



Visual Communications - GENERAL EVALUATION REPORT

COMMITTEE FOR THE EVALUATION OF VISUAL
COMMUNICATIONS STUDY PROGRAMS IN ISRAEL

JANUARY 15, 2019

Section 1: Background and Procedures

- 1.1** In the academic year 2017-18 the Council for Higher Education [CHE] put in place arrangements for the evaluation of study programs in the field of Visual Communications [VC] in Israel.
- 1.2** The Colleges participating in the evaluation process were:
- Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem
 - Holon Institute of Technology, Holon
 - WIZO (Neri Bloomfield School of Design), Haifa
 - Shenkar College of Engineering, Design and Art, Tel Aviv
- 1.3** To undertake the evaluation, the Vice Chair of the CHE appointed a Committee consisting of:
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| • Prof. Nancy Skolos: Committee Chair | Rhode Island School of Design, USA |
| • Prof. Bruce Brown | Royal College of Art, UK |
| • Prof. Leland Burke | Massachusetts College of Art and Design, USA |
| • Prof. Anat Katsir | Bezalel Academy of Art and Design, Israel |
| • Assoc. Prof. Gerry Leonidas | Reading University, UK |
- Ms. Molly Abramson served as the Coordinator of the Committee on behalf of the CHE.
- 1.4** The evaluation process was conducted in accordance with the CHE's Guidelines for Self-Evaluation (June 2017). Within this framework the evaluation committee was required to:
- examine the self-evaluation reports submitted by the institutions that provide study programs in VC
 - conduct on-site visits at those institutions participating in the evaluation process
 - submit to the CHE an individual report on each of the academic units and study programs participating in the evaluation
 - set out the committee's findings and recommendations for each study program
 - submit to the CHE a general report regarding the evaluated field of study within the Israeli system of higher education including recommendations for standards in the evaluated field of study
- 1.5** The Evaluation Committee based its work on the evidence provided by each participating institution — considering this alongside the distinctive mission set out by each institution in terms of its own aims and objectives. This material was further elaborated and explained in discussions with senior management, lecturers, students and alumnae during the course of each one-day visit to each of the institutions.¹
- 1.6** A separate meeting was convened between the Committee and the four Heads of the departments of VC under evaluation. This served to contextualize the Committee's discussions and to identify common issues between the departments.
- 1.7** In undertaking this work the Committee considered matters of both quality assurance and quality enhancement — applying its collective knowledge of developments and good practices in the delivery of higher education in visual communication design (mainly from European countries and from the USA) to the evaluation of such provision in Israel.

¹ Prof. Katsir did not participate in the visit to the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design or in the Committee's discussions concerning the evaluation of this institution.

Section 2: International context

- 2.1** Though Israel may be geographically small in comparison to other nations, it is culturally and creatively immense. It has delivered radical innovations that transform current practices into new ways of dealing with world realities — it has the potential capacity to find game-changing solutions that enhance the ways in which we live. Many of these innovations have come out of the broad range of VC disciplines and their engagement with other sectors of education as well as the new digital economies.
- 2.2** Israel's higher education (HE) provision in VC design, though being small in scale, has enormous potential to lead the development of a vibrant creative economy. Israel's creative and cultural assets provide a solid platform on which to build a design culture of international distinctiveness that could greatly add to the nation's social, cultural and economic wellbeing.
- 2.3** The four VC Departments that were reviewed in this QA process are geographically distributed, with distinct missions and student experiences. Taken as a whole, this provides a healthy range of opportunities for VC studies in Israel that recognizes the diversity and complexity of local culture. Collectively, this creates a solid platform from which to address the range of cultures within Israel.
- 2.4** During the course of this evaluation, there were many issues that arose in Israeli Higher Education and VC that are shared with other nations and so are not exclusive to Israel. As the HE sector continues to grow and evolve, some of the teaching and learning strategies associated with practice-based study in the creative arts and design are still evolving and maturing to find their place within the mainstream of the higher HE sector.
- 2.5** In many other European nations and the USA there is an increased focus on interdisciplinary work. This is particularly so in our quest to find new solutions that more effectively deal with some of the big social and economical challenges we face.
- 2.6** In this respect VC design, in its broad sense, is inherently interdisciplinary being able to engage with other disciplines on an equal footing. It is now widely accepted by most disciplines outside the creative arts that an understanding of design thinking is at the root of their work — whether this be, for example, in engineering, business or the social sciences. This however demands an HE system that does not isolate the creative arts and design from all other disciplines within the HE mainstream or exclude them from resources that could help to develop capacity and stimulate activity.
- 2.7** It is further understood that radical innovation is a major driver of this approach. Much of this activity in other disciplines within the academy is based on grounded research for which such a capacity within the creative arts and design is yet to develop in Israel. If this enormous potential is to be fully realized, then there is an urgent need to reconsider the engagement of the practice-based arts and design within the research culture of the academy — from the supervision of PhDs to having access to research funds that will support projects having the potential for a wider impact within society, culture and the economy.
- 2.8** Though the HE sector for VC design in Israel is active, it still remains small in scale in comparison to other nations. This may inhibit its ability to make a full contribution to the development of a vibrant and creative cultural economy in Israel. This, in turn, seems to have left the creative sector of VC design with low visibility and esteem both within the HE sector and in the public's perception.
- 2.9** In Europe and the US, it is acknowledged that the ancient universities have much longer traditions and histories than the more recently established art schools and specialized institutions. Though the history of HE in Israel is even shorter than this, Israeli arts colleges also have shorter histories than the respective Universities (with the exception of Bezalel

Academy of Arts and Design). So the arts colleges in Israel, as in Europe and the US, are still in the process of maturing their academic practices and research within the scholarship of art and design.

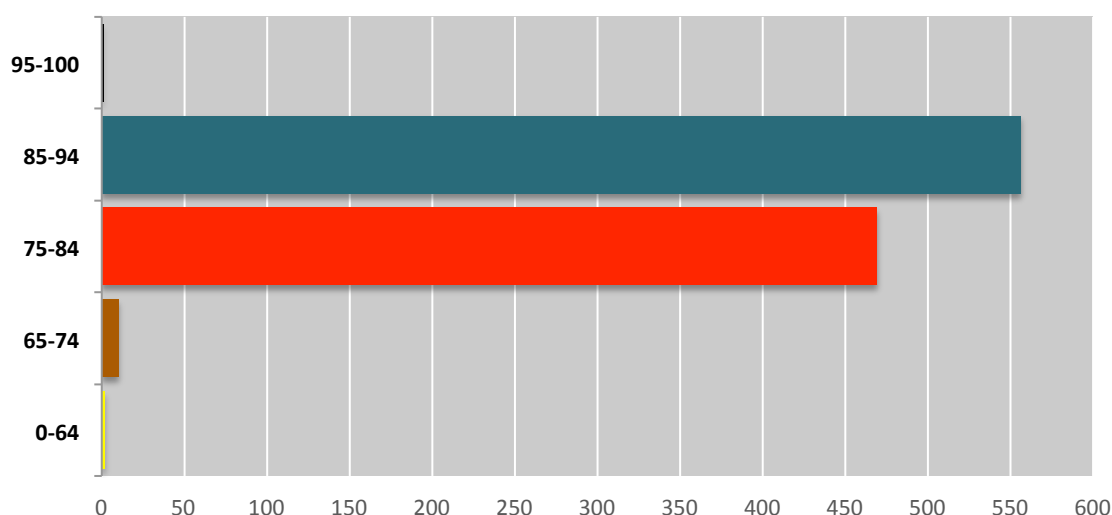
- 2.10** There is therefore a need to provide early support in this process if it is to fully develop. This challenge is frustrated by the fact that the colleges are excluded from access to research funding. Though it may be an unintended consequence of this approach it appears that Israel has adopted a strategy of supporting research in the natural and physical sciences alone. This situation is yet further exacerbated by the fact that current provision for HE art and design only takes place in Colleges that are excluded from the research funding regime.
- 2.11** In HE in VC and Design, the dominant pedagogy is “learning through doing”. This approach is common in all VC programs in all nations. This distinctive teaching and learning methodology helps to develop students as autonomous learners whose ability to “learn how to learn” then sustains them throughout life-long careers. Indeed, such students will only be in mid-career by the year 2040 by which time the professions and their associated technologies will have changed beyond recognition. Therefore, a primary outcome of an education through design is for each student to create the intellectual and creative scaffolding that will be essential to their ability to learn and re-learn throughout a lifetime.
- 2.12** This in turn, only happens when research serves to infuse the whole system, from staff activity down to student learning. Therefore the spectrum of research, learning and teaching is a single entity that will ensure the health and vibrancy of the system overall. The absence of a systematic approach to support the development of research within VC design is a major obstacle to this endeavor. It not only stifles the development of innovative practices, but limits the breadth and depth of the student learning experience.
- 2.13** In the spirit of this QA process the Committee distinguished between threshold standards and excellence. Its overall conclusion was that the majority of the provision for VC HE in Israel was meeting a minimum threshold standard. Beyond this, the Committee was further encouraged to see evidence for excellence in some areas. This report, therefore, focuses on those adjustments and refinements that would help to further raise the bar on excellence and so realize the full potential that Israel has to be a global leader in the areas covered by this evaluation.

Section 3: Quality Assurance

- 3.1** The purpose of this section of the report is to set out key areas where the CHE quality assurance process has identified that, in some cases, the respective programs meet the threshold standard needed to deliver each institution's mission or may fall below this threshold.
- 3.2** Overall, the Committee felt that there was sufficient contextual evidence to suggest that the study programs were fulfilling the students' expectations and preparing them for careers in VC. All institutions are thoughtfully addressing the challenge of constantly expanding platforms and shifting dynamics in this field.
- 3.3** In each of the evaluated institutions there was a strong individual identity. This helped to foster vibrant, engaged communities of faculty and students, who evidenced a strong sense of loyalty and dedication. This was well understood and appreciated by all faculty and all students in each institution.
- 3.4** Each of the institutions demonstrated their commitment to civic and social engagement and to finding ways of building this into the curriculum and the student experience.
- 3.5** In addition, in all institutions, there were clear steps being taken to make the contribution of VC to contemporary society more clearly visible and embedded alongside other disciplines. More than this, Israeli design overall has a strong international reputation for innovation, which helps to support national prosperity and productivity. There is potential for VC in Israel to be a greater catalyst for growth and innovation.
- 3.6** Amongst the many positive aspects encountered during the Quality Evaluation process there were some areas in which further development either is *essential*, *important* or *desirable*, as outlined below.

3.7 Assessment regime and exit results

- 3.7.1** The graph below shows the total number of final grades for all students (1,038 headcount), in all four institutions, for the three years 2014-2017. Of the final grades, awarded to 1,038 students, 0.19% were in the band 0-64 and 1% in the band 65-74. The majority of the students, 99%, were in the band 75-94 with 54% of these being in the upper band 85-94.
- 3.7.2** In discussion with all senior faculty there was universal acceptance that this apparent bunching of exit grades at the higher end was not acceptable and in need of some attention. Prior to this evaluation exercise none of the institutions had commented on the distribution of final grades in their evaluation reports.



3.8 Learning Outcomes

In the four BA(Hons) programs evaluated in this process there was an inconsistency of practices in establishing the learning outcomes² for each program as a whole. In some cases these were clearly articulated, whereas in other cases these were absent.

3.9 Curriculum content

All institutions had designed curricula that were relevant to the wider design discipline in contemporary society. However, along with the expansion of design practice the curriculum is becoming overcrowded, making it difficult to decide what to include. As a result, students are overstretched when trying to deal with many aspects of design practice at once. In this context, the learning outcomes are mostly focused on what students produce, rather than what they are learning through the education process.

3.10 Curriculum structure

In the context of 2.1.3 above, all of the institutions that were evaluated were moving towards a more holistic and student-directed experience. This was a move away from the track system previously in place. The consequence is that a greater burden is placed on students to manage their path through the curriculum. In the absence of learning outcomes and academic oversight embedded in the programs, students experience an increased workload, which is often burdensome in years 1 and 2.

3.11 Curriculum and syllabi

- 3.11.1 All of the evaluated departments fulfilled the QA Division of CHE requirement to provide syllabuses for each program, and work is still underway to develop and refine these. Furthermore, the programs aligned with the mission set out for each institution.
- 3.11.2 In terms of the curriculum and syllabuses, there is a need to fulfil two aspects of the student experience. The first is to provide a range of content material in which all institutions illustrated a range of material that was relevant to design HE at this moment in time. The second purpose is to inform each student of the learning expectations that are placed upon them.
- 3.11.3 The degree to which each institution met the threshold expected in this area is addressed in individual reports. Generally, overall, there was an absence of:
 - a program description that clearly set out the LOs expected of the students from the program overall;
 - mapping the overall learning outcomes into the individual syllabuses;
 - inconsistent practices in the design of individual syllabuses so that important information that the students needed was absent from the description, especially learning outcomes and assessment criteria, that would add up to a coherent student experience.
- 3.11.4 The practice in designing and articulating course syllabuses varied widely in the four institutions. In all cases there was further work to be done, especially in stating or clarifying the learning outcomes at the level of the curriculum, and mapping the learning outcomes into the individual syllabuses. For example, some contained learning outcomes, and some did not.

² By 'learning outcome' the Committee is referring to what a student will be expected to have learned by the end of a course.

3.12 Feedback and assessment

No evidence was provided to demonstrate that any of the evaluated departments provided students with written feedback on the assessment of their coursework against learning outcomes. This led to:

- an absence of clarity in how students achieve learning outcomes
- inconsistencies in the focus and terminology used for feedback
- an inability to support and foster reflection in order to provide for a global review of students' performance

3.13 Faculty development

3.13.1. There is evidence of growing awareness of the need to provide more systematic support for teaching and learning skills in VC design. This is at an early stage of development and not yet embedded in all of the evaluated institutions. This kind of support has two aims:

- To ensure that lecturers based in professional studio practice are also conversant with the good practices of teaching, learning and assessment.
- All lecturers are provided with continuous development, not only with teaching skills, but also to understand student learning within the context of design education.

3.13.2. The one-day-a-week schedule of most teaching staff does not help to facilitate faculty-to-faculty coordination and collaboration. Furthermore, it inhibits an ongoing dialogue from faculty to student over the course of the program. Students can seek out guidance but faculty time is limited. The consequence of this is that the student experience is often fragmented and in an unnecessarily-pressured environment.

3.13.3. The Committee found little written evidence of transparent promotion procedures for academic faculty along their access to these.

3.14 Developing students' learning skills

Overall there was an understanding of the need for faculty to develop greater skills in the processes that foster student learning. In many overseas institutions, for example, there are established practices of agreeing formal learning contracts that are initiated by individual students. In these, the student will spell out their aims, objectives, working methods, and proposed learning outcomes in order for a contract to be approved by a member of staff. In particular, a systematic approach to enable students to develop their own intellectual scaffolding on which to build a life-long career in a rapidly changing environment is essential in design HE.³

3.15 Student health and wellbeing

The Committee recognized the motivation of faculty to support students with challenges faced during their studies, including in cases where special needs and student wellbeing beyond academic demands were involved. There is room to improve the support of students by developing programs for student wellbeing, extending to the provision of counselling

³ <http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/learning-at-university/independent-learning/learning-contract/>
<https://study.com/academy/lesson/student-learning-contract-examples-and-template.html>

services, and staff training for supporting special educational needs. In all institutions, we observed a lack of overview feedback on the progress of each student. As the design curriculum becomes more packed, courses are delivered in isolation from each other and the learning outcomes are not clearly defined then the student experience will become more fragmented rather than holistic.

3.16 Infrastructure and facilities

Across all institutions, we identified an intense pressure on space and facilities borne of the growing number of students, and budgetary constraints. An important consideration in this regard is the requirement of VC programs to integrate different modes of learning, spanning digital workstations, print output stations, craft workshops, and spaces for individual and group work outside timetabled sessions.

3.17 Research

- 3.17.1 The four institutions that were evaluated had all claimed research to be an important element in sustaining the health and vibrancy of the undergraduate curriculum along with the quality of the student experience. Not all institutions, however, had yet developed formal mechanisms to embed research as a part of the undergraduate student experience.
- 3.17.2 In terms of faculty research three of the four institutions had asserted that research was an essential part of their mission and values. Of these, two cited Faculty research within the institution as a whole but not within the area of VC. One institution provided a list of faculty research outputs specifically in the area of VC and concluded that such research was in its infancy.

3.18 National and international collaborations

- 3.18.1 The political, social and cultural circumstances in which Israeli students study is unique within international HE. Consequently it brings different demands and contingencies to the student learning experience that do not exist elsewhere. Outreach that could bring a greater awareness of these unique conditions to a wider audience outside of Israel would make a significant contribution to the international community and help to foster collaborations that could lead to additional funding streams.
- 3.18.2 There are many agencies outside of Israel that have undertaken fundamental work on a range of HE issues such as assessment and learning outcomes. These agencies should be identified and their resources utilised in the further development of curricula, syllabuses, learning outcomes and assessment criteria.
- 3.18.3 There are potential areas for development that would benefit from collaborations between departments both within and outside of Israel. This may be in the interests of resource efficiency or in pooling intellectual and creative expertise.

3.19 Diversity

More work needs to be done to ensure that the demography of the student population is appropriate to the opportunities offered by HE.

Departments should tailor support for the student experience to the specific needs of all ethnic groups in order to ensure successful completion of the academic program.

3.20 Self-Evaluation Process

Overall the QA self evaluation process was heavily inward looking, having two consequences:

- 3.20.1 There was little evidence that best practices concerning the development of teaching and learning outcomes, outside of Israel had been referenced in order to support the quality evaluation process.
- 3.20.2 The evaluation process itself was highly insular, without the course teams being asked to engage with any form of independent scrutiny that was based within each and every institution.

Section 4: Quality enhancement and capacity building

- 4.1 The purpose of this section of the report is to identify areas where continuous enhancement of various elements in the HE provision is important in order to raise the bar on excellence and essential where the minimum threshold may not have been met.

4.2 Institutional ownership of the QA process

- 4.2.1 This exercise is the first time that the four programs in VC design have been taken through the CHE's quality evaluation process. This cycle of evaluation is, therefore, at a very early stage of development within the departments, so needing some further time and help for it to fully mature.
- 4.2.2 Each of the VC Departments participating in this review engaged fully with the process and provided much material to inform the review. This material, and the CHE reports resulting from this exercise will provide good data and information to inform the next steps in the process of continuous evaluation. This is something that needs to be continued on a regular basis from year to year so that it becomes part of the institutional culture.
- 4.2.3 As set out in paragraph 3.20.2 there is a need to ensure that the QA process does not become increasingly inward looking. Here, the role of the institution in taking ownership of its own internal quality evaluation process is critical. In this respect, the quality evaluation framework has three levels as follows:
 - i. **Council** Responsible for the **governance** of the evaluation framework
Ensuring that all Institutions are evaluated equally and fairly, and that institutional procedures safeguard the integrity of the framework and its operation;
 - ii. **Institution** Responsible for the **ownership** of the evaluation framework within the Institution to assure and enhance quality standards. In this respect there are a number of mechanisms that could be employed of which the Committee would suggest consideration of:
 - establishing an annual cycle of quality assurance and enhancement that helps the process to become part of institutional thinking and culture
 - convening an independent body within the institution to scrutinize the QA report produced by a department, to sign off the resulting actions and to provide feedback
 - including external and/or international representatives at some point in the evaluation process

- providing each program team with key data sets on the program's operation;
- iii. **Department** Responsible for the **implementation** of the evaluation framework within the Department, for analyzing performance, identifying key issues, making recommendations and taking follow up actions.
- 4.2.4 Each institution, in taking ownership of its quality assurance and enhancement process, should ensure that a balance is struck between rigorous reflection and efficiency in the use of staff time so that it does not become an over-burdensome exercise in administration at the expense of institutional learning.

4.3 The design and the description of syllabuses

- 4.3.1 In all of the evaluated institutions there was considerable room for enhancement in the design and articulation of independent syllabuses that, together, make up the respective programs. In some cases the description of syllabuses fell below the minimum threshold for international practices in this respect and in other instances some good examples were evident in the institutions under evaluation — though few single syllabuses gave a complete articulation of all the key elements that could be expected.
- 4.3.2 Faculty members in each of the institutions asserted that it was very difficult to construct learning outcomes and assessment criteria in the fields of design. Whereas it is true that such an exercise is complex there are many good examples outside of Israel where this issue has been effectively addressed. The process of continuous enhancement within each program could ensure that lecturers are aware of international examples of good practice in the respect.⁴
- 4.3.3 Each institution should establish a standard template for syllabus descriptions that includes all of the key information a student will need to know about then ensure that each one is quality controlled. A sample of the key information headings is set out in the chart below.

Title	Year offered	Length (One-or two-semester)
Year of program (if relevant)	How often given (if relevant)	Number of hours/credits
Prerequisites	Mandatory or elective	Course description/summary
Learning outcomes	Week-by-week content, assignments, and readings	
Evidence of study	Assessment criteria	Bibliography

⁴ For example, the *UK Higher Education Academy's Subject Centre for Learning and Teaching in Art/Design/Media* provides a range of resources that highlight best practices of learning and teaching (these can be found at <<http://arts.brighton.ac.uk/projects/networks>>).

The *Centre* has also published material that specifically deals with issues relating to the design of learning outcomes in the design disciplines e.g. <<http://arts.brighton.ac.uk/projects/networks/issue-18-july-2012/learning-outcomes-and-assessment-criteria-in-art-and-design.-whats-the-recurring-problem>>.

Also see the *The Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning* at Brown University which can be accessed at <<https://www.brown.edu/sheridan/teaching-learning-resources/teaching-resources/course-design>> and (<<https://wiki.massart.edu/display/AcademicAffairs/Creating+a+Syllabus>> at *MassArt*.

4.4 Mapping the curriculum

4.4.1 The student experience would be considerably enhanced through greater clarity and consistency in the mapping of learning outcomes for the program as a whole along with their embedding within all the syllabuses that make up the program. This would help students to understand what was expected of them at each stage and to see the stages through which their development would be guided. In this respect the learning outcomes would be a transparent proactive part of the student's learning process and not simply function of the grading scheme.

4.5 Monitoring student progression and workload

4.5.1 Making time available for academic support for students progression through the program and helping to maintain a reasonable balance in the workload (especially in years 1&2) would enhance the overall experience in terms of ensuring that it was holistic (rather than fragmentary) and paced with time for learning to be absorbed.

4.6 Collaboration and competition

4.6.1 Both collaboration and competition between programs in VC design are essential aspects of a healthy system in which enhancement and excellence are the goals. In a small nation like Israel there will, of course, always be a high level of healthy competition between each of the four programs. In this context there may also be an opportunity for the four institutions to stop and reflect where the continuous enhancement of VC teaching and learning could be supported through collaborations. In some instances such collaborations may be where a pooling of differential expertise between the institutions is advantageous. In other instances it may simply be that any one initiative is too costly for a single institution to support. For example, two areas in which collaboration between the institutions may help to enhance understanding and quality are:

- The establishment of a training scheme for new and adjunct staff in teaching and learning skills. This may be accredited, leading to some form of accreditation that both recognizes and validates professional attainment in teaching and learning.
- The establishment of a professional association in Israel for lecturers in VC HE to which all of whom could be members. Through shared workshops and an annual conference this could disseminate best practices, link with other VC associations beyond Israel and promote awareness of VC education in Israel.

4.7 Research

4.7.1 It is now accepted within international HE that the creative arts and design qualify for access to competitive research funding alongside the natural and physical sciences.

4.7.2 In most research assessment frameworks the aim now is to identify excellent research wherever it may be found (this task is not obstructed by structural barriers related to organisational hierarchies).

4.7.3 Research activity is perceived to enhance the student experience in two ways

- Research active staff imbue the learning and teaching environment with a 'spirit of enquiry' that helps students to become autonomous learners, knowing how to learn and re-learn;
- Faculty research brings new knowledge and insights to the curriculum so keeping it at the cutting edge of contemporary issues being relevant to professional and social needs.

- 4.7.4 In addition to the above, research in the creative arts and design is high on innovation so bringing new assets to national productivity and prominence.
- 4.7.5 There are many examples of agencies in other countries recently establishing pilot schemes to help build capacity in the creative arts and design. One such example is the PEEK program of the Austrian Research Council. A recent independent review of the programme reported as follows:

“The PEEK programme of the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) is a vital external funding source for artistic research at the State Arts Universities. Based on rigorous peer review around eight new projects are funded annually within a total project scheme budget of about €2.8m per year. This adds up to over 50 funded projects since the inception of the scheme in 2009. Thus, the PEEK programme has supported the building of critical mass in arts based research and helped to establish a community of practice of international significance and influence as the strong leadership of Austrian State Arts Universities in European networks such as SHARE, SAR, EARN, AEC and ELIA attests. Engagement with and success in obtaining funding through the highly competitive FWF PEEK programme varies between the State Arts Universities. Respective success has been linked to the development of a stimulating research culture, an efficient research support infrastructures and the incentivisation for research active staff”.

Section 5: Recommendations

In further QA exercises conducted by CHE, each of the institutions will be expected to evidence the degree to which they have fulfilled the recommendations set out below and in each of the individual reports for each institution. The following templates list the recommendations along with their suggested actions.

Essential Recommendations	CHE/PBC	Institution	Department	
<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action</i>			<i>See paragraphs</i>
1 QA Process — The QA process was highly inward looking and self-validating with little evidence for external scrutiny or Institutional involvement in the process.	Establish a governance framework for the QA process overall that is published. Within this framework, implement periodic QA reviews at the level of <i>institution and department</i> .	Take ownership of embedding the CHE QA framework within the institution on a regular basis. Quality control and sign off the operation and outcomes of the QA framework within the Institution.	Lead implementation of the CHE QA framework within the department. Engage with the Institution's preferred process for independent scrutiny of the department's QA evaluation report.	3.20.2 4.2
2 Curriculum — The student experience should be holistic with learning outcomes supporting academic progress overall.	Implement periodic reviews and/or follow-up actions.	Scrutinize and approve the mapping of learning outcomes as proposed by the department.	Map the learning outcomes of the entire curriculum at each key stage of the student's progression.	3.7 3.9 3.10.3 4.4
3 Syllabi — descriptions need to be improved overall and presented in a consistent format. Project briefs, when written by adjuncts, should fulfill all elements of an approved syllabus.		Scrutinize and approve the proposed syllabi from the department.	Each department to establish a standard template for syllabi descriptions.	3.10 3.10.3 4.3 4.3.3
4 Assessment — Students should be able to understand how they will be assessed at the end of a course and these criteria should be consistently applied in set project briefs.		Scrutinize and approve the assessment criteria and assessment regime proposed by the department.	Define and document consistent assessment criteria and an assessment framework for the program as a whole, at each key stage of the student's progression.	3.11 3.12 4.5
5 Learning and Teaching Skills — There was emphasis on the material outcomes of teaching. Greater emphasis needs to be placed on the skills needed to stimulate the processes of student learning.	Facilitate collaboration and cooperation between institutions in order to establish shared resources that will enhance teaching and learning skills.	Develop resources and facilities to enhance those teaching and learning skills that are essential to the quality delivery of all the recommendations set out here.	Positively engage with opportunities for the enhancement of teaching and learning skills.	3.13 3.14 4.5
6 Supporting student progression — In a packed curriculum, with increasingly limited staff contact time and continuity, students need better academic and pastoral support.		Better implement frameworks for supporting the health and well-being of each student.	Implement a coherent framework that will better support each student as they progress through the academic program.	3.11 3.14 3.15 4.5
2 Research — by default (rather than intent) the impression seems to be that Israel is prioritising research in the natural and physical sciences whilst excluding the creative arts and design.	Explore possibilities to facilitate a one-off, time-limited, pilot project that will start the process of building research capacity in the creative arts and design.	Develop institutional infrastructure that will train and support the enhancement of research and its impact in communities outside the institution.	Establish clear guidelines on criteria for research in practice-based disciplines and mentor lecturers in this development.	2.6 2.7 2.10 2.12 3.17 4.7

Important Recommendations	CHE/PBC	Institution	Department	
<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action</i>			<i>See paragraphs</i>
1 Exit results — The final exits results seem to show a bunching of marks at the higher end of the scale.		Receive recommendations on the spread of exit mark, agree actions and keep these under review.	Review exit marks over the last three years to ensure a fair distribution. Make recommendations in response to this review.	3.7
3 Diversity — More work needs to be done to ensure that the demography of the student population is appropriate to that of Israel's ethnic makeup and that all students are supported towards successful completion of their program. .		Develop a mechanism to reach out to ethnic and religious groups so they are aware of the opportunities offered by higher education.	Tailor the support for the student experience to the specific needs of all ethnic groups in order to ensure successful completion of the academic program.	3.19
4 National and International Collaboration		Continue to expand the range of possibilities for international staff and student exchange programs.	Establish connections and collaborations with international subject associations in Visual Communication Learn from the best of international practices for teaching and learning internationally in the creative arts and design.	3.18 4.6

Signed by:



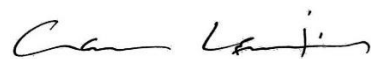
Prof. Nancy Skolos - Chair



Prof. Bruce Brown



Prof. Leland Burke



Associate Prof. Gerry Leonidas



Prof. Anat Katsir



May 2018

Prof. Nancy Skolos,
Professor of Graphic Design, former Dean of Architecture and Design
Rhode Island School of Design
USA

Dear Professor,

The Israeli Council for Higher Education (CHE) strives to ensure the continuing excellence and quality of Israeli higher education through a systematic evaluation process. By engaging upon this mission, the CHE seeks: to enhance and ensure the quality of academic studies, to provide the public with information regarding the quality of study programs in institutions of higher education throughout Israel, and to ensure the continued integration of the Israeli system of higher education in the international academic arena.

As part of this important endeavor we reach out to world renowned academicians to help us meet the challenges that confront the Israeli higher education by accepting our invitation to participate in our international evaluation committees. This process establishes a structure for an ongoing consultative process around the globe on common academic dilemmas and prospects.

I therefore deeply appreciate your willingness to join us in this crucial enterprise.

It is with great pleasure that I hereby appoint you to serve as Chair of the Council for Higher Education's Committee for the Evaluation of the study programs in **Visual Communication and Graphic Design**. In addition to yourself, the composition of the Committee will be as follows: Prof. Bruce Brown, Associate Prof. Gerry Leonidas, Prof. Leland Burke, and Prof. Anat Katsir.

Ms. Molly Abramson will be the coordinator of the Committee.

Details regarding the operation of the committee and its mandate are provided in the enclosed appendix.

I wish you much success in your role as a member of this most important committee.

Sincerely,

Prof. Ido Perlman
Vice Chair,
The Council for Higher Education (CHE)

Enclosures: Appendix to the Appointment Letter of Evaluation Committees

cc: Dr. Varda Ben-Shaul, Deputy Director-General for QA, CHE
Ms. Molly Abramson, committee coordinator

Appendix to the Letter of Appointment for Evaluation Committees

1. General

In 2003 the Council for Higher Education (CHE) decided to establish a system for quality assessment and assurance (QA) in Israeli higher education, which came into effect in 2004-2005. Within this framework, study-programs are to be routinely evaluated by the QA division.

The main objectives of the quality assessment process are:

- To enhance the quality of higher education in Israel;
- To foster institutional awareness to the importance of quality evaluation;
- To develop an internal culture of self-evaluation, and the required mechanisms to do so;
- To provide the public with information regarding the quality of study programs in institutions of higher education throughout Israel;
- To address the needs of the relevant regulatory bodies;
- To ensure the continued integration of the Israeli system of higher education in the international academic arena.

The CHE does not intend to rank the programs or the institutions of higher education according to the results of the quality assessment processes. The evaluation Committee (hereinafter "Committee") should refrain from formal comparisons.

2. The Work of the Evaluation Committee

- 2.1 The committee will be advised and accompanied by a QA coordinator from the CHE.
- 2.2 The Committee shall hold meetings, as needed, before visiting the institution, in order to evaluate the material received.
- 2.3 The Committee shall visit the institutions evaluated - if possible - within two months of receiving the self-evaluation reports. The purpose of the visit is to verify and update the information submitted in the reports, clarify matters if necessary, inspect the educational environment and facilities first hand, etc. During the visit, the Committee will meet with various representatives from the institution (e.g. management, faculty, students).
- 2.4 The duration of the site visits will be coordinated with the chairperson and the coordinator of the Committee.
- 2.5 **By the end of the Committee's visit to Israel, the Committee will submit the following documents to the CHE:**
 - 2.5.1 A final report on each of the evaluated departments.
 - 2.5.2 A general report on the state of the discipline in the Israeli higher education system. The general report will include recommendations to the CHE for standards and potential statewide changes in the evaluated field of study.
- 2.6 The individual reports will be sent to the institutions for their response.
- 2.7 The reports along with the institutions' responses will be submitted to the CHE and discussed within its various forums.

3. Conflict of Interest Policy

- 3.1 In order to avoid situations that may question the credibility and integrity of the evaluation process, and in order to maintain its ethical, professional and impartial manner, members and chairperson of the evaluation Committee will sign a Declaration on Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality.

3.2 In the event that a member of the Committee is also a current or former faculty member at an institution evaluated, he/she will not take part in any visits or discussions regarding that institution.

4. The Individual Reports

4.1 The final reports of the evaluation Committee shall address every institution separately.

4.2 The final reports should refer to a variety of topics (e.g. students, faculty, study program, research, organizational structure) as the committee sees fit.

5. The Recommended Structure of the Reports

5.1 *Part A – General background:*

5.1.1 General background of the evaluation process; the names of the members of the Committee and its coordinator; a short overview of the Committee's procedures.

5.1.2 A general description of the institution and the academic unit being evaluated.

5.2 *Part B – Findings and Conclusions:*

For each topic examined by the Committee, the report will present a summary of the its findings and their analysis (based on the self-evaluation report and site-visit).

5.3 *Part C –Recommendations:*

This section will include recommendations regarding the evaluated academic unit and the study program according to the topics examined by the committee in part B.

Classification of Recommendations:

- Essential: the quality of the program is unacceptable/non-viable, unless the recommendations will be implemented in the short term.
- Advisable: requested for ensuring appropriate academic quality within a reasonable time, in coordination with the institution.
- Desirable: will further enhance/develop the program's strengths at the institution's convenience and follow-up in the next cycle of evaluations.
- *A combination of any of the above.*

5.4 *Part D - Appendices:*

The appendices shall contain the Committee's letter of appointment and the schedule of the on-site visit, as well as any other documents the committee sees fit.

5.5 *Part E - Second round of evaluation:* (in relevant cases)

This section will review the implementation of recommendations by the evaluation Committees in the previous round of evaluation.

6. The General report

In addition to the individual reports concerning each study program, the Committee shall submit to the CHE a general report regarding the status of the evaluated field of study within the Israeli institutions of higher education. The report should also evaluate the state and status of Israeli faculty members and students in the international arena (in the field), as well as offer recommendations to the CHE for standards and potential statewide changes in the evaluated field of study.

We urge the Committees to clearly list its specific recommendations for each of the topics (both in the individual reports and in the general report) and to prioritize them, in order to ease the eventual monitoring of their implementation.