

Q&A

- 01** **How many students on average drop out during the first year? How does that figure compare to other degree programmes at the AUAS?** Annually approximately 430 students are admitted. The total number of students enrolled at AMFI is around 1,300 students. 14% of students drop out in the first year. This figure is lower than the average figure at the AUAS. The success rate, the percentage of students that complete a degree programme within 4 years, is 70% at AMFI. Every university of applied science conducts a student satisfaction study each year. AMFI scores a 3.9 on a scale from 1 to 5. That is slightly higher than the national average (3.8).
- 02** **Former students say that they are told during their first lessons that half of the class will not make it to the winter break. Are you familiar with this? Is this AMFI policy?** AMFI policy is to make sure students have a clear and realistic understanding of what is expected of them, what choices (specialisations) they must make during the programme in order to successfully complete their studies. The fact that the programme is highly demanding, both in dedication and hours (home-work assignments), is made perfectly clear from the onset. Out of a class of 28 students only 4 drop out in the first year.
- 03** **Is it true that you prefer not to accept students who are 17 years old and advise them to return when they are older?** AMFI is a popular degree programme and each year we receive many more applications that we can admit. We must select, as must all other creative degree programmes in The Netherlands. The selection takes place using the following criteria: previous education, motivation and creativity.
- 04** **Is it possible to have a job on the side?** For some students it is and for others it is not. Students who are performing poorly are offered an appointment with the student counsellor. During the appointment the causes of the poor study performance are discussed, as are possible solutions. When the cause lies in a student not being able to spend enough time on the course, due to him or her holding down a job on the side, then the counsellor will question the necessity of the job. At the end of the day, it is the student who makes a choice.
- 05** **What is expected of teachers when students become emotional?** Many students work on their projects with great intensity and passion, leaving them vulnerable. This is something all creative programmes are faced with and must deal with. Compliments and assessments full of high praise lead to emotions just as easily as disappointing assessments and criticism. AMFI teachers strive to act with great care. Reactions we have received from former students in the past weeks, have made it apparent that they were not always successful at that, and that is incredibly painful. For the students in the first place, and for us as well. This is why we have taken steps to examine this process critically together with the students.
This also means that we are discussing with teachers and external advisers how we can change and improve assessments.
- 06** **How do you prepare your students for the 'hard' world of fashion?** How the world of fashion works is, of course, a subject matter that is discussed with the students and during classes. We are aware that by pointing out the competitive nature of the fashion world, we are also contributing to its perpetuation. AMFI wants to take responsibility in this aspect by finding a good balance between inspiring and enthusing students for our wonderful profession on the one hand and providing students with all the tools necessary to hold their own within the sector. In addition, we are proactively engaging with the companies in our work field, to ensure our students can also fulfil a socially safe internship.

- 07** **Wat does AMFI do regarding diversity and inclusivity?** Within the AUAS diversity, alongside sustainability and digitisation, is one of the policy priorities. At AMFI diversity is an integral part of management meetings. One MT member has been appointed to prevent any form of discrimination and to head a Taskforce focused on this. A student council has also been formed, to join in the discussion on improving the social safety within AMFI. Reports by students on discriminatory utterances or other forms of transgressing conduct are and will be discussed.
- 08** **AMFI has hired an independent agency to investigate social safety. When will that investigation be completed and what will AMFI do with the outcome?** The report is expected in the course of June. The external agency Bezemer & Schubad has spoken to approximately 130 (former) students and (former) staff members about how they experienced the social safety at AMFI. Focus here lies on perception and not on establishing the truth. Everyone was invited to sign up for an interview with Bezemer & Schubad. No selection was made. The agency is analysing the causes for the creation of this social (un)safety, the demand for change, the need for change, and the possibilities for change regarding the social/psychological safety within the work and study environment. AMFI will use the results of the investigation and the recommendations by the agency to improve the social safety, and where necessary, better guarantee it.
- 09** **In the past years much has already been done to make AMFI a safe learning environment. What was the reason for this?** That is correct. There are two reasons for this. In the first place, it became clear that there were students coming in with different needs, a different awareness regarding the creation of fashion. They were successful at expressing that vision. We also see that the industry is changing. It makes sense to anticipate on that. In the second place, the new director started two years ago. Together with a new management team he began building a new curriculum and improving the work and learning environment at AMFI.
- 10** **What measures has AMFI already taken in creating a safer environment?** AMFI has been working on improving its social safety for two years now. These are the measures that have been realised.
1. The curriculum has been changed with the purpose of decreasing the workload and pressure in the first two academic years.
 2. The complaints procedure has been simplified, resulting in a speedier handling of complaints and a higher approachability of the confidential counsellor.
 3. The Code of Conduct has been amended.
 4. Staff and students are joining forces to improve the working and learning environment at AMFI. The Safety & Culture Taskforce and Student Council have been established to this end. Both are in operation.
 5. An investigation into social safety is being carried out by an independent agency.
 6. There is a physical input box and an online contact form for you to submit your complaint or share your story anonymously.
- 11** **To what extent was AMFI already aware of the negative stories that are now coming out? And why was no action taken against it before?** We were aware that the work pressure was considered to be high. This is why a number of years ago we already began implementing changes in order to reduce that workload and pressure. It became apparent over the past years that students had other needs, a different awareness regarding the creation of fashion. We anticipated on that but hearing and seeing the stories that are now coming out, we should have acted sooner. AMFI has been shocked by the stories that are coming out. We are all deeply affected by them. This is why we have accelerated the implementation of changes and enlisted an external agency to investigate the social safety within AMFI. The clear objective is to learn from the past and make change possible.
- 12** **Why do you not respond actively to what is written about AMFI in the media?** AMFI is highly transparent regarding these current issues. We post all information relevant to our students and future students at our website. For the people starting with us this coming academic year, we are organising a special gathering so they can meet our teachers and staff and they will have the

opportunity to ask questions. All questions from journalists, students, staff, companies we work with, and parents will be answered. We do however have one provision, and that is that we will not anticipate the results of the investigation.
