against the backdrop of the teaching and studying conditions specific to the Academy can be considered beneficial to and useful for all people involved (especially for students and lecturers). The experiences thus gained, plus all accompanying thought processes, shall serve as a sound basis for all further developments and refinements of course feedback provided by students.

This short version provides a rough overview of the main points of the pilot project at the IKA. For more detail, please see the long version of the concept.

1 LEGAL BASIS

- Universities Act 2002, especially § 2, 6¹; § 14 (1)²; § 14 (7)³
- Guideline for making temporary positions permanent at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.⁴

2 OBJECTIVES

- Quality assurance and continual development of teaching processes
- Creation of an open, lively and continual quality process in teaching
- Initiation of a productive dialog between students and teachers

1 “student codetermination, particularly in respect of matters relating to studies, quality assurance of teaching and the application of tuition fees”, cf. Universities Act 2002 (as amended 2009). Online at: http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/ErV/ERV_2002_1_120/ERV_2002_1_120.pdf (24/07/2013), unofficial translation by the Austrian Federal Chancellery, Austrian Legal Information System.

2 “The universities shall develop their own quality management in order to assure quality and the attainment of their performance objectives.” Cf. Universities Act 2002 (as amended 2009), unofficial translation by the Austrian Federal Chancellery, Austrian Legal Information System.

3 “The performance of university professors, associate professors, and other research, artistic and teaching staff shall be regularly evaluated, at least once every five years. The detailed arrangements shall be established by university statutes.” Cf. Universities Act 2002(as amended 2009), unofficial translation by the Austrian Federal Chancellery, Austrian Legal Information System.

4 The results of course feedback are not automatically taken into account when considering the removal of the time limit on an employee’s position; such results can, however, be included should the respective employee so desire. Cf. Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (2012): Guideline issued by the Rector’s Office on the extension of temporary employment contracts of university professors according to § 98 Universities Act 2002 – UA. § 4 Teaching. Vienna, unofficial translation.

3 PRINCIPLES OF COURSE FEEDBACK

- Open, heterogeneous understanding of the term “quality”
- Fairness, integrity and honesty of all persons involved, focusing on the chance to talk on an equal footing
- Adherence to the provisions of data protection
- Anonymity and voluntary participation of students
- Duty to cooperate on the part of the lecturers and the departmental heads
- Contextualization of results
- Sustainability
- Continual improvement of the feedback methods on the basis of the experience of everybody involved

4 METHODS

For the course feedback, two different methods can be applied:

- Online Feedback
- Feedback Round

Lecturers and students together decide on the methods they would like to make use of (Online Feedback, Feedback Round or both). If no notification is sent to the Department of Quality Management, Online Feedback is used automatically.

- Online Feedback will be collected via an online questionnaire using an application provided by AcademyOnline. For each type of lecture or course (project, project lecture, lecture, seminar) there is a different questionnaire. The questionnaires will be available in German and English. On request lectures can supplement optional questions for each course.
- The Feedback Round will be a discussion among students without the lecturer, taking 45 minutes during one of the lectures in the course of the semester. The discussion will be moderated by a student and a minute will be taken. The student taking the minutes will then send them by email to the Department of Quality Management, to be forwarded to the respective lecturer by the latter.

5 UTILIZATION OF RESULTS

In order to be able to sustain and further improve the high-quality teaching and learning conditions at the Academy, students' feedback is to be incorporated into any decisions and potential modifications envisaged by those responsible. Such results will therefore be forwarded to the following institutions and persons:

Table 1

Overview of the utilization of results of course feedback provided by students

Type of result	Results accessed by	Lecturer and co-lecturer	Departmental heads	Students Representatives	Rector's Office
Results of the Online Feedback of single courses		X	X		
Minutes of the Feedback Round of single courses		X	X		
Summarized results ⁵ of the Online Feedback of all courses according to the type of course (P, PV, V, S)**		X	X	X	
Summary of main results from the minutes of the Feedback Rounds**		X	X	X	
Follow-Up Report compiled by the Departmental head**				X	X

) For the sake of completeness, it must be pointed out that the Department of Quality Management in its data processing function has access to all the results.

**) In the summaries, the anonymity of all lecturers involved is guaranteed as they are not named, nor are single lectures or courses listed by name.

⁵ For instance, the questionnaire results of all courses of the 'Project' type are combined to form a single feedback result.

6 TIME SCHEDULE

6.1 SELECTION OF FEEDBACK METHOD

The lecturers decide together with their student group by November 15, 2013, which method of student feedback they would like to use (Online Feedback, Feedback Round or both) and notify the Department of Quality Management. If no preference is registered, Online Feedback is automatically selected.

6.2 REALIZATION OF THE COURSE FEEDBACK SELECTED

ONLINE FEEDBACK

Short title	Description	Scheduled for
Additional questions provided by lecturers	If they wish to do so, lecturers can add one or two personal questions per course to the questionnaire. A set of possible questions will be provided. Such questions should be communicated to the Department of Quality Management by November 15.	Nov. 15, 2013
How Online Feedback is carried out	Students have access to the course feedback questionnaires on AcademyOnline from Dec. 2, 2013 until Jan. 7, 2014. For courses ending before Dec. 2 (e.g. block courses), the questioning period will be adjusted accordingly.	From Dec. 2, 2013 until Jan. 7, 2014
Results provided for lecturers and co-lecturers	The results of the Online Feedback can be accessed by the lecturer and co-lecturer at AcademyOnline for each course taught. Additionally, lecturers and co-lecturers will be provided with the summarized results of the Online Feedback according to course type as well as the summary of the main results taken from the minutes of the Feedback Rounds. ^{*)}	As of mid-Jan 2014
Lecturers' comments	If they wish to do so, lecturers can (via the application offered by AcademyOnline) post their comments on, or add their own views to, the feedback provided by their students.	From mid-Jan until March 7, 2014 (deadline)

^{*)} The summaries do not mention either lecturers or courses by name.

FEEDBACK ROUND

Short title	Description	Scheduled for
Moderation Training	For students interested in moderating a Feedback Round, the Academy will offer a two-hour training session.	Nov. 2013
How the Feedback Round is carried out	The student group attending the respective course will be carrying out the Feedback Round autonomously in the course of the lecture (45 min). A discussion guideline will be provided. A moderator determined in advance will host the discussion and a predetermined minute-taker will record the main points of discussion. The minutes will be sent to the Department of Quality Management by email.	Dec. 2013
Results provided for lecturers and co-lecturers	The Department of Quality Management will then send the minutes taken in the course of the Feedback Rounds to the lecturers and co-lecturers.	Dec. 2013/Jan. 2014
Lecturers' comments	If required, lecturers are invited to comment on the feedback results, or to add their own views to students' feedback. Such a comment is to be sent to the Department of Quality Management.	By March 7, 2014

6.3 FOLLOW-UP

Short title	Description	Scheduled for
Results provided for Student Representatives	The Department of Quality Management will communicate the following to the Students Representatives <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. the summarized results of the Online Feedback sorted according to course type2. the summary of main results taken from the minutes of the Feedback Rounds*	March 2014
Results provided for Departmental Heads	The Department of Quality Management will communicate the following to the Departmental Heads: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. the assessment of the Online Feedback for each course offered by the respective institute, including any comments added by the lecturer involved2. the minutes of the Feedback Rounds for each course offered by the respective institute, including any comments added by the lecturer3. the summarized results* of the Online Feedback sorted according to course type4. the summary of main results gleaned from the minutes of the Feedback Rounds*	March 2014
Follow-Up Report	On the basis of the results transmitted, the departmental heads are expected to compile a report containing the strengths and weaknesses of the courses, as well as possible measures for sustaining and improving the quality of teaching. This report will then be sent to the Rector's Office, and to the Students' Representatives.	By May 5, 2014

**) In the summaries, individual lecturers and/or individual courses will not be named.*

7 QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE PILOT PROJECT (MAY 2014)

In order to be able to learn from the experience gained throughout the pilot project, we plan to ask everybody involved (especially students and lecturers) about the course feedback. Any feedback and suggested improvements will serve to refine the methods.

FURTHER QUERIES

If you have any further questions, please contact:

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I would like to thank the Student Representatives – Architecture, the ÖH/University Representation, as well as those lecturers who have provided me with numerous helpful ideas for this concept.

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Vienna, October 2013