Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) of Cambridge Arts and Sciences Ltd t/a Cambridge School of Visual and Performing Arts

October 2017

Contents

About this review

This is a report of a Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at Cambridge School of Visual and Performing Arts. The review took place from 17 to 19 October 2017 and was conducted by a team of two reviewers, as follows:

- Dr Alan Howard
- Dr Anya Perera.

The main purpose of the review was to investigate the higher education provision and to make judgements as to whether or not academic standards and quality meet UK expectations. These expectations are the statements in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code)[1] setting out what all UK higher education providers expect of themselves and of each other, and what the general public can therefore expect of them.

In Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) the QAA review team:

- makes judgements on
  - the setting and maintenance of academic standards
  - the quality of student learning opportunities
  - the information provided about higher education provision
  - the enhancement of student learning opportunities
- makes recommendations
- identifies features of good practice
- affirms action that the provider is taking or plans to take.

The QAA website gives more information about QAA[2] and explains the method for Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers).[3] For an explanation of terms see the glossary at the end of this report.

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[1] The UK Quality Code for Higher Education is published at: www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code.
[2] QAA website: www.qaa.ac.uk.
[3] Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers):
www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews-and-reports/how-we-review-higher-education.

Key findings

Judgements

The QAA review team formed the following judgements about the higher education provision.

- The maintenance of the academic standards of awards offered on behalf of degree-awarding bodies and other awarding organisations **meets** UK expectations.
- The quality of student learning opportunities **meets** UK expectations.
- The quality of the information about learning opportunities **meets** UK expectations.
- The enhancement of student learning opportunities **meets** UK expectations.

Good practice

The QAA review team did not identify any features of **good practice**.

Recommendations

The QAA review team makes the following **recommendations**.

By April 2018:

- develop an internal policy for new programme development that makes systematic use of stakeholder feedback (Expectation B1).

By June 2018:

- consolidate the outcomes of programme monitoring and review processes for all higher education courses for strategic enhancement purposes (Expectations B8 and Enhancement)
- clearly articulate and implement a more strategic approach to the development of enhancement activities at School level (Enhancement).

By September 2018:

- revise the higher education committee structure to ensure more effective oversight of academic standards, quality and enhancement (Expectations A2.1 and Enhancement)
- articulate and implement a distinctive strategic approach to teaching and learning to improve further the shared understanding among staff and students (Expectation B3)
- develop a strategic and systematic approach to higher education staff development and ensure its impact is effectively monitored (Expectation B3).

Affirmation of action being taken

The QAA review team did not **affirm** any actions already being taken to make academic standards secure and/or improve the educational provision offered to students.

About the provider

Cambridge School of Visual and Performing Arts (the School) is a trading entity within the legal entity Cambridge Arts and Sciences (CAS) Limited. The School is the only part of CAS that offers higher education programmes. CAS is owned by Cambridge Education Group Colleges Ltd which is itself owned by Cambridge Education Group Ltd.

The School offers the following higher education programmes: MA Art and Design; Graduate Diploma Art and Design; BA Graphics and Illustration; and BA Fashion Design. From September 2017, Falmouth University replaced Kingston University as the awarding body for these programmes. Cohorts of MA and BA Fashion Design students are currently being taught out under the previous awards offered through Kingston University. The School also has students on its Level 4 Diploma in Art and Design: Foundation Studies awarded by the University of the Arts London, and a Level 4 ATCL (Associate of Trinity College London) in Performing where students are prepared to take an examination with Trinity College London.

At the time of the review visit, the School had 200 higher education students, all studying on a full-time basis.

The School has identified a number of key challenges facing its higher education provision, including: sustaining growth in recruitment; making a successful transition to a new validating body; and continuing to ensure adequate space and resources for higher education students.

The School has made satisfactory progress with the recommendations and further development of features of good practice made in the 2014 Review for Specific Course Designation report.

Explanation of findings

This section explains the review findings in greater detail.

1 Judgement: The maintenance of the academic standards of awards offered on behalf of degree-awarding bodies and/or other awarding organisations

Expectation (A1): In order to secure threshold academic standards, degree-awarding bodies:

a) ensure that the requirements of *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) are met by:

- **positioning their qualifications at the appropriate level of the relevant framework for higher education qualifications**
- **ensuring that programme learning outcomes align with the relevant qualification descriptor in the relevant framework for higher education qualifications**
- **naming qualifications in accordance with the titling conventions specified in the frameworks for higher education qualifications**
- **awarding qualifications to mark the achievement of positively defined programme learning outcomes**

b) consider and take account of QAA's guidance on qualification characteristics

c) where they award UK credit, assign credit values and design programmes that align with the specifications of the relevant national credit framework

d) consider and take account of relevant Subject Benchmark Statements.

Quality Code, *Chapter A1: UK and European Reference Points for Academic Standards*

Findings

1.1 The School specialises in arts qualifications ranging from Levels 3 to 7. It currently holds partnership agreements with Kingston University, the University of the Arts London and Trinity College London; these have all been held in advance of its newest collaborative partnership with Falmouth University. The School is responsible for designing programmes offered through partnerships with Kingston University and Falmouth University and, in doing so, adheres to the policies and procedures as defined in these agreements. Ultimate responsibility for programme approval resides with the degree awarding partners and assurance that qualifications comply with the appropriate level of the FHEQ is achieved through the development and validation procedures. The School's Level 4 provision adheres to University of the Arts London's regulatory frameworks and qualifications centre handbook. The School also holds a registered exam centre agreement with Trinity College London. The processes in place would enable the Expectation to be met.

1.2 The review team examined the effectiveness of these practices and procedures by examining a range of documentation including partnership agreements, validation events,

annual reviews and meetings. The team also met with the Head of School, and a range of senior, academic and support staff.

1.3   The evidence reviewed shows the procedures to be effective in practice. The School fulfils its responsibilities to the awarding bodies as outlined in the partnership agreements. The School's policies and procedures have been reviewed through the recent approval process with Falmouth University. Previous and recent validations show that the School's provision reflects the relevant FHEQ descriptors and their alignment with programme learning outcomes. The recent revalidation of its programmes with Falmouth University has also facilitated greater familiarity with external reference points beyond senior academic staff.

1.4   While the awarding bodies have ultimate responsibility through their own regulatory frameworks for ensuring that the relevant external reference points are adhered to, there is evidence that the School effectively manages its own responsibilities for doing this within its partnership agreements. The review team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A2.1): In order to secure their academic standards, degree-awarding bodies establish transparent and comprehensive academic frameworks and regulations to govern how they award academic credit and qualifications.

Quality Code, *Chapter A2: Degree-Awarding Bodies' Reference Points for Academic Standards*

Findings

1.5   The School adheres to the academic frameworks and regulations of its awarding partners, as articulated in the respective collaborative agreements. The School manages the MA and BA degrees through its own policies and procedures as well as those of its awarding partners according to its delegated responsibilities. The School has a defined governance structure in which matters pertaining to the academic standards of programmes are considered. The Internal Quality Committee (IQC) is responsible for, among other things, monitoring internal quality assurance, strategic oversight of quality, and promoting dissemination of good practice in learning and teaching. The School Board, among other things, has a remit to monitor qualitative and quantitative information in alignment with its internal governance role.

1.6   The operation and management of the provision with Kingston University is reviewed through the Joint Executive Committee, chaired by the University, with oversight of academic standards held by Senate. The School's Academic Director acts as the Partner Academic Liaison Officer, meetings being scheduled with the appointed Link Officer at the University. Kingston University's Education Committee provides oversight of its collaborative provision. In terms of its new partnership with Falmouth University, the awarding body is responsible for academic standards and quality and, in the initial stages of this new agreement, close oversight is provided through its operations handbook. The process for academic regulations would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.7   The review team tested the effectiveness of the arrangements by examining documentation including minutes of the School's governance and deliberative committees and those of its awarding bodies, validation reports, development reports, programme specifications and other programme and module documentation. The team also met students, and senior and academic staff.

1.8   The most recent annual institutional review carried out by Kingston University, drawing on its own annual quality assurance and enhancement monitoring mechanisms, found no areas of concern and no further action was required by the School.

1.9   While the School Board fulfils its remit for monitoring qualitative and quantitative information, the IQC has yet to fulfil its explicit responsibilities as set out in the terms of reference. The review team saw evidence of overlap, and some omissions in practice, between the two committees. This has resulted in a lack of clarity about where academic authority resides. The team therefore **recommends** that, by September 2018, the School revises the higher education committee structure to ensure more effective oversight of academic standards, quality and enhancement.

1.10   While the School adheres to the academic frameworks and regulations of its awarding partners, the role of the IQC has yet to be developed fully to fulfil its terms of reference. This has resulted in overlap with the School Board. Therefore, while the

Expectation is met, the level of risk is moderate because of weaknesses in the operation of part of the School's academic governance structure.

Expectation: **Met**
Level of risk: **Moderate**

Expectation (A2.2): Degree-awarding bodies maintain a definitive record of each programme and qualification that they approve (and of subsequent changes to it) which constitutes the reference point for delivery and assessment of the programme, its monitoring and review, and for the provision of records of study to students and alumni.

Quality Code, *Chapter A2: Degree-Awarding Bodies' Reference Points for Academic Standards*

Findings

1.11   The relevant validating partners are responsible for maintaining the definitive record of each programme and qualification, but records are also kept by the School Administrator and Data Manager. Programme information is prepared for all University-validated provision and details the educational aims, intended learning outcomes and modes of assessment. These also articulate the principles of teaching and learning being employed, and are published on the website and through programme documentation. These, together with module documentation and directories, provide a definitive record of each programme. The responsibility for writing these documents is devolved to the School and tested through the validation procedures. The Universities are responsible for the production and distribution of award certificates. The arrangements in place for the maintenance and use of definitive programme records would allow the Expectation to be met.

1.12   The review team tested the Expectation by scrutinising a range of documentation including course and module handbooks, centre handbooks, awarding body documentation, and validation reports. The team also held meetings with senior staff, and teaching and support staff.

1.13   The evidence reviewed shows the School's practices and procedures to be effective and to fulfil its responsibilities regarding the processes of its awarding partners. Staff the review team met confirmed their understanding of the processes in place, and many had taken part in the recent validation with Falmouth University and those relating to the postgraduate provision at Kingston University. Students the review team met confirmed that they had a good understanding of their programmes.

1.14   The team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.1): Degree-awarding bodies establish and consistently implement processes for the approval of taught programmes and research degrees that ensure that academic standards are set at a level which meets the UK threshold standard for the qualification and are in accordance with their own academic frameworks and regulations.

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards*

Findings

1.15   The School's undergraduate and postgraduate programmes are subject to the validation and review procedures of their awarding bodies. Where an idea for a new programme is identified, a new product development form is completed and presented for approval by the School's Board. Programme development work, including consultation with external stakeholders, is then undertaken by an internal development team in preparation for consideration by the validation panel of the awarding body. Where validation is agreed, a memorandum of agreement is signed. These processes enable the Expectation to be met.

1.16   The review team scrutinised documentation, including programme specifications, operations handbooks and recent validation reports. The team also discussed programme development and approval with academic and senior staff.

1.17   The evidence reviewed shows the procedures to be effective in practice. Robust processes, set out in the respective University's operations handbooks, exist for the approval and validation of taught programmes and the team saw evidence that the School adheres to them. In 2015, the School followed the validation processes of Kingston University in seeking approval for a new postgraduate programme in Art and Design. In changing to a new awarding body in 2017, the School was subject to the validation processes of Falmouth University to approve a number of programmes previously validated by Kingston University. It was evident from discussions with senior staff that they have current experience and a good understanding of requirements in respect of setting academic standards and the external processes involved in approval.

1.18   While the awarding bodies retain ultimate responsibility for academic standards, the School discharges effectively its delegated responsibilities for contributing to the development and approval of the programmes and its associated academic standards. Therefore, the team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.2): Degree-awarding bodies ensure that credit and qualifications are awarded only where:

- **the achievement of relevant learning outcomes (module learning outcomes in the case of credit and programme outcomes in the case of qualifications) has been demonstrated through assessment**
- **both UK threshold standards and their own academic standards have been satisfied.**

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards*

Findings

1.19   Arrangements for assessment and the award of credit and qualifications follow the requirements of the awarding bodies. Learning outcomes to be tested and associated assessment strategies are described in programme specifications and module descriptions. Assessment briefs are produced for all summative assessment and student work is subject to moderation. External examiners are appointed by the awarding bodies and attend university examination boards which have ultimate responsibility for decisions on progression and the award of credit. The Student Handbook summarises the processes involved and provides links to the regulations of the awarding bodies. These processes enable the Expectation to be met.

1.20   The review team explored the operation of these procedures by scrutinising external examiner reports and programme documentation. The team also held discussions with a range of staff involved in the delivery and administration of assessments.

1.21   The evidence reviewed shows the policies and procedures to be effective in practice. Programme specifications for Kingston University and award documents for programmes validated by Falmouth University follow a consistent structure, and clearly list the learning outcomes, teaching and learning methods, and assessment strategies. Award documents informatively map curriculum structure, assessment methods and programme learning outcomes. Module information forms provide clear information on learning outcomes and assessment strategies. As a condition of validation, module descriptors for MA Art and Design were rewritten so that the assessment strategy for each module more clearly shows how Level 7-specific learning outcomes are assessed.

1.22   External examiner reports for Kingston confirm that standards set for the awards are appropriate for the qualification and are comparable to similar courses in other institutions. External examiners also confirm that processes for assessment, examination and the determination of marks for modules and final award of qualifications are sound and fairly conducted by the relevant examination boards. From academic year 2017-18, the processes for assessment and award of credit and qualifications for the programmes recently validated by Falmouth University will operate. Teaching staff met by the team were knowledgeable about how this will necessitate a change in practice in some aspects of the assessment process.

1.23   Effective regulations and procedures exist in respect of the award of credit and maintenance of academic standards. The team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.3): Degree-awarding bodies ensure that processes for the monitoring and review of programmes are implemented which explicitly address whether the UK threshold academic standards are achieved and whether the academic standards required by the individual degree-awarding body are being maintained.

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards*

Findings

1.24   The School has followed the processes for programme review and monitoring set out in the Kingston University liaison document. An annual Institutional Monitoring Review report produced by the University appraises compliance with these processes. Module enhancement plans and course enhancement plans are completed annually by module and course leaders and are tabled for consideration at the Kingston University Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture Board of Studies responsible for programmes delivered by the School. From academic year 2017-18, the School will follow the review and monitoring procedures of Falmouth University set out in the operations handbook. This approach to programme review and monitoring enables the Expectation to be met.

1.25   The review team explored the effectiveness of the approach by considering documentation including module and course enhancement plans, external examiner reports and minutes of the Board of Studies. The team also discussed the review process with a range of School staff.

1.26   In terms of achieving and maintaining academic standards, the evidence reviewed showed the procedures to be effective in practice. Module enhancement plans typically reflect on the operation of the module and areas for development. Course enhancement plans include consideration of student performance data, student feedback, and external examiner reports. Consideration of the course enhancement plans and external examiner reports enable the Board of Studies to possess oversight of student achievement and to have confidence that threshold standards are achieved on programmes delivered by the School. The annual Institutional Monitoring Review confirms the School's compliance with the agreed requirements for review and monitoring set out in the Kingston University liaison document.

1.27   In conclusion, the School is fulfilling the requirements for monitoring and review agreed with its awarding body and these processes adequately address whether UK threshold academic standards are achieved. The Expectation is, therefore, met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (A3.4): In order to be transparent and publicly accountable, degree-awarding bodies use external and independent expertise at key stages of setting and maintaining academic standards to advise on whether:

- **UK threshold academic standards are set, delivered and achieved**
- **the academic standards of the degree-awarding body are appropriately set and maintained.**

Quality Code, *Chapter A3: Securing Academic Standards and an Outcomes-Based Approach to Academic Awards*

Findings

1.28 The respective Universities with which the School collaborates are responsible for the approval of modules and programmes, which involves mandatory external participation in the validation procedures. The composition of the validation panel requires nomination of external independent candidates, non-faculty and faculty representatives. The role of the external examiners is also central to the School's quality assurance processes. As stated in the validation agreement, externality featured in the recent approval event for the School's partnership with Falmouth University and validation of its programmes. Staff attended a collaborative partnership visit to Falmouth University ahead of the approval event and, internally, staff have received training on the use of external reference points and the Quality Code. These approaches would allow the School to meet the Expectation.

1.29 The review team considered the effectiveness of these procedures by examining validation documents, external examiner reports and responses, and annual monitoring reports. The team also held meetings with senior and academic staff.

1.30 The review team found these processes to work effectively in practice. The School adheres to the programme monitoring and review procedures of the awarding partners, which are informed by data and external examiner reports. The external examiner reports are submitted to Kingston University and sent to the School for consideration. Responses are prepared by the School, in liaison with Faculty, and formally approved by the Associate Dean Learning and Teaching. Module enhancement plans subsequently reflect on external examiner reports and themselves feed into the course enhancement plans produced by course leaders. The annual monitoring procedures result in feedback from the University. In addition, independent external expertise is integral to validation events and to the assurance of academic standards for each awarding partner.

1.31 The School works in accordance with the regulations and procedures of its awarding body. The evidence from documentation and meetings shows that the School is effectively managing its responsibilities for maintaining academic standards and making use of external expertise. The team, therefore, concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

The maintenance of the academic standards of awards offered on behalf of degree-awarding bodies and/or other awarding organisations: Summary of findings

1.32   In reaching its judgement, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook. Six of the seven applicable Expectations are met with low levels of associated risk.

1.33   Expectation A2.1 is met with a moderate level of risk, which indicates weaknesses in the operation of part of the School's academic governance structure.

1.34   The review team makes one recommendation in this area: revise the higher education committee structure to ensure more effective oversight of academic standards, quality and enhancement (Expectation A2.1).

1.35   There are no affirmations or good practice identified in this judgement area.

1.36   The review team concludes that the maintenance of the academic standards of awards offered on behalf of degree-awarding bodies and other awarding organisations at the School **meets** UK expectations.

2 Judgement: The quality of student learning opportunities

Expectation (B1): Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes.

Quality Code, *Chapter B1: Programme Design, Development and Approval*

Findings

2.1 The School adopts a strategic approach to identification of potential new programme areas. Data relating to UK and international education and employment trends in the creative industries is monitored and reviewed. Where a potential new programme is identified, a new product development form is completed and presented for approval by the School Board (where practical aspects of marketing and planning for delivery are considered) and Cambridge Education Group (CEG) ExCom. Following approval of the business case, a development team led by the School's Academic Director and comprising relevant subject specialist staff prepare programme documentation in line with the requirements of the awarding body. Development teams then liaise with subject specialist staff at the awarding body and seek input from students and other stakeholders in the programme development process. The approach to programme design and development and the processes for programme approval enable the Expectation to be met.

2.2 The review team examined documentation relating to a recent validation event and discussed programme design, development and approval with academic and senior staff.

2.3 While the process leading to internal approval of a business case is well understood by senior staff, there is less clarity about internal procedures for curriculum design and subsequent development of the initial idea into a full academic proposal for approval by an awarding body. Despite the School successfully gaining approval in June 2015 for a new MA programme in Art and Design, the Kingston University validation report highlighted some inconsistencies in the use made of stakeholders in the development process. While industry input was sought from a leading UK magazine publisher, the validation report noted that there was no direct consultation with students in the curriculum design stage. As a condition of approval, the School was required to ensure student involvement in future programme development and review initiatives. It is evident that the School takes its responsibilities for programme design and development seriously, but currently the processes involved are not fully documented in School policy. To assure consistency and robustness of internal processes, the review team **recommends** that by April 2018 the School develops an internal policy for new programme development that makes systematic use of stakeholder feedback.

2.4 Overall, the review team concludes that the Expectation is met. However, because internal processes for new programme development are not well documented, the level of risk is moderate as a result of some weaknesses in the operation of part of the School's academic governance structure.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Moderate

Expectation (B2): Recruitment, selection and admission policies and procedures adhere to the principles of fair admission. They are transparent, reliable, valid, inclusive and underpinned by appropriate organisational structures and processes. They support higher education providers in the selection of students who are able to complete their programme.

Quality Code, *Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education*

Findings

2.5   The School is responsible for managing the student recruitment and admissions process in accordance with the terms of partnership agreements with its validating bodies. The School operates its own Admissions Policy, approved through its recent validation process with Falmouth University, and seeks to be inclusive with an access and participation statement which is published on its website. Applications are made through UCAS, while international applicants apply through the central admissions office of the Cambridge Education Group Colleges Limited. This is supported by a bespoke client relationship management system and a student records system. Responsibility for admitting students rests with the Course Directors. Entry requirements are published on the website and in the course prospectus. The application process may require submission of a portfolio of work and audition, or course-specific tests or assessment. Portfolios are approved by the Course Director or other senior members of staff. Applicants are invited to an informal interview online or in person with two members of staff. These policies and procedures would enable the Expectation to be met.

2.6   In considering this Expectation, the review team examined the Admissions Policy and relevant documentation including the website, prospectuses and study guides, and a demonstration of the online training provided to the sales teams. The team also met students and senior, academic and support staff.

2.7   The review team found that the policies and procedures for recruitment, selection and admission work effectively in practice. The website and prospectuses contain adequate information about the content of the courses and how to apply, including the admissions criteria. Guidance to applicants makes it clear that acceptance of an offer to study gives rise to an agreement with the School and with Falmouth University. Students the team met stated that admissions and induction processes were clear and that they had been given an accurate understanding of their course prior to commencement.

2.8   International students form a high proportion of the student body, contributing to the multicultural ethos of the School. The sales teams receive comprehensive online training and an Agent Training Guide which ensures they are fully cognisant of the School's provision.

2.9   The review team found that the School's Admissions Policy adheres to the principles of fair admission and is underpinned by appropriate organisational structures and processes. The School has experience of aligning admission to the requirements of its validating partners and Course Directors hold oversight of admissions decisions. The team, therefore, concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B3): Higher education providers, working with their staff, students and other stakeholders, articulate and systematically review and enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices, so that every student is enabled to develop as an independent learner, study their chosen subject(s) in depth and enhance their capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking.

Quality Code, *Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching*

Findings

2.10   Although there is currently no Teaching and Learning Strategy, course documentation clearly articulates each course's approach to teaching, learning and assessment which underpins the School's focus on career and employability development. Programme specifications and awards documentation also provide guidance on learning, teaching and assessment, and these are published on the website. Supporting the full-time staff are a number of visiting lecturers with specialist areas of expertise. The Course Director liaises with the University Link Tutors, undertakes lesson observations, and line manages teams of academic staff. The School's approach has been reviewed through the recent approval and validation process with Falmouth University. These procedures would enable the Expectation to be met.

2.11   The review team tested the operation of these arrangements by examining course documentation, validation reports, external examiner and moderator reports, and peer observation records. The team also held meetings with students, the Head of School, and senior, academic and support staff.

2.12   Students the review team met were very positive about the quality of teaching and learning at the School. In particular, students value the emphasis placed on small class size, teaching taking place in dedicated work spaces, and the opportunity to be taught by, and interact with, well-qualified and experienced lecturers who are active in their professional disciplines. In addition, the School has been guided in its tutorial support by Kingston University's 'Led by Learning', with personal tutorials being core to the School's approach. The team saw evidence that specific study skills support is embedded in the curriculum, with a Study Skills Officer providing additional support as required.

2.13   There is shared understanding among staff and students regarding the value of the studio culture, individualised support, collaborative learning, practice by doing, and employability skills. The review team was informed that good practice is identified through team teaching, discussions at Boards of Study and at Senior Leadership Group meetings, with the IQC seen by senior staff as a major way of disseminating best practice. Thus far, the approach to teaching, learning and assessment has aligned with Kingston University's strategic plan; strategies and principles at course level are articulated through programme documentation. However, there remains a lack of clarity on how oversight of the School's values and practices are managed and linked to strategic ambitions for learning and teaching. Senior managers recognise the value of developing a formal learning and teaching strategy to define its approach, and coordinate and direct developments that underpin strategic priorities. The team therefore **recommends** that, by September 2018, the School articulates and implements a distinctive strategic approach to teaching and learning to improve further the shared understanding among staff and students.

2.14   The relevant validating partner approves the appointment of teaching staff who subsequently undergo annual appraisals, in which there is an opportunity to identify appropriate opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD). In addition, staff meet regularly with their Course Director. The team was given several examples of how

teaching staff had been supported through the use of an allocated budget for CPD, with some staff undertaking postgraduate qualifications and new staff encouraged to complete teaching qualifications. Although one Course Director is encouraging staff to become fellows of the Higher Education Academy (HEA), this has not been universally adopted across the School due to limited interest among staff in gaining fellowship. Although the School clearly provides support for staff development, it is not systematic and lacks clarity in terms of how it is used to underpin strategic priorities to enhance learning and teaching. Therefore, the review team **recommends** that, by September 2018, the School develops a strategic and systematic approach to higher education staff development and ensures its impact is effectively monitored.

2.15   While the School has a number of strengths in the area of teaching and learning, the team makes two recommendations to improve it further. While the Expectation is met, the team concludes that the level of risk is moderate because of insufficient priority given to assuring quality in the School's planning processes with regard to systematic analysis of aspects of its teaching and learning.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Moderate

Expectation (B4): Higher education providers have in place, monitor and evaluate arrangements and resources which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

Quality Code, *Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement*

Findings

2.16   The School's Employability Statement encapsulates its approach to learning and articulates the graduate attributes that it seeks to develop in students to improve their prospects of sustained employment. The student handbook and course guides reinforce learning expectations. The School endeavours to provide a highly personalised learning experience facilitated through tutor-student dialogue and the emphasis placed on the role of the personal tutor. Student progress is monitored through tutorials, feedback on course work, group critiques, and daily dialogue with tutors in the studio. The information management system allows students' learning and personal development to be tracked from first contact through to graduation. The processes the School has in place would allow it to meet the Expectation.

2.17   The review team tested the effectiveness of the arrangements and resources through an examination of documentation including partnership agreements, Employability Statement, student handbook, course guides, external examiner and validation reports, and annual monitoring reports. The team also held discussions with teaching and support staff, and students.

2.18   The review team found that the procedures for implementing, monitoring and evaluating arrangements and resources work effectively in practice. Students met by the team were satisfied with both the academic and tutorial support available to them, and particularly valued the dialogue and close working relationships with their tutors and other students from different year groups. The studio, and the culture it promotes, is seen as a crucial part of student learning and is a recurring positive theme in student feedback.

2.19   As a means of supporting student retention and achievement, study skills and English support are integrated with in-class support and provided in groups or individually. The commitment and cohesiveness of the School's approach to the whole student experience and the inclusive environment it seeks to foster were commended in the Falmouth University partnership approval process.

2.20   The School now has a strategic plan for the development of library resources and, since moving to a dedicated space, is monitoring library usage through student feedback and data submitted to management. In response to student feedback and course improvement plans, a dedicated print room has been provided. The development and implementation of a virtual learning environment (VLE) has been postponed and is awaiting the results of a trial at its sister institution. In the absence of a VLE, students receive free printing facilities and hard copies of lecture material.

2.21   The School has a strong emphasis on engaging with industry, professionals and practitioners as part of its approach to enhancing employability. Many staff have industry and professional experience and, through their networks, they are able to recommend visiting tutors who are current practitioners. Collectively, these staff provide students with careers support and advice.

2.22   The MA Art and Design programme has established links with a leading UK magazine publisher and this provides opportunities for unpaid internships that provide a unique insight into professional working practice. This relationship also allows input into the

MA provision through live projects, reciprocal visits, and attendance at the end-of-year show. Students on the BA Fashion Design programme validated by Kingston University have always been encouraged to undergo work placements and are also able to exhibit through the end-of-year Degree Show, as well as taking part in the Graduate Fashion Week and London Fashion Week.

2.23   The School has appropriate arrangements and resources in place to support students to develop and achieve their potential. The tutorial system and accessibility of staff are central to its approach. The team, therefore, concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B5): Higher education providers take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience.

Quality Code, *Chapter B5: Student Engagement*

Findings

2.24   The School engages with students through formal student representation and a range of student satisfaction surveys. Student representatives, who are elected across all programmes and years, attend the School Student Forum (SSF), Student Staff Consultative Committees (SSCC) and Board of Studies. The SSCC provides a forum for the consideration of student opinion and feedback in relation to academic matters. The SSF considers wider aspects of student life at the School. Student evaluation surveys are conducted on some modules and all students are invited to complete the annual student satisfaction survey. The School recently signed up to the National Student Survey (NSS) and the first cohort completed the survey in 2017. The opportunities provided for effective student engagement enable the Expectation to be met.

2.25   The review team examined minutes of key meetings including the SSF, SSCC, and Board of Studies. The team also held discussions with students and student representatives.

2.26   The review team found that the procedures for student engagement work effectively in practice. Informal discussion and feedback is evidently an important characteristic of School life, with small class sizes, shared working spaces and regular tutorials providing opportunity for open dialogue. The School has also sought to strengthen its formal engagement with students through the appointment of a Student Liaison Officer, who facilitates the student representative system and represents student opinion in decision making at senior levels, including at School Board.

2.27   Student representatives receive an appropriate induction provided by the Academic Director. Normally, two student representatives attend each Board of Studies meeting where student feedback is considered. The minutes of SSF and SSCC meetings are comprehensive and provide evidence of open discussion and constructive feedback on issues raised by students. NSS results in 2017 regarding whether it is clear how students' feedback has been acted upon, suggest slightly lower satisfaction among BA Fashion students (68 per cent) than BA Graphics and Illustration students (88 per cent). However, 76 per cent of BA Fashion Students felt that staff value students' opinions and feedback.

2.28   All students have an opportunity to provide formal feedback through some form of questionnaire survey. The annual student satisfaction survey for the whole School achieves a very good response rate. End-of-module evaluation surveys have been piloted on the BA Graphics and Illustration programme and some consideration of student feedback is evident in module and course enhancement plans.

2.29   Overall, the team concludes that the School provides adequate opportunities for student engagement both individually and collectively. Therefore, the Expectation is met and the level of associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B6): Higher education providers operate equitable, valid and reliable processes of assessment, including for the recognition of prior learning, which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought.

Quality Code, *Chapter B6: Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning*

Findings

2.30   The processes for setting work and benchmarking expected standards for students on the programmes are set out in agreements with the awarding bodies. A School Examinations Policy sets out these processes and an Assessment and Reporting Policy outlines the School's approach to the way that students' progress is monitored, assessed and reported. The Student Handbook summarises the processes involved in assessment and provides links to the regulations of the awarding bodies.

2.31   For programmes validated by Falmouth University, the School writes assessment briefs in line with the University's guidelines and in liaison with the link tutor. All summative assessment is reviewed by the University prior to delivery to students. Assessments are marked by the School in accordance with the University's marking scale and Assessment Principles. In the first year of partnership (academic year 2017-18), the Link Tutor or representative will moderate 100 per cent of work and, thereafter, a representative sample. Similar arrangements exist for the two Kingston University programmes currently being taught out, though the moderation is completed internally and is overseen by the course leader. The processes adopted in respect of assessment enable the Expectation to be met.

2.32   The review team explored the effectiveness of assessment processes by scrutinising external examiner reports and programme documentation including the student handbook, assessment briefs and marking criteria. The team also held discussions with students and a range of staff involved in the delivery and administration of teaching and learning.

2.33   The evidence showed the policies and procedures to be effective in practice. Assessment briefs and marking criteria issued to students are comprehensive. Students are supported to develop good academic practice and all written work is checked for originality through submission to plagiarism-detection software. Suspected cases of plagiarism or poor academic practice are dealt with in line with the regulations of the awarding bodies, links to which are included in the Student Handbook. Small cohort sizes lead to a large percentage of work being sampled by external examiners.

2.34   Students appreciate the opportunities to discuss formative and summative assessment feedback face-to-face with tutors during timetabled sessions. NSS results in 2017 indicate very good student satisfaction with assessment and feedback, particularly among BA Graphics and Illustration students. External examiner reports confirm that processes for assessment, examination and the determination of marks are fair and enable students to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the specified learning outcomes.

2.35   The team considers that the School operates sufficiently robust processes of assessment, which enable students to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved

the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought. The team therefore concludes that the Expectation is met and the level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B7): Higher education providers make scrupulous use of external examiners.

Quality Code, *Chapter B7: External Examining*

Findings

2.36   The School's awarding partners are responsible for the appointment of external examiners and moderators. For provision awarded by Kingston University, the School nominates candidates for appointment. For other aspects, the School adheres to the requirements of Kingston University's Academic Quality and Standards Handbook and this is monitored by the University's Joint Executive Committee. The Joint Executive Committee at Kingston University is responsible for managing the operation of its agreement with the School. It receives reports from the Liaison Officer, course data and notes external examiners' comments and actions arising from these reports for its courses delivered at the School. In its new partnership, Falmouth University's Link Tutor will provide the primary point of contact with the external examiner, and arrangements will be monitored by the awarding body's Collaborative Provision Committee. The School's procedures and its adherence to those of its awarding partners would allow it to meet the Expectation.

2.37   The review team examined the effectiveness of these procedures in practice by examining a range of documentation including external examiner reports and associated responses, module enhancement plans, minutes of deliberative committees and Boards of Study, as well as partnership agreements. The team also held meetings with students, and teaching and senior staff.

2.38   The evidence showed the processes and procedures to be effective in practice. The University's external examiner template allows confirmation that draft assessments have been seen, and that an adequate response to the previous report had been received. The team also saw evidence that external examiner reports are considered by the Head of School and at Boards of Study, which are attended by student representatives. Responses are written and forwarded to the external examiner by the link faculty at the University. The monitoring of external examiner reports also sits within the terms of reference for the IQC.

2.39   Although there is no central means of disseminating external examiner reports to students, those met by the team did express an awareness of the reports and where to locate them. The role of the external examiner is explained in the student handbook. Responses to external examiners and course summary reports are discussed at Boards of Study and SSCC meetings with students.

2.40   The procedures allow effective use of external examiners who have a defined role that is well understood by staff working in quality assurance. The team therefore concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk in low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B8): Higher education providers, in discharging their responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards and assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, operate effective, regular and systematic processes for monitoring and for review of programmes.

Quality Code, *Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review*

Findings

2.41   Programmes are subject to ongoing monitoring by the School's academic governance committees. Key monitoring information, including external examiner reports, student feedback, retention, progression and employment data are used in monitoring and review. Changes to modules or programmes arising from these processes must be approved by the awarding body. The student voice is represented through student feedback channels, student membership of the Board of Studies, and through representation by the Student Liaison Officer at higher level committees. Processes for programme review and monitoring have followed the procedures set out in the Kingston University liaison document. From academic year 2017-18, the School will follow the review and monitoring procedures of Falmouth University as described in the operations handbook. The processes adopted in respect of monitoring and review would enable the Expectation to be met.

2.42   The review team explored the effectiveness of the approach by analysing recent course enhancement plans and the minutes of School committees. The team also discussed monitoring and review processes with students and a range of senior, academic and support staff.

2.43   The School produces, and has access to, detailed monitoring data across its higher education provision. For programmes validated by Kingston University, course leaders produce annual course enhancement plans, which are informed by module-level enhancement plans and include reflection on monitoring data and feedback from students and external examiners. These plans identify areas for development at course level and are tabled at the Board of Studies. Consideration of the student voice is evident from module to School level. While strong connections exist with relevant areas of industry, the School currently lacks a systematic approach to gaining employer input into programme review. The planned establishment of an industrial panel should strengthen employer engagement in programme development and review. Under its new partnership with Falmouth University, broadly similar arrangements will exist for annual programme review, and provision will be subject to periodic review every three years.

2.44   The School has fulfilled its requirements in respect of monitoring and review of programmes validated by Kingston University. However, while course enhancement plans inform course-specific priorities, their role in formally supporting enhancement planning at School level is less evident in the minutes of IQC meetings and Boards of Studies. The College also receives and considers monitoring information relating to its Level 4 Foundation Diploma provision including external moderator reports for the Diploma in Art and Design awarded by the University of Arts. However, collective outcomes of programme monitoring and review processes are not currently consolidated into an overarching School annual review or action plan to support approaches to strategic enhancement. The team therefore **recommends** that, by June 2018, the School consolidates the outcomes of programme monitoring and review processes for all higher education courses for strategic enhancement purposes.

2.45   While the School adheres to the awarding partners' requirements for programme monitoring and review allowing the Expectation to be met, the level of risk is moderate

because of weaknesses in the way in which the School uses outcomes of review and monitoring across its higher education provision for enhancement purposes.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Moderate

Expectation (B9): Higher education providers have procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints about the quality of learning opportunities; these procedures are fair, accessible and timely, and enable enhancement.

Quality Code, *Chapter B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints*

Findings

2.46   The School follows the requirements, agreed at validation, of its awarding bodies for dealing with higher education complaints and appeals. An internal Complaints Policy details a two-stage process for addressing formal complaints. Academic appeals are dealt with by the awarding partners. The Student Liaison Officer is available to support students who raise a concern. Information on making complaints is provided in the student handbook. Complainants who remain dissatisfied with the response to their complaint, regardless of whether the matter was reviewed by the School or the awarding partner, may refer their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) upon receipt of a Completion of Procedures letter. The policies and procedures for handling complaints and appeals would enable the Expectation to be met.

2.47   The review team tested the effectiveness of the policies and procedures for handling academic appeals and student complaints by scrutinising the internal Complaints Policy with reference to the operating agreements of its awarding partners. The team also held meetings with students, support staff and senior staff.

2.48   The review team found that the policies and procedures for academic appeals and student complaints work effectively in practice. In line with the Falmouth University operations handbook, the School maintains a clear and accessible complaints policy. The School seeks informal resolution where possible, and students or student representatives may raise concerns with the Student Liaison Officer who will support the process of early resolution. Students know how to go about raising concerns and the process described in the Complaints Policy enables timely completion of procedures.

2.49   Few complaints and appeals have been recorded but examples seen by the review team indicate that, when they arise, the School takes such matters seriously and that resolution is actively sought. In one case, a student, with the support of their Course Leader, made an appeal against an assessment decision, which was subsequently upheld by the awarding body. In the recent change of awarding body to Falmouth University, the School's BA Fashion Design students decided that this move was not agreeable and expressed the desire to remain with Kingston University and to exit with a Kingston University award. The Student Liaison Officer assisted the students in raising the issue with senior members of staff and the issue was resolved, through meetings, with the outcome being a teach-out agreement with Kingston University.

2.50   The team concludes that the School has an effective complaints and appeals process and therefore the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B10): Degree-awarding bodies take ultimate responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, irrespective of where these are delivered or who provides them. Arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with organisations other than the degree-awarding body are implemented securely and managed effectively.

Quality Code, *Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others*

Findings

2.51   Students on the BA Fashion Design programme have an elective 30 credit placement during one of their Level 5 modules. The duration of placements is flexible but typically last for two weeks. However, there is flexibility within the course design to offer students alternative learning to allow them to meet the minimum course requirements should they fail to secure or complete their placement. An audit of placement learning by Kingston University in 2015 found the School's arrangements to be satisfactory with regard to this provision. A Placement Learning Policy is in place and documents for students have been revised accordingly. In addition, both the student and the provider receive a checklist of requirements prior to commencing the placement. In the newly validated BA Fashion programme with Falmouth University, a placement is encouraged but it does not contribute directly to assessment.

2.52   The Expectation is therefore met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

Expectation (B11): Research degrees are awarded in a research environment that provides secure academic standards for doing research and learning about research approaches, methods, procedures and protocols.
This environment offers students quality of opportunities and the support they need to achieve successful academic, personal and professional outcomes from their research degrees.

Quality Code, *Chapter B11: Research Degrees*

Findings

2.53   The School does not offer research degrees, therefore this Expectation is not applicable.

Expectation: Not applicable
Level of risk: Not applicable

The quality of student learning opportunities: Summary of findings

2.54   In reaching its judgement, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook. Seven of the 10 applicable Expectations are met with low levels of associated risk.

2.55   Expectations B1, B3 and B8 are all met with a moderate level of risk, which indicates weaknesses in the operation of parts of the School's academic governance structure and insufficient priority given to assuring quality in its planning processes.

2.56   The review team makes four recommendations in this area: develop an internal policy for new programme development that makes systematic use of stakeholder feedback (Expectation B1); articulate and implement a distinctive strategic approach to teaching and learning to improve further the shared understanding among staff and students (Expectation B3); develop a strategic and systematic approach to higher education staff development and ensure its impact is effectively monitored (Expectation B3); and, consolidate the outcomes of programme monitoring and review processes for all higher education courses for strategic enhancement purposes (Expectation B8).

2.57   There are no affirmations or good practice identified in this judgement area.

2.58   The review team concludes that the quality of student learning opportunities at the School **meets** UK expectations.

3 Judgement: The quality of the information about learning opportunities

Expectation (C): UK higher education providers produce information for their intended audiences about the higher education they offer that is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy.

Quality Code, Part C: Information about Higher Education Provision

Findings

3.1 Information for prospective students along with course information such as handbooks, programme specifications and module guides are available on the website. The School, including its Marketing team, and Cambridge Education Group design and deliver course publicity at appropriate times throughout the academic year. Website and marketing materials, including information for each course, must be approved internally by the relevant Course Director/Leader and Head of School. Under its partnership agreements, all marketing and publicity material is ultimately agreed and approved by the awarding partner prior to use. The School has also sought external legal advice on its compliance with the 1988 Data Protection Act and with the requirements set out by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA). The School's arrangements for the production of information would enable it to meet the Expectation.

3.2 The review team tested the effectiveness of the School's arrangements for publication and assurance of information by exploring the availability and accuracy of information on the website, student handbooks, prospectuses, programme specifications, module guides, and partnership agreements. The team also held meetings with senior, teaching and support staff, and students.

3.3 The review team found the procedures for checking and producing information about higher education provision to be effective in practice. Students expressed their satisfaction with the quality of information available to them when making a decision about where to study and also once they'd enrolled on their respective courses. The prospectus is used in UK and international markets as a means of promoting the School. Direct website links to relevant information at partner institutions are provided in the student handbook and on the School's website to ensure currency of information.

3.4 The information produced by the School is informative, accurate and well received by students. Internal approval processes, and the obligations to awarding partners with regard to the production of information, are made clear through the respective partnership agreements. Therefore, the team concludes that the Expectation is met and the associated level of risk is low.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

The quality of the information about learning opportunities: Summary of findings

3.5   In reaching its judgement, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook. The Expectation for this judgement area is met and the associated level of risk is low.

3.6   There are no recommendations, affirmations or features of good practice in this judgement area.

3.7   The review team concludes that the quality of the information about learning opportunities at the School **meets** UK expectations.

4 Judgement: The enhancement of student learning opportunities

Expectation (Enhancement): Deliberate steps are being taken at provider level to improve the quality of students' learning opportunities.

Findings

4.1 The School states that enhancement of learning opportunities is driven at course level by Course Leaders and is monitored at management level by the Head of School and School Board. The Board has oversight of the enhancement of student learning opportunities, and the governance and management of all courses through regular monthly meetings. The Internal Quality Committee (IQC) is tasked to promote the recognition and dissemination of good practice and innovation in learning, teaching and student support. Course Leaders, who are members of IQC, are considered as advocates for the needs of students and the enhancement of learning opportunities. They are responsible for the continued development and enhancement of their courses and make use of monitoring data and external examiner reports to inform production of annual course enhancement plans. The School's procedures would enable the Expectation to be met.

4.2 The review team explored the effectiveness of the School's approach to enhancement by scrutinising documentation concerned with course review, and papers from the Board of Studies, Internal Quality Committee and School Board. The team also held discussions with a range of staff involved in the delivery and senior management of teaching and learning.

4.3 The School's approach to monitoring and review is driven by the requirements of its awarding partners (see paragraphs 1.24, 1.26, 2.41 and 2.43). While course enhancement plans inform course-specific priorities, their role in formally supporting enhancement planning at School level is less evident in the minutes of IQC meetings and Boards of Studies. In addition, while some consideration of student feedback is evident, it is unclear how IQC uses the outcomes of review processes to help promote recognition and then dissemination of good practice. These findings feed into the recommendation in paragraph 2.44 regarding consolidation of the outcomes of programme monitoring and review processes for all higher education courses for strategic enhancement processes.

4.4 In addition, documentation relating to meetings of the School Board does not provide evidence of explicit consideration of the minutes of either IQC or the Board of Studies. It is therefore unclear how the Board uses its internal quality assurance procedures to support the systematic identification of strategic areas for enhancement. These findings feed into the recommendation in paragraph 1.9 regarding the need to revise the higher education structure to ensure more effective oversight of academic standards, quality and enhancement.

4.5 There is, however, stronger evidence that the School Board makes more direct use of other qualitative and quantitative information to inform strategic development, governance and management of its higher education provision. Evidence from Board papers shows that feedback from internal and external stakeholders is used to inform strategic decisions that are intended to enhance the student learning experience. For example, the School appointed a Student Liaison Officer to enhance its working partnership with higher education students. In addition, resource has recently been invested in a dedicated print room, and the Board has considered the organisation of its building space and resources in supporting and enhancing teaching and learning. Academic and support staff the team met understood and endorsed fully the School's explicit intention to make the

student experience feel more like a 'university' than a 'school'.

4.6   While the review team found evidence of strategic enhancement activities through scrutiny of meeting documentation and from examples cited in discussions with members of staff, these are not well articulated in a manner such as might be found in a School level enhancement strategy or plan. As a result, a shared and consistent understanding of the School's priorities for enhancement of the student learning experience was not always evident in the team's meetings with staff. The review team therefore **recommends** that, by June 2018, the School clearly articulates and implements a more strategic approach to the development of enhancement activities at School level.

4.7   The review team concludes that the School takes deliberate steps to enhance the quality of student learning experiences and the Expectation is therefore met. However, because of some weaknesses in the use of quality assurance processes to support enhancement and the lack of a clearly articulated strategic approach, the level of risk is judged to be moderate.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Moderate

The enhancement of student learning opportunities: Summary of findings

4.8   In reaching its judgement, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook. The Expectation for this judgement area is met but the associated level of risk is moderate.

4.9   The review team makes one recommendation in this judgement area: to clearly articulate and implement a more strategic approach to the development of enhancement activities at School level. The team also repeats two recommendations from Parts A and B.

4.10   There are no affirmations or good practice identified in this judgement area.

4.11   The moderate risk in the enhancement of student learning opportunities refers to some weaknesses in the operation of part of the School's academic governance structure and insufficient emphasis given to enhancement in parts of the School's planning processes.

4.12   The review team concludes that the enhancement of student learning opportunities at the School **meets** UK expectations.

Glossary

This glossary is a quick-reference guide to terms in this report that may be unfamiliar to some readers. Definitions of key operational terms are also given on pages 21-24 of the [Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) handbook](#).

If you require formal definitions of other terms please refer to the section on assuring standards and quality: www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality.

User-friendly explanations of a wide range of terms can be found in the longer Glossary on the QAA website: www.qaa.ac.uk/Pages/GlossaryEN.aspx.

Academic standards
The standards set by **degree-awarding bodies** for their courses (programmes and modules) and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standard**.

Award
A qualification, or academic credit, conferred in formal recognition that a student has achieved the intended **learning outcomes** and passed the assessments required to meet the academic standards set for a **programme** or unit of study.

Awarding organisation
An organisation authorised to award a particular qualification; an organisation recognised by Ofqual to award Ofqual-regulated qualifications.

Blended learning
Learning delivered by a number of different methods, usually including face-to-face and e-learning (see **technology enhanced or enabled learning**).

Credit(s)
A means of quantifying and recognising learning, used by most institutions that provide higher education **programmes of study**, expressed as numbers of credits at a specific level.

Degree-awarding body
A UK higher education provider (typically a university) with the power to award degrees, conferred by Royal Charter, or under Section 76 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, or under Section 48 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992, or by Papal Bull, or, since 1999, granted by the Privy Council on advice from QAA (in response to applications for taught degree awarding powers, research degree awarding powers or university title).

Distance learning
A course of study that does not involve face-to-face contact between students and tutors but instead uses technology such as the internet, intranets, broadcast media, CD-ROM and video, or traditional methods of correspondence - learning 'at a distance'. See also **blended learning**.

Dual award or double award
The granting of separate awards (and certificates) for the same **programme** by two **degree-awarding bodies** who have jointly delivered the programme of study leading to them. See also **multiple award**.

e-learning

See technology enhanced or enabled learning.

Enhancement
The process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported. It is used as a technical term in our review processes.

Expectations
Statements in the **Quality Code** that set out what all UK higher education providers expect of themselves and each other, and what the general public can therefore expect of them.

Flexible and distributed learning
A programme or module that does not require the student to attend classes or events at particular times and locations. See also **distance learning**.

Framework
A published formal structure. See also **framework for higher education qualifications**.

Framework for higher education qualifications
A published formal structure that identifies a hierarchy of national qualification levels and describes the general achievement expected of holders of the main qualification types at each level, thus assisting higher education providers in maintaining academic standards. QAA publishes the following frameworks: *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) and *The Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland* (FQHEIS).

Good practice
A process or way of working that, in the view of a QAA review team, makes a particularly positive contribution to a higher education provider's management of academic standards and the quality of its educational provision. It is used as a technical term in QAA's audit and review processes.

Learning opportunities
The provision made for students' learning, including planned study, teaching, assessment, academic and personal support, and resources (such as libraries and information systems, laboratories or studios).

Learning outcomes
What a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completing a process of learning.

Multiple awards
An arrangement where three or more **degree-awarding bodies** together provide a single jointly delivered **programme** (or programmes) leading to a separate **award** (and separate certification) of each awarding body. The arrangement is the same as for **dual/double awards**, but with three or more awarding bodies being involved.

Operational definition
A formal definition of a term, establishing exactly what QAA means when using it in reviews and reports.

Programme (of study)
An approved course of study that provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification.

Programme specifications
Published statements about the intended **learning outcomes** of programmes of study, containing information about teaching and learning methods, support and assessment methods, and how individual units relate to levels of achievement.

Quality Code
Short term for the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, which is the UK-wide set of **reference points** for higher education providers (agreed through consultation with the higher education community, and published by QAA), which states the **Expectations** that all providers are required to meet.

Reference points
Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured.

Self-evaluation document
A report submitted by a higher education provider, assessing its own performance, to be used as evidence in a QAA review.

Subject Benchmark Statement
A published statement that sets out what knowledge, understanding, abilities and skills are expected of those graduating in each of the main subject areas (mostly applying to bachelor's degrees), and explains what gives that particular discipline its coherence and identity.

Technology enhanced or enabled learning (or **e-learning**)
Learning that is delivered or supported through the use of technology.

Threshold academic standard
The minimum acceptable level of achievement that a student has to demonstrate to be eligible for an academic **award**. Threshold academic standards are set out in the national **frameworks** and **Subject Benchmark Statements**.

Virtual learning environment (VLE)
An intranet or password-only interactive website (also referred to as a platform or user interface) giving access to **learning opportunities** electronically. These might include such resources as course handbooks, information and reading lists; blogs, message boards and forums; recorded lectures; and/or facilities for online seminars (webinars).

Widening participation
Increasing the involvement in higher education of people from a wider range of backgrounds.