



# AEC Learning Outcomes 2017



Association Européenne des  
Conservatoires, Académies de  
Musique et Musikhochschulen

# Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	4
1.1 What are learning outcomes?	4
1.2 What are the AEC Learning Outcomes and why were they created?	4
1.3 What are the benefits of using learning outcomes?	5
1.4 How are the AEC Learning Outcomes structured?	7
1.5 How do the AEC Learning Outcomes relate to the Polifonia/Dublin Descriptors?	8
<b>2. AEC Learning Outcomes 2017</b>	11
2.1 AEC Learning Outcomes: 1 <sup>st</sup> cycle	11
2.2 AEC Learning Outcomes: 2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle	13
2.3 AEC Learning Outcomes: 3 <sup>rd</sup> cycle	16
<b>3. Why are institutions encouraged to make use of the AEC Learning Outcomes?</b>	19
<b>4. How can institutions use the AEC Learning Outcomes to create programme-specific learning outcomes?</b>	22
<b>The Learning Outcomes Working Group (2015-2017)</b>	24
<b>Colophon</b>	25

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 What are learning outcomes?

Learning outcomes are statements of what a student is expected to know, understand and be able to do at the end of a period of learning.<sup>1</sup>

Learning outcomes are the core element and focus of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), and apply to all learning within higher education regardless of the system, country or institution where a particular qualification was acquired.

## 1.2 What are the AEC Learning Outcomes and why were they created?

The Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC) has developed learning outcomes specific to higher music education (HME). The development of these AEC Learning Outcomes (AEC LOs) began in 2001 and culminated in their publication in 2009 as a key part of the document *Reference Points for the Design and Delivery of Degree Programmes in Music*, one of the subject-based texts produced as part of the *Tuning* project.<sup>2</sup> The AEC LOs have now been revised to ensure their continued fitness for purpose in defining the skills, competences and knowledge required by graduating students in HME.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Source: the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The EQF is a common European reference framework which helps communication and comparison between national qualifications systems across Europe. More detailed information is available at [www.ec.europa.eu/ploteus/content/how-does-efq-work](http://www.ec.europa.eu/ploteus/content/how-does-efq-work).

<sup>2</sup> For more information about the *Tuning* project, please visit [www.tuningacademy.org](http://www.tuningacademy.org).

<sup>3</sup> The revision of the AEC LOs took place in the context of the *FULL SCORE* project (2014-2017). More information about the *FULL SCORE* project, as well as detailed information about the *FULL SCORE* Learning Outcomes Working Group and the revision process, can be found at [www.aec-music.eu](http://www.aec-music.eu) and in the 'AEC Learning Outcomes. Background to the 2017 Revision Process' document, which is available for download in the publications section of the AEC website ([www.aec-music.eu/publications](http://www.aec-music.eu/publications)).

The AEC LOs were created to:

- assist institutions in implementing the requirements of the Bologna Process reforms and, more specifically, in (re-)designing curricula and adopting a student- and competence-oriented approach to curriculum design;
- facilitate the international recognition of students' studies and qualifications, and increase compatibility and transparency within and beyond the HME sector;
- provide current or potential students, employers and other stakeholders with a clear presentation of the main aspects of a HME curriculum and its opportunities;
- serve as reference point for institutions and relevant stakeholders within quality assurance and accreditation processes in HME;
- help employers and other stakeholders to understand the competences of musicians they hire.

## 1.3 What are the benefits of using learning outcomes?

For all stakeholders – students, teachers, institutional managers and employers – there are demonstrable benefits to derive from engagement with learning outcomes.

For **students**, learning outcomes increase transparency about:

- the mission of the institution;
- the purpose and educational goals of the programme (i.e. the programme learning objectives);
- the goals they will be assessed against (i.e. the assessment criteria).

For **teachers**, learning outcomes increase transparency about:

- the relationship between the programme of study and the mission of the institution;
- the focus, priorities and overall objectives of the programme of study;

- options and opportunities for the development of course outlines, teaching content and/or supporting materials;
- options and opportunities for the creation of holistic assessments which enable students to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes.

For the **institutional managers**, learning outcomes provide a framework for:

- the development of programme-specific objectives appropriate to their institutional mission, context and purpose;
- challenging themselves and their programme teams in defining the purpose, value and nature of their offer;
- the development of curricula to support knowledge and skill acquisition and enable assessment of learning;
- the development of appropriate resources and curricular materials to support a programme's objectives;
- supporting teaching staff to enable students to achieve educational goals which meet institutional or national benchmark expectations and as scrutinised within quality management, enhancement, review and assurance processes;
- benchmarking the content of programmes against the learning outcomes of similar programmes, especially in the context of (the development of) joint programmes.

For **employers**, learning outcomes increase transparency about:

- what knowledge, skills and competencies graduates of a particular institution will have acquired on completion of a particular programmes of study.

Essentially, learning outcomes can be used by all stakeholders as a tool to engage in discussions about what the priorities within curricula are or could be.

#### 1.4 How are the AEC Learning Outcomes structured?

The AEC LOs are structured into:

- practical (skills-based) outcomes;
- theoretical (knowledge-based) outcomes;
- generic outcomes.

This threefold structure is used in order to provide consistency between the AEC LOs and the EQF, upon which all national qualification frameworks within the European Higher Education Area are based. Within the EQF, learning is described as acquiring:

- skills: described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments);<sup>4</sup>
- knowledge: described as theoretical and/or factual;<sup>5</sup>
- competences: described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.<sup>6</sup>

In the tables hereafter, the AEC LOs are presented in three columns. Each of the columns corresponds to one of the three types of outcomes (practical, theoretical and generic). This structure enables the expression of three different aspects of the various areas of learning relevant to musicians (such as artistic expression, improvisation, verbal and written communication, etc.). In this way, each learning outcome is linked vertically to the other learning outcomes (each line corresponding to an area of learning), and at the same time reinforces the skills, knowledge and competences linked to particular areas of learning horizontally.

The AEC LOs are structured to express achievement arising from each of the three main cycles:

- 1<sup>st</sup> cycle (Bachelor);
- 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle (Master);
- 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle (Doctoral).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> 'Skills' means the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems.

<sup>5</sup> 'Knowledge' means the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that is related to a field of work or study.

<sup>6</sup> 'Competence' means the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development.

<sup>7</sup> These three cycles correspond to levels 6, 7 and 8 as expressed in the EQF.

The learning outcomes for each of these three individual cycles are provided in separate tables. In the tables, each learning outcome is identified by a code, for example: '2.B.8.'. The code should be interpreted as follows:

- the first number indicates the relevant cycle (1 for Bachelor, 2 for Master, 3 for Doctoral);
- the letter refers to the type of learning outcome (A for practical outcomes, B for theoretical outcomes, C for generic outcomes);
- the last number is a reference number.

The example '2.B.8' thus refers to a theoretical learning outcome in the second cycle. It should be noted that there is no implied hierarchy among the AEC LOs: the last number in each code is merely a reference number provided to facilitate referring to specific learning outcomes. The numbering does not imply relative importance.

### 1.5 How do the AEC Learning Outcomes relate to the Polifonia/Dublin Descriptors?

The AEC LOs and the *Polifonia/Dublin Descriptors* form together a European Sectoral Qualifications Framework for Higher Music Education which institutions can relate their study programmes to.

The *Polifonia/Dublin Descriptors* provide general statements of the typical achievement of students who are awarded a qualification on successful completion of the first, second or third cycle of their HME studies. The *Polifonia/Dublin Descriptors* can further assist HME institutions in comparing their programmes with other programmes across the European Higher Education Area.

The initial version of the AEC LOs was mapped against the *Polifonia/Dublin Descriptors* and the AEC LOs 2017 still closely relate to them. The *Polifonia/Dublin Descriptors*, as well as more information about their link with the AEC LOs, can be found in the document *Reference Points for the Design and Delivery of Degree Programmes in Music*.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The *Reference Points for the Design and Delivery of Degree Programmes in Music* publication is available for download in the publications section of the AEC website ([www.aec-music.eu/publications](http://www.aec-music.eu/publications)).

# 2. AEC Learning Outcomes 2017

## 2.1 AEC Learning Outcomes: 1<sup>st</sup> cycle

At the completion of their 1<sup>st</sup> cycle studies, and as appropriate to their discipline or genre, students are expected to be able to:<sup>9</sup>

A. Practical (skills-based) outcomes	B. Theoretical (knowledge-based) outcomes	C. Generic outcomes
<p><b>1.A.1.</b> Demonstrate ability to realise, recreate, create, manipulate and/or produce music as appropriate within their discipline or genre for practical purposes and settings.</p> <p><b>1.A.2.</b> Demonstrate effective and professionally appropriate study, practice and rehearsal techniques.</p> <p><b>1.A.3.</b> Demonstrate evidence of craft skills in relation to a variety of representative repertoire, styles, etc.</p>	<p><b>1.B.1.</b> Demonstrate knowledge of practices, languages, forms, materials, technologies and techniques in music relevant to the discipline, and their associated texts, resources and concepts.</p> <p><b>1.B.2.</b> Exhibit sound knowledge of the theoretical and historical contexts in which music is practiced and presented, including a range of musical styles and their associated performing traditions.</p>	<p><b>1.C.1.</b> Demonstrate systematic analytical and processing skills and the ability to pursue these independently and with tenacity.</p> <p><b>1.C.2.</b> Demonstrate strong self-motivation and self-management skills, and the ability to undertake autonomous self-study in preparation for continual future (life-long) learning and in support of a sustainable career.</p>
<p><b>1.A.4.</b> Recognise, interpret, manipulate, realise and/or memorise the materials of music through notation and/or by ear.<sup>10</sup></p>	<p><b>1.B.3.</b> Exhibit comprehensive knowledge of relevant representative repertoire within their area of musical study, demonstrating the ability to create and provide coherent musical experiences and interpretations.<sup>11</sup></p>	<p><b>1.C.3.</b> Demonstrate a positive and pragmatic approach to problem solving.</p>
<p><b>1.A.5.</b> Engage musically in varied ensemble and other collaborative contexts, including those which go beyond the discipline of music.</p>	<p><b>1.B.4.</b> Draw upon knowledge and experience of known repertoire and styles to explore and engage with new and challenging repertoire and styles.</p>	<p><b>1.C.4.</b> Evidence ability to listen, collaborate, voice opinions constructively, and prioritise cohesion over expression of individual voice.</p> <p><b>1.C.5.</b> Evidence flexibility, the ability to rapidly synthesise knowledge in real time, and suggest alternative perspectives.</p>
<p><b>1.A.6.</b> Demonstrate improvisational fluency, interrogating, shaping and/or creating music in ways which go beyond the notated score.</p>	<p><b>1.B.5.</b> Demonstrate knowledge of practices, languages, forms, materials, technologies and techniques in music and their associated texts, resources and concepts.</p>	<p><b>1.C.6.</b> Recognise the relevance of, and be readily able to adapt, previously learned skills to new contexts.</p>
<p><b>1.A.7.</b> Identify key questions about, and undertake self-reflective enquiry into, their own artistic practice.</p>	<p><b>1.B.6.</b> Recognise, internalise and respond to the fundamental processes which underlie improvisation and recreate musical materials aurally and/or in written form.</p>	<p><b>1.C.7.</b> Develop, research and evaluate ideas, concepts and processes through creative, critical and reflective thinking and practice.</p>
<p><b>1.A.8.</b> Explore, evaluate, apply and challenge existing scholarship, research and performing practices.</p>	<p><b>1.B.7.</b> Evidence understanding of the means by which musicians can develop, research and evaluate ideas, concepts and processes through creative, critical and reflective thinking and practice.</p>	<p><b>1.C.8.</b> Respond creatively and appropriately to ideas and impetus from others, exhibiting tenacity and the ability to digest and respond to verbal and/or written feedback.</p>
<p><b>1.A.9.</b> Utilise appropriate oral, digital and practical formats to disseminate information and ideas about music.</p> <p><b>1.A.10.</b> Communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences through a range of media and presentation formats.</p>	<p><b>1.B.8.</b> Demonstrate knowledge of – and ability to gather and utilise relevant information found within – libraries, internet repositories, museums, galleries and other relevant sources.</p>	<p><b>1.C.9.</b> Exhibit ability to utilise and apply a range of technology in relation to their music making, including the promotion of their professional profile.</p>
<p><b>1.A.11.</b> Use appropriate digital technology to learn, create, record, produce and disseminate musical materials.</p>	<p><b>1.B.9.</b> Identify a range of strategies to interpret, communicate and present ideas, problems and arguments in modes suited to a range of audiences.</p>	<p><b>1.C.10.</b> Project a confident and coherent persona appropriate to context and communicate information effectively, presenting work in an accessible form and demonstrating appropriate IT and other presentational skills as required.</p>
<p><b>1.A.12.</b> Evidence skills in the use of new media for promotion and dissemination.</p>		<p><b>1.C.11.</b> Making use of their imagination, intuition and emotional understanding, think and work creatively, flexibly and adaptively.</p>

<sup>9</sup> Nota bene (NB) students should be aware of the interrelationships and interdependencies between outcomes.

<sup>10</sup> 'Manipulate' should be understood as 'compose', 'arrange', etc. 'Musical materials' include signs, symbols and structures.

<sup>11</sup> NB in this context the word 'repertoire' should be understood to include an original work or production created by an individual composer, performer or ensemble.

### A. Practical (skills-based) outcomes

- 1.A.13.** Demonstrate a range of communication, presentation and self-management skills associated with public performance.
- 1.A.14.** Recognise and respond appropriately to a range of performing contexts, spaces and environments.
- 1.A.15.** Recognise, reflect upon and develop their own personal learning style, skills and strategies.
- 1.A.16.** Lead and/or support learning and creative processes in others, creating a constructive learning environment.
- 1.A.17.** Engage with a range of audience and/or participant groups across a range of professional working contexts.
- 1.A.18.** Exhibit awareness of, and actively engage with, issues affecting the personal (physical and mental) health and wellbeing of musicians.
- 1.A.19.** Develop artistic concepts and projects and the capacity to present these professionally to potential clients and audiences.

### B. Theoretical (knowledge-based) outcomes

- 1.B.10.** Display knowledge of a range of ways that technology can be used in the creation, dissemination and performance of music.
- 1.B.11.** Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate communication theories and their applications.
- 1.B.12.** Identify a range of professional working environments and contexts, reflecting on the role of the musician in contemporary society.
- 1.B.13.** Recognise the skill demands of local, national and international music markets.
- 1.B.14.** Display knowledge of key financial, business and legal aspects of the music profession.
- 1.B.15.** Exhibit familiarity with concepts and practices of pedagogy, in particular strategies to motivate and facilitate musical creativity and learning.
- 1.B.16.** Demonstrate awareness of the legal and ethical frameworks relating to intellectual property rights, and the ability to take appropriate steps to safeguard innovation.

### C. Generic outcomes

- 1.C.12.** Recognise and reflect on diverse social, cultural and ethical issues, and apply local, national and international perspectives to practical knowledge.
- 1.C.13.** Engage with individuals and groups, demonstrating sensitivity to diverse views and perspectives, and evidencing skills in teamwork, negotiation, leadership, project development and organisation as required.
- 1.C.14.** Recognise and respond to the needs of others in a range of contexts.
- 1.C.15.** Recognise the physiological and psychological demands associated with professional practice, and evidence awareness of – and preparedness to engage with as needed – relevant health and wellbeing promotion initiatives and resources.
- 1.C.16.** Exhibit a long-term (life-long) perspective on individual artistic development, demonstrating an inquiring attitude, and regularly evaluating and developing artistic and personal skills and competences in relation to personal goals.

### 2.2 AEC Learning Outcomes: 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle

Building on the skills acquired in the 1<sup>st</sup> cycle, at the completion of their 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle studies, and as appropriate to their discipline or genre, students are expected to be able to:<sup>12</sup>

### A. Practical (skills-based) outcomes

- 2.A.1.** Realise, recreate, create, manipulate and/or produce music to a high professional level, expressing their own artistic concepts and reflecting a well-developed musical personality.
- 2.A.2.** Evidence sophisticated craft skills in relation to the repertoire, styles, etc. of their discipline or genre.
- 2.A.3.** Demonstrate breadth and/or depth of specialist knowledge in relation to their area of study evidencing fluency across a range of styles and/or a distinctive and individual voice in one particular style.

### B. Theoretical (knowledge-based) outcomes

- 2.B.1.** Demonstrate sophisticated knowledge of practices, languages, forms, materials, technologies and techniques in music relevant to their core and, as appropriate, related disciplines, and their associated texts, resources and concepts.
- 2.B.2.** Exhibit comprehensive knowledge of repertoire within their area of musical study,<sup>13</sup> demonstrating a sophisticated level of skill in creating and providing coherent musical experiences and interpretations which engage with both well- and lesser-, or unknown repertoire.
- 2.B.3.** Develop and extend their knowledge of the theoretical and historical contexts in which music is practiced and presented.

### C. Generic outcomes

- 2.C.1.** Exhibit sophisticated skills in critical thinking and critical awareness.
- 2.C.2.** Demonstrate independence in all aspects of learning, social interaction, and opportunity identification.
- 2.C.3.** Exhibit confidence and competence in the use of a range of communication and social skills as appropriate to context.
- 2.C.4.** Exhibit appropriate leadership, teamwork, negotiation and/or coordination skills, taking account of a variety of artistic contexts.
- 2.C.5.** Evidence ability to integrate knowledge drawn from a variety of contexts or perspectives.

<sup>12</sup> NB students should be aware of the interrelationships and interdependencies between outcomes.

<sup>13</sup> NB in this context the word 'repertoire' should be understood to include an original work or production created by an individual composer, performer or ensemble.

## A. Practical (skills-based) outcomes

- 2.A.4.** Demonstrate ability to create, realise and express their own artistic concepts, ensuring that any areas of relative weakness in relation to practice, rehearsal, reading, aural, creative and re-creative skills have been addressed.
- 2.A.5.** Play a leading role in ensemble and/or other collaborative activity.
- 2.A.6.** Demonstrate a high level of improvisational fluency.
- 2.A.7.** Evidence ability to develop, research and evaluate ideas, concepts and processes as appropriate within their discipline, genre, area of study, and/or own artistic practice.
- 2.A.8.** Demonstrate excellent command in a range of communication modes associated with their practice and its presentation to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- 2.A.9.** Exhibit competence in technological utilisation and application.
- 2.A.10.** Take responsibility for the engagement between context, audience and musical material, projecting their ideas fluently and with confidence in a wide variety of performance settings.
- 2.A.11.** Within the context of the musical learning environment, recognise and identify individual learners needs, and exhibit the ability differentiate and facilitate activity accordingly.
- 2.A.12.** Engage with a significantly level of critical self-reflection in relation to their own personal learning style, skills and strategies.
- 2.A.13.** Evidence ability to translate the oretical knowledge into practical activities to enable musical learning and creative processes in others.
- 2.A.14.** Demonstrate sensitivity with regard to the subjects of their research, respecting diversity in the characteristics of individuals and contexts, and considering the ethical dimensions of their work.
- 2.A.15.** In relation to relevant self-identified professional pathways or opportunities, demonstrate sophisticated understanding of the working field, and identify and formulate strategies for developing engagement with them.

## B. Theoretical (knowledge-based) outcomes

- 2.B.4.** Exhibit knowledge of musical styles and a sophisticated and critical understanding of their associated performing traditions.
- 2.B.5.** Develop, present and realise programmes that are coherent and suitable to a wide range of different performing contexts.
- 2.B.6.** Exhibit sophisticated and embodied knowledge of improvisational patterns and processes, and the ability to apply these freely in a variety of contexts.
- 2.B.7.** Evidence understanding of a range of sophisticated investigative techniques, enabling the application of selected approaches to develop, frame, research and evaluate ideas, concepts and processes as appropriate within their discipline, genre, area of study and/or artistic practice.
- 2.B.8.** Identify and utilise relevant literature and/or other resources as appropriate to inform their practice and development within their discipline, genre, and/or area of study.
- 2.B.9.** Identify and employ sophisticated research, study, communication and presentation techniques to independently develop and deliver an extended and/or in-depth artistic project.
- 2.B.10.** Utilise specific technologies to enable the creation, dissemination and/or performance of music appropriate to their discipline, genre, area of study and/or artistic practice.
- 2.B.11.** Demonstrate a thorough understanding of pedagogical theories relevant to music education in one or more specific educational contexts.
- 2.B.12.** Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the role of the musician in contemporary society, researching, engaging with and reflecting upon specific relevant professional working environments and contexts.

## C. Generic outcomes

- 2.C.6.** Demonstrate independent thought supported by rational and evidence-based application of knowledge in undertaking tasks that may be:
- extended and complex
  - in new or unfamiliar contexts
  - based upon incomplete or limited information.
- 2.C.7.** Recognise the interrelationship between theory and practice, and apply such knowledge to underpin and strengthen their own artistic development.
- 2.C.8.** Demonstrate ability and willingness to communicate knowledge and ideas through modes other than notation, performance and/or other musical outputs (recordings, etc.).
- 2.C.9.** Consistently analyse, interrogate, utilise, and respond creatively and appropriately to verbal and/or written feedback, ideas and impetus from others.
- 2.C.10.** Initiate activities or projects, and work with others through interaction or collaboration.
- 2.C.11.** Exhibit sophisticated and appropriate public presentation skills in all aspects of their practice and activity.
- 2.C.12.** Exhibit a sensitivity to the learning styles and needs of others and ability to motivate and facilitate creativity and learning.
- 2.C.13.** Engage with individuals and/or groups as appropriate and in relation to both their own, and a wider variety of, cultural contexts.
- 2.C.14.** Engage and share information with specialist and non-specialist musicians and audiences across a broad spectrum of society, demonstrating awareness of individual and/or group reactions to such information and the ability to respond appropriately.
- 2.C.15.** Exhibit confidence in using their own psychological understanding – and their sense of their own wellbeing, and that of others – to underpin decision making in a variety of situations associated with professional practice.
- 2.C.16.** Demonstrate a positive attitude towards, willingness to engage and interest in, on-going (life-long) personal and professional development.

### 2.3 AEC Learning Outcomes: 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle

Building on the skills acquired in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycles, at the completion of their studies (where appropriate, and according to the individual nature of the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle curricula) students are expected to be able to work autonomously in the pursuit of new knowledge to:<sup>14</sup>

#### A. Practical (skills-based) outcomes

- 3.A.1.** Identify and contextualise dynamic research questions from their artistic practice or their musical domain to extend understanding and create new knowledge and research outputs.<sup>15</sup>
- 3.A.2.** Define, plan, manage and deliver research activities and projects, selecting and justifying appropriate methodological processes and resources, including possible funding opportunities, while recognising, evaluating and minimising any identified risks and/or negative impacts.
- 3.A.3.** Support, collaborate with and lead colleagues, using a range of practical, facilitative, communication and networking skills to influence practice and policy in diverse environments.
- 3.A.4.** Systematically and critically analyse and evaluate their own and others' research outcomes.
- 3.A.5.** Identify the value of their research outputs in social, cultural, ethical and economic terms.
- 3.A.6.** Document and demonstrate original insights and innovative solutions in the realisation, recreation, creation, manipulation and/or production within their musical activity/practice.
- 3.A.7.** Consider the impact of their research on diverse audiences and facilitate insight for both specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- 3.A.8.** Seek opportunities to exploit and further develop knowledge deriving from their research.

#### B. Theoretical (knowledge-based) outcomes

- 3.B.1.** Recognise, engage with, and help to maintain standards of excellence in their research field.
- 3.B.2.** Seek, discover, access, retrieve, sift, interpret, analyse, evaluate, manage, conserve and communicate knowledge derived from relevant literature and/or other resources as appropriate within their area of study and/or artistic practice.
- 3.B.3.** Identify, select and employ effective and appropriate research inquiry and dissemination techniques and methods, taking account of the needs of a range of target audiences.
- 3.B.4.** Engage with professional standards in research practice, acknowledging ethical, legal, and health and safety implications of the research undertaken, its national and international context, and the ownership rights of all those affected by their research.

#### C. Generic outcomes<sup>16</sup>

- 3.C.1.** Exercise professional standards in research and research integrity, adhering to and encouraging development of research and artistic practice.
- 3.C.2.** Identify key questions in relation to their area of study, consider these critically and produce innovative solutions.
- 3.C.3.** Engage with the wider community of researchers, practitioners and creators, be responsive to critical engagement with the ideas of others and receptive to critique of their own work.
- 3.C.4.** Establish and maintain cooperative relationships with peers, senior colleagues, students, artistic collaborators and other stakeholders, with sensitivity to equality, diversity and cultural context.
- 3.C.5.** Engage in research with impact and communicate its outcomes to diverse specialist and non-specialist audiences, enabling public understanding of the subject and/or wider artistic insight.
- 3.C.6.** Approach research tasks with enthusiasm, perseverance and integrity and devise strategies to unlock their own full potential.

<sup>14</sup> NB students should be aware of the interrelationships and interdependencies between outcomes.

<sup>15</sup> I.e. the products of research which can be published through any form of public dissemination, presentation, performance or exhibition.

<sup>16</sup> During the revision process, the Learning Outcomes Working Group decided to retain the original structure of the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle learning outcomes. Therefore, these are provided in two separate tables: one table with practical and theoretical outcomes, and a second table with generic outcomes.

### 3. Why are institutions encouraged to make use of the AEC Learning Outcomes?

First and foremost, the AEC LOs are designed to stimulate reflection, innovation and creativity within curriculum review and development within the HME sector, as well as to encourage individual institutions – and their quality assurance agencies and ministries – to recognise and celebrate good and pioneering practice in the development and delivery of learning within national systems. If embraced as a key curriculum enhancement tool, the AEC LOs:

- can aid dialogue between students, teachers, institutional managers and employers;
- stimulate new approaches to delivering, supporting and assessing learning;
- underpin the development of new partnerships and associations between HME institutions and employers;
- ensure that recent developments in the subject area, society and music industry are taken into appropriate consideration when designing educational programmes.

Importantly, however, institutions offering programmes of study in HME are also encouraged to engage with the AEC LOs because they are designed to support the sector in implementing the Bologna Process reforms. The AEC LOs aim to provide a shared understanding across the European Higher Education Area of what graduates will have achieved at any given level. At national level, ministries and quality assurance agencies have inevitably approached the creation of frameworks for the management of higher education quality from a generic perspective. Institutions within the HME sector can sometimes struggle to interpret or implement these more generic approaches, and there is an increased likelihood that different national systems – when interpreted at subject-specific level, and alongside particular national HME traditions – may

unhelpfully appear far more differentiated than is necessary or indeed accurate. Such differentiation can quickly inhibit (international) student mobility – whether during an individual's study within any given cycle, between cycles, or upon entry to the workplace – and thus inhibit the future success of students and institutions alike. This can be avoided by referencing directly to the common European music-specific AEC LOs when writing institutional or programme learning outcomes.

It should be noted that the AEC LOs are not a 'one size fits all' tool: the protection and preservation of individual institutional autonomy and diversity was a key principle of the *Tuning* project; at the same time, the independence of the academics, teachers and other subject specialists who lead curriculum development and delivery across AEC member institutions and participate in quality enhancement and review processes at local, national and international levels is prerequisite to excellence. HME institutions uphold the principles of shared and celebrated values and standards which derive from the *Tuning* project, but equally they rightly claim the ability to determine what is important to them in light of their unique national and institutional perspective, mission, vision and context. It is helpful to HME institutions to assess if, as part of their quality assurance processes, they are meeting their benchmarked goals and to provide transparency about them for all stakeholders through the learning outcomes articulated for any given programme of study. The AEC LOs seek to provide a framework which assists institutions in the HME sector in this aspiration.

Finally, institutions should be aware that the development of the AEC LOs has taken place in full synergy with the other strands of AEC's ongoing work to support and enhance the European HME sector:

- the AEC LOs have been drafted following the consultation of a wide range of stakeholders within the AEC membership and in its partner organisations. As such, they are explicitly designed to take account of the interests of the various AEC Working Groups, member institutions and partners;
- the AEC LOs have specific relevance and applicability to institutions considering to make use of the review and accreditation services of AEC's partner organisation MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement. MusiQuE is an independent external evaluation body which aims to assist HME institutions in their own enhancement of quality

and to improve the quality of HME across Europe and beyond. Through MusiQuE, the HME sector possesses its own *Standards for Institutional Review, Programme Review and Joint Programme Review*, which make explicit reference to the AEC LOs;<sup>17</sup>

- the development of learning outcomes specific to HME by the AEC is a significant credit to the sector, which is relevant also beyond the confines of HME.

## 4. How can institutions use the AEC Learning Outcomes to create programme-specific learning outcomes?

The creation of programme-specific learning outcomes is an engaging process which has been approached in diverse and creative ways in countries across the European Higher Education Area. The AEC's 2007 handbook *Curriculum Design and Development in Higher Music Education* provides a useful framework for institutional consideration when undertaking programme design, including the creation of appropriate learning outcomes.<sup>18</sup> Building upon the principles outlined in this handbook, the following points should be particularly kept in mind when designing programme-specific learning outcomes:

- **The AEC LOs can be used as source of inspiration for the development of programme-specific learning outcomes:** Just as each individual institution possesses its own unique identity, the AEC LOs are not designed to be adopted in their entirety by any particular programme, or to be 'copy-pasted' directly into the curriculum. They should in no way be understood as focusing on the fulfilment of a set of prescriptive normative expectations, but rather be used as a source of inspiration: as examples to support and drive dialogue about the content of an institution's programmes. This dialogue should involve all stakeholders (students, teachers, institutional managers and employers) to ensure that all needs are addressed.
- **The AEC LOs represent an overarching set of skills and competences with relevance to HME:** The AEC LOs address a range of different

<sup>17</sup> More information about the review and accreditation services of MusiQuE and the *Standards for Institutional Review, Programme Review and Joint Programme Review* can be found at the MusiQuE website ([www.musique-qe.eu](http://www.musique-qe.eu)).

<sup>18</sup> The *Curriculum Design and Development in Higher Music Education* handbook is available for download in the publications section of the AEC website ([www.aec-music.eu/publications](http://www.aec-music.eu/publications)).

areas of learning: artistic expression, repertoire, practice (rehearsal, reading, aural, creative and re-creative), ensemble, improvisation, artistic research, verbal and written communication, technology, public performance, musicians in society, learning and teaching, and self-management (sometimes called entrepreneurship). These areas are, however, not specifically named or labelled within the AEC LOs to avoid preconceived assumptions about their relevance or relative importance within specific programme contexts. The AEC LOs should instead be read as an overarching set of skills and competences, within which each learning outcome can potentially be addressed at some point – to a greater or lesser extent as appropriate – within the programme. It should be noted that there are no compulsory learning outcomes: each institution must evolve and agree upon its own set of learning outcomes for each given programme. It is not expected that every, or indeed any, programme should or could embody all of the articulated AEC LOs. However, it is equally encouraged that institutions utilising the AEC LOs within curriculum review, design and/or enhancement processes should engage with each and every learning outcome. Doing so will ensure not only that the aspirations, assumptions and concerns of all stakeholder groups may be met in full, but also that individual institutions can explore creative solutions to more challenging and/or new areas of competence within the curriculum development process.

- **The AEC LOs are a tool to develop programme-specific learning outcomes to address specific study profiles:** The AEC LOs aim to address competences relevant to most HME programmes; they are not designed to differentiate between or express in detail outcomes associated with specific programme specialisations within the broadly defined discipline of music. Institutions therefore need to develop

<sup>19</sup> In the case of music pedagogy specialist programmes, there are a number of existing learning outcomes formulations which may serve as an inspiration to programme teams alongside, and in complement to, the AEC LOs: a set of learning outcomes for music teachers in schools have been developed within the framework of the *Music Education Network* project. They are available at [www.menet.info](http://www.menet.info). Similarly, a set of learning outcomes for vocal and instrumental teachers have been developed by the *Polifonia* Working Group INVITE – International Network for Vocal and Instrumental Teacher Education in the 2010 Handbook *Instrumental and Vocal Teacher Education: European Perspectives* which is available for download in the publications section of the AEC website ([www.aec-music.eu/publications](http://www.aec-music.eu/publications)).

their own more specific learning outcomes for such specialised study programmes.<sup>19</sup>

- **Learning outcomes should reflect the institutional vision:** Consistency between the institutional vision and mission, the programme goals and the curriculum is an essential underpinning in the work to create learning outcomes. The learning outcomes, whether developed for a programme as a whole or for a specific curriculum element or course, should reflect the institutional context, priorities and strategy.
- **Learning outcomes should be clearly expressed and communicated:** The use of clear and simple language to express learning outcomes supports their communication and comprehension to the great benefit of all stakeholder groups associated with or involved in the programme of study. Further, it is evident that the clear and well communicated LOs allow transparency in the creation of admission and assessment criteria.
- **The AEC LOs use a broad definition of ‘entrepreneurship’:** Underpinning the AEC LOs is an understanding of entrepreneurship as a transversal key competence as defined by the European Commission’s *EntreComp* conceptual model: “Entrepreneurship is when you act upon opportunities and ideas and transform them into value for others. The value that is created can be financial, cultural, or social.”<sup>20</sup> Entrepreneurship is therefore understood not only as a set of ‘hard skills’, such as business planning and marketing, but also as the ability to develop creative and purposeful ideas, to believe in one’s ability, and other ‘soft skills’ closely associated with artistic practice. For this reason, entrepreneurship is therefore an integrated aspect of many of the AEC LOs.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Source: [www.ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/entrecomp](http://www.ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/entrecomp).

<sup>21</sup> The work of the *Polifonia* Working Group on entrepreneurship provides a further useful source for developing learning outcomes in this area. More information about musical entrepreneurship is available at [www.aec-music.eu/musicalentrepreneurship](http://www.aec-music.eu/musicalentrepreneurship).

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