



Review for Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of SAE Education Ltd, June 2013

Section 1: Outcome of the monitoring visit

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit, the review team concludes that SAE Education Ltd (the Institute) has made commendable progress with implementing the action plan from the June 2012 [Review for Educational Oversight](#).

Section 2: Changes since the last QAA monitoring visit

2 The Institute continues to offer BA, BSc, MA and MSc programmes validated by Middlesex University in the areas of audio production, digital film making, web development, interactive animation and games programming. The Institute has 694 students, which is 16 per cent more than at the time of the June 2012 review. This mainly reflects the expansion of the Institute's campuses outside London.

3 The Institute has taken a number of steps to integrate its four UK campuses, including the appointment of senior staff with cross-campus responsibilities in areas such as student administration. It has continued to work with its parent body, Navitas Limited, on the design and development of a global learning management system. This is scheduled to go live in the UK in 2014 and will facilitate many of the actions listed in the action plan. A major external review of the Institute's admission practices was conducted in November 2012.

Section 3: Findings from the monitoring visit

4 The Institute is making commendable progress in implementing the good practice and recommendations in its review report. Success indicators for most of the actions in the plan and evaluation of their effectiveness have not yet been fully completed, but the team saw evidence of robust mechanisms to maintain progress in these areas. The students whom the team met were very positive about the support they receive from staff. The relationship with Middlesex University continues to be highly collegial and supportive. Regular meetings of key staff take place in accordance with the Institute's Special Partnership Agreement with Middlesex University.

5 The enhancement of processes for obtaining external academic and vocational advice has begun through an Academic Advisory Committee (AAC) to which three Industry Experts Panels will report. There was a delay in establishing the AAC while the most appropriate structure was explored, but its inaugural meeting was held in April 2013.

6 Students confirmed that, on the whole, assignment guidelines are relevant and easy to understand, and that staff are readily available to clarify any concerns. Evaluation by the Institute shows that a minority of students are unclear about module assignment guidelines on certain modules and would welcome greater precision. There is a continuing need to communicate with students about assessment and to monitor their perceptions about the application of assessment criteria by tutors. The Institute has developed a database of completed work-related projects and placements, although a staff survey to determine the

effectiveness of the database for supporting students remains to be undertaken. Students appreciate the strength of the Institute's links with the audio and film industries.

7 The Institute has developed guidelines for peer observation, and has made good progress in synchronising the teaching observation cycle across campuses. Sessional lecturers will be included in this process. Staff confirmed that peer observation is beneficial in enhancing teaching practice.

8 In terms of the recommendations in its review report, the Institute has produced a Quality Manual, and has made this available on staff and student portals. Feedback from staff and students indicates that further work would be helpful to make sections easier to navigate. Institute staff have contributed to all aspects of the specification for the management information system that is being developed by Navitas Limited, with implementation of the new system to begin in November 2013, and to go live in the UK before June 2014.

9 Improvements in recruitment and induction procedures have been made through the preparation of written information and training of managers. The Institute will evaluate the impact of these measures by obtaining feedback from appointment panels, new staff, and students.

Section 4: Progress in working with the external reference points to meet UK expectations for higher education

10 The Institute has a robust mechanism in place to ensure that its procedures and policies are benchmarked against national and international reference points, and that staff are made aware of relevant developments. It is initiating a mapping exercise of its Quality Manual against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, beginning with *Chapter B5: Student engagement*. The Institute has also been able to benefit from the experience of its parent organisation in meeting quality assurance requirements in Australia.

Section 5: Background to the monitoring visit

11 The monitoring visit serves as a short check on the provider's continuing management of academic standards and quality of provision. It focuses on progress since the previous review. In addition, it provides an opportunity for QAA to advise the provider of any matters that have the potential to be of particular interest in the next monitoring visit or review.

12 The monitoring visit was carried out by Dr David Taylor (Coordinator) and Dr Elaine Crosthwaite (Reviewer) on 19 June 2013.