



This review method  
is ESG compliant

# Elective Quality Review

Arts University Bournemouth

June 2025

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## About this review

This is a report of an Elective Quality Review conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at Arts University Bournemouth. The review took place from 22 to 25 April 2025 and was conducted by a team of three reviewers, as follows:

- Mr Mark Cooper
- Dr Iván García
- Mr Rory O'Neill

The QAA Officer for this review was Dr John Wheeler.

Elective Quality Review offers institutions the opportunity to have a review by the UK's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). The review benchmarks the institutions' quality assurance processes against international quality assurance standards set out in [Part 1 of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(ESG\)](#).

In Elective Quality Review, the QAA review team:

- makes conclusion against the ESG standards covered by this method
- makes conditions (if relevant)
- makes recommendations
- identifies features of good practice
- determines an overall conclusion as to whether the provider meets the ESG Standards.

In addition, the QAA review team considered several enhancement initiatives that the provider put forward for scrutiny. These initiatives, selected by the provider, represent strategic intentions, and plans for enhancement that take account of the diversity of provision (student population, location, modes and levels of study) and explore the impact of the planned changes on the student experience as part of the review. The team's commentary on these initiatives is provided below.

The QAA website gives more information [about QAA](#) and its mission. A dedicated section explains the method for [Elective Quality Review](#) and has links to other informative documents. QAA reviews are evidence-based processes. Review judgements result from the documents review teams scrutinise, the meetings they hold, and draw upon their experience as peer reviewers and student reviewers. For an explanation of terms see the [Glossary](#) at the end of this report.

The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) provide the framework for internal and external quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area. QAA's review methods are [compliant with these standards](#), as are the [reports we publish](#). More information is available on our [website](#).

This review was conducted in compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

## Executive summary

The Arts University Bournemouth (AUB) is a specialist institution that delivers higher education in art, design, media, and performance at all levels, including undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research degrees. In addition, it delivers a Saturday Art School (for under-18s), short and summer courses, and a Foundation Diploma in Art and Design (validated by the University of the Arts London Awarding Body). A total student population of just under 4,000 is based on a single campus in Wallisdown, Bournemouth.

Undergraduate students make up 82% of the population, with a further 9% enrolled on taught postgraduate courses and the remainder on research degrees or on Foundation programmes. The proportion of students who commute from home is relatively small (below 20% of the student population), although most live within 100 miles of Bournemouth. Around 16% of the student population is from outside the UK, of whom about one-fifth are from the EU and the remainder from a wide variety of countries across the globe.

AUB has made significant efforts over recent years to enhance the diversity of its student body. About 15% of home students do not identify as white (compared to around 5% of the local population), and AUB has been working to increase the historically low proportion of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The most recent data confirms that over 30% of entrants were from TUNDRA quintiles 1 and 2<sup>1</sup>. Students identifying as female are in the majority (68.5%), 26.8% identify as male; and 4.5% identify in another way.

As of 1 March 2025, there were 196 academic staff (150.3 FTE), 185 professional services staff (169.7 FTE) and 116 technical staff (108.7 FTE), the latter figure demonstrating the importance that technical staff play within the creative and performing arts in providing expert advice and support to students on practical elements of their studies.

AUB has four undergraduate schools (Arts and Communication; Arts, Media and Creative Industries Management; Bournemouth Film School; and Design and Architecture) and a Graduate School which houses all taught postgraduate activity. This includes a suite of online courses which are studied entirely remotely. The School of Arts, Media and Creative Industries Management was launched in 2024-25, and houses courses which focus on developing the leaders and managers for the creative industries of the future.

AUB Strategy 2030 endorses the university's vision to be "A world-class art, design and media university working with professional partners to create excellence, relevance and impact", and articulates its values: Collaborative, Connected, Innovative and Passionate.

The former Vice-Chancellor retired in December 2024, and the Board of Governors appointed the previous Executive Director Academic Innovation as Vice-Chancellor on a fixed-term basis until July 2026 as AUB navigates the very challenging higher education

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<sup>1</sup> TUNDRA (tracking underrepresentation by area) is an area-based measure that uses tracking of state-funded mainstream school pupils in England to calculate young participation. It is an official statistic. TUNDRA classifies local areas across England into five equal groups – or quintiles - based on the proportion of 16-year-old state-funded mainstream school pupils who participate in higher education aged 18 or 19 years. Quintile one shows the lowest rate of participation. Quintile five shows the highest rate of participation.

environment in a period of uncertainty about national policy. The new Vice-Chancellor has initiated a process to refresh the strategy in the coming months in response to this constantly evolving environment.

In reaching conclusions about the extent to which AUB meets the ESG Standards, the QAA review team followed the evidence-based review procedure as outlined in the published handbook for Elective Quality Review (November 2023). AUB provided the review team with a self-evaluation and supporting evidence. During the review visit, which took place from 23 to 25 April 2025, the review team held a total of nine meetings with the senior management team, academic staff, professional support staff, students and student representatives, and external stakeholders. They also undertook a tour of the campus and specialist facilities and received a demonstration of a number of online and data systems.

At the time of the review, the institution was registered with the Office for Students (OfS) which articulates ongoing conditions of registration, to which providers must comply, in its regulatory framework, [Securing student success: Regulatory framework for higher education in England, November 2022](#). QAA has undertaken a [detailed mapping of the OfS conditions for quality and standards \(B1-B5\) against Part 1 of the ESG](#) and consider there to be a comprehensive overlap between the requirements of the regulatory body and parts of the provisions within the ESG Standards. Where there is overlap, further evidence was not required from the provider beyond assurances that the provider was not subject to any specific conditions of registration and/or an OfS investigation at the time of the review. Nothing in QAA's assessment should be taken as evidence or assurance that OfS conditions are met as that is a matter for the OfS.

In summary of the review outcomes, the team found seven examples of good practice and made four recommendations for further enhancement. The recommendations are of a desirable rather than essential nature and are proposed to enable AUB to build on existing practice which is operating satisfactorily but which could be improved or enhanced. The team did not set any conditions.

Overall, the team concluded that Arts University Bournemouth **meets** all Standards.

## Conclusions

The QAA review team reached the following conclusions about the higher education provision at Arts University Bournemouth.

### European Standards and Guidelines

Arts University Bournemouth meets the Standards in Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

### Conditions

The team did not set any conditions.

### Good practice

The QAA review team identified the following features of **good practice**:

- The systematic use of feedback from its quality assurance framework, together with the willingness and engagement of Industry Patrons and partners, that enhances and develops opportunities for students (ESG Standard 1.1).
- The involvement and embedding of student support services throughout induction which provides an enhanced experience for new students (ESG Standard 1.4).
- The collaborative effort of all stakeholders across AUB in the design and delivery of offer holder days that provide potential students with a holistic view of the opportunities and support open to them (ESG Standard 1.4).
- The opportunities and support provided to new members of academic staff, particularly the newly established HEA fellowship programme that facilitates the speedy development of skills and knowledge (ESG Standard 1.5).
- The annual verification exercise that enables staff at AUB to calibrate their approach to assessment and feedback of their students (ESG Standard 1.9).
- The use of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework, for its systematic approach, clear articulation of pedagogical principles, and collaborative development process and its subsequent employment in a university-wide approach to the review of the taught portfolio that resulted in a renewed, congruent, and coherent set of courses (Enhancement Initiative 1).
- The opportunities provided to students through the Industry Patrons scheme for professional development, authentic learning, and to gain clarity on professional expectations, together with helping students to develop the insight, confidence, and adaptability needed to navigate the complexities of the creative sector (Enhancement Initiative 3).

## Recommendations

The QAA review team made the following **recommendations**:

- Further develop policies and procedures for the partnership between AUB and AUB Students' Union to foster engagement in the governance of quality and facilitate the strengthening of the relationship between the two bodies, particularly, in the appointment and role of student representatives (ESG Standard 1.1).
- While evidence suggests that the quality of feedback is well-embedded and effective, AUB extend ongoing monitoring and dialogue with students to identify and address where there may be individual issues.
- Review methods of communication with students, both those currently enrolled and those joining following deferral, to ensure more effective dissemination of information through multiple methods (ESG Standard 1.4).
- Build upon the learning, outcomes, and successes of the Your Voice Your Curriculum participatory research project to ensure that its impact is further exploited and embedded into the culture of the provider (ESG Standard 1.7).

## Explanation of the findings

### 1.1 Policy for quality assurance

**Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.**

#### Findings

1. AUB has established a robust quality assurance framework, detailed in the Quality Assurance Handbook. This framework enables AUB to review its provision in a self-reflective and evaluative manner, emphasising the importance of "seeking the views of academic staff, students and external examiners/moderators" in these processes. The framework encompasses key aspects, such as course approval, monitoring, and review, which include annual course review, periodic review, and external examining. Key strategic documents and policies, including AUB Strategy 2030, the HE Quality Assurance Handbook, and the Regulatory Framework and Assessment Regulations, reviewed by the team demonstrate that the framework is comprehensively embedded within its strategic management framework, ensuring alignment with institutional priorities and governance structures.
2. The development of the framework involved extensive consultation with internal stakeholders, including academic staff, professional services teams, and student representatives, as evidenced by minutes from the Academic Board and feedback from institutional roadshows and in meetings with staff.
3. External stakeholders, such as employers and professional bodies, are systematically engaged through course validation panels and periodic review processes, ensuring policy remains responsive to sector needs and expectations. Regular review mechanisms are integral to the quality assurance framework's effectiveness, with scheduled evaluations, informed by internal audits, external examiner reports and student feedback. Documents examined by the review team and meetings with senior leaders and academic staff confirm strong engagement and commitment to high quality.
4. The emphasis on academic integrity is operationalised through clear procedures for addressing misconduct that are delivered by staff training programmes and student induction materials. Case studies from school-level audits illustrate how these procedures are applied consistently, with robust record-keeping that ensures transparency and accountability.
5. External scrutiny, including validation reports from professional bodies, confirms that quality assurance policy meets sector benchmarks for rigour and fairness and these practices align with the focus in ESG 1.1 on maintaining public confidence in academic standards through transparent, evidence-based processes.



6. Stakeholder engagement extends to the dissemination of the policy, which is publicly accessible via AUB's website and reinforced through staff handbooks and student-facing documentation, as evidenced in the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework and a range of course handbooks inspected by the review team. Training sessions are available and attended by new staff, with annual refresher workshops ensuring widespread understanding and implementation of policy requirements.
7. AUB demonstrated a consistent commitment to engaging students as partners in the development and assurance of academic quality. Student representatives reported during review meetings that they mostly feel informed about quality processes, citing opportunities to contribute to policy discussions through Course Partnership Groups and with peers through the student representative system and social media channel discussion boards.
8. Feedback gathered by the review team during meetings with Arts University Bournemouth Students Union (AUBSU), students, and senior leadership referenced challenges in sustaining consistent levels of student engagement, particularly considering rising external pressures, such as cost of living and part-time work. AUBSU has reported difficulties in securing participation even in response to expressed student interest, prompting a review of communication channels and representational structures. Nevertheless, where engagement is achieved, student input is recognised as meaningful and well-integrated; for example, all students who expressed interest in participating in periodic review were accommodated, and students were vocal and confident in these discussions.
9. AUB and AUBSU meet regularly to discuss shared governance issues and are currently in the process of revising their Partnership Agreement, with the support of a change management consultant. AUBSU holds representation on key bodies such as the Board of Governors, and SU sabbatical officers are routinely involved in institutional governance processes.
10. While these practices evidence a commitment to student voice, the review team **recommends** AUB further develop policies and procedures for the partnership between AUB and AUB Students' Union to foster engagement in the governance of quality and facilitate the strengthening of the relationship between the two bodies, particularly, in the appointment and role of student representatives. This could help to formalise engagement mechanisms in quality governance and strengthen the clarity and consistency of representative structures, particularly regarding the election and support of student representatives. Enhancing these arrangements may further deepen student involvement in institutional decision-making and ensure alignment with the values of collaboration and connection, thus further embedding AUB's commitment to student-centred governance and accountability.
11. Even though the policy framework is working effectively, AUB has identified opportunities to enhance external stakeholder input further. Plans to expand industry partnerships and integrate employer feedback more directly into course redesign processes and the Annual Course Review processes are positive, with the activity linking directly to the Strategic Plan and AUB's drive to accelerate their commitment to industry and professions as part of their developing Partnership Plan. In meetings with Industry

Patrons<sup>2</sup> and partners, the review team heard how valued the scheme is and how projects and direct associations are leading to exciting new opportunities for Industry Patrons, AUB and students alike. This demonstrates a proactive approach to deepening partnerships and engagement with external stakeholders and employers to inform programme development, support learning, teaching and assessment practice and student employment opportunities. The systematic use of feedback from its quality assurance framework, together with the willingness and engagement of Industry Patrons and partners, that enhances and develops opportunities for students is considered an area of **good practice** by the review team.

12. The enhancements noted above in paragraph 11, coupled with ongoing monitoring of policy impact, ensure the institution remains aligned with the requirements for quality assurance in higher education as outlined in ESG 1.1. Overall, the evidence confirms that AUB's quality assurance policy is well-embedded, regularly reviewed, and effectively supported by stakeholder engagement. The policy's integration with strategic objectives, transparency in implementation, and responsiveness to feedback collectively demonstrate full alignment with ESG 1.1. The review team therefore concludes that the provider **meets** this Standard.

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<sup>2</sup> Industry Patrons is a scheme by which AUB links its courses with professionals working in industry for the benefit of students. This initiative is discussed later in this report as Enhancement Initiative 3.

## 1.2 Design and approval of programmes

Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated, and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

### Findings

13. At the time of the review, the provider was registered with the Office for Students (OfS) and was not subject to any regulatory activity by the OfS regarding potential or actual non-compliance with the ongoing conditions of registration articulated in its regulatory framework, [Securing student success: Regulatory framework for higher education in England, November 2022](#).
14. QAA has undertaken a detailed mapping of the OfS conditions for quality and standards (B1-B5) against Part 1 of the ESG and consider there to be a comprehensive overlap between the requirements of the regulatory body and the provisions within the ESG Standard 1.2. The provider was not therefore requested to provide information for this Standard due to the unnecessary duplication of assessment that this presents.
15. The QAA considers therefore that the provider **meets** this Standard on account of the provider fulfilling its obligations to the regulator in England with regards to the OfS ongoing conditions for quality and standards. Nothing in this assessment should be taken as evidence or assurance that OfS conditions are met as that is a matter for the OfS.

## 1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

**Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.**

### Findings

16. AUB's approach to student centred learning is articulated through its Learning, Teaching and Assessment Feedback (LTAF) policy, which in the view of the team sets clear expectations for active student engagement and the use of flexible, inclusive pedagogies. As explored in meetings with the review team, course teams described how they implement a variety of teaching methods, including collaborative projects, live briefs, and industry linked assessments. These approaches enable students to apply theoretical concepts in practical settings and to develop autonomy in their learning.
17. The policy also requires regular evaluation of teaching methods, which is supported by structured feedback mechanisms and ongoing curriculum review. The review team heard that student input is central to the enhancement of learning and assessment. The LTAF and Industry Patron schemes are particularly noteworthy practices that enhance student engagement and ensure industry relevance. Course Partnership Groups and student representation on validation panels provide formal opportunities for students to contribute to curriculum design and evaluation, and the review team heard that students appreciate these opportunities.
18. Course design and delivery at AUB reflect a student-centred approach through transparent documentation of contact hours and independent study expectations in course handbooks. This enables students to understand what is expected of them and how their time will be structured. The variety of assessment methods noted by external examiners demonstrates AUB's commitment to accommodating different learning styles and enabling all students to demonstrate their achievement of learning outcomes.
19. Assessment practices are transparent and designed to support student learning. Marking criteria and rubrics are published in advance, ensuring clarity about expectations. Feedback is provided through AUB's online system, which supports timely and accessible communication between staff and students. A review of the assessment feedback provided to students through AUB's online system for student submission, marking and feedback demonstrates a consistent and systematic approach, with feedback closely aligned to published marking rubrics and offering clear, analytical commentary to support student understanding and progression. The examples reviewed provide evidence that assessors not only justify the marks awarded but also offer constructive advice for future improvement, reflecting good practice in both formative and summative assessment as outlined in institutional policy and self-evaluation. AUB's quality assurance framework places significant emphasis on the continuous review of assessment processes and the importance of student feedback in shaping the learning experience.

20. During the review meeting with students, some participants expressed concerns that feedback can be inconsistent and cursory, with limited feedforward value to inform their next steps. The review team considered this information carefully, reviewed key documentation and had a demonstration of the online feedback system. The review team concluded that the documentary evidence and direct observation by the team did not indicate a systemic issue in this regard and instead point to feedback as a strength of the institution's assessment practice. However, the review team **recommend** that, while evidence suggests that the quality of feedback is well-embedded and effective, AUB extend ongoing monitoring and dialogue with students to identify and address where there may be individual issues.
21. The external examiners' reports summary confirms that assessment practices are appropriate and fair. Student feedback mechanisms are well-established, clear, and understood by students, including the National Student Survey, the AUB Student Perception Survey and Course Partnership Groups. The Mitigation Policy shows a student-centred approach to assessment, with a focus on supporting students through extensions rather than adjusting marks, which in the view of the team facilitates fair treatment for all students.
22. Student choice is embedded through project units where students complete Learning Agreements that set out how they plan to demonstrate learning outcomes. This approach allows students to select topics that interest them, and methodologies suited to their individual learning styles, which is particularly effective in creative disciplines. The Course Partnership Group feedback demonstrates that students value this flexibility and personalisation of their learning experience.
23. Staffing and staff development is a key feature of AUB's approach to student centred learning. For example, the Senior Lecturer Person Specification requires expertise in inclusive teaching and active learning strategies and postholders are expected to demonstrate 'effective, flexible teaching strategies and good management of the assessment process, assisting with the development and implementation of good practice in assessment'. Ongoing training and support for teaching staff, through strategically targeted Continuous Professional Development and the use of the relaunched peer observation scheme, encourages the sharing of effective practice across the institution. In addition, the annual Learning and Teaching Symposia, which is very much valued by teaching staff, also provide platforms for staff to discuss and disseminate innovative approaches. These activities are designed to ensure that teaching remains responsive to student needs and that staff are supported in developing their pedagogical skills. AUB's approach is characterised by a willingness to adapt and enhance its practices in response to student and staff feedback, as well as ongoing monitoring of outcomes.
24. Overall, the review team concluded that that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach. The review team therefore concludes that the provider **meets** this Standard.

## 1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

**Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.**

### Findings

25. The review team found that AUB's approach to student recruitment, admissions, and support is underpinned by transparent policies, inclusive practices, and clearly defined procedures to appropriately facilitate the full student lifecycle. The publicly available Admissions Policy, approved by Academic Board, outlines the institution's mission to support progression. The policy aligns with the AUB's Access and Participation Plan and is accompanied by an Equality Impact Assessment. In addition to standard admissions criteria, it was clear that AUB provides pathways for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), including Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), as outlined in the dedicated policy. Upon completion, students receive a formal certificate and transcript detailing award title, level, and credit, aligned with sector and regulatory requirements.
26. Undergraduate applications are submitted through UCAS, while direct applications can be made via the AUB website. The review team were able to confirm that applicants under the age of 18 are subject to a clear institutional statement regarding AUB's Admissions Policy that applies equally to domestic and international students, and that applicants who meet contextual indicators automatically receive an interview or portfolio review and may receive offers with up to two-grade reductions, provided they meet GCSE English and Maths requirements and core course expectations. Where unsuccessful, applicants may be offered a place on the Foundation Diploma in Art and Design, ensuring continued access to the creative education pathways on offer.
27. The review team considered that the student support system surrounding the admissions and induction processes was comprehensive with, for example, pre-sessional English provision offered to international students within one International English Language Testing System (IELTS) band of the expected standard. AUB also offers detailed financial support information on its website. AUB's Access and Participation Plan, overseen by a cross-institutional steering group with student representation, outlines a targeted programme of outreach for under-represented groups. This includes funded summer residentials, one-to-one portfolio support, mentoring, and engagement events. In the view of the team, such initiatives exemplify AUB's commitment to social mobility and are well-regarded by students.
28. Student feedback gathered through review meetings revealed satisfaction with the availability and clarity of support information during induction. Students met by the team valued the friendly, knowledgeable staff and appreciated initiatives such as the "Quickscan" dyslexia screening, pre-arrival information, and induction resources. The collaborative delivery of induction by academic and professional services staff ensures that all students receive structured orientation through welcome packs, timetabled

activities, and access to tailored transition support where needed. The involvement and embedding of student support services throughout induction provides an enhanced experience for new students and is considered an area of **good practice** by the review team.

29. Similarly, Offer-Holder Days provide prospective students with a comprehensive and engaging introduction to AUB. Through documentation and multiple meetings during the visit, the review team heard that staff across departments work together on campus tours, talks, and course-level sessions, to provide early clarity on expectations, structures, and available support. The collaborative effort of all stakeholders across AUB in the design and delivery of offer holder days provide potential students with a holistic view of the opportunities and support open to them and is also recognised by the review team as an area of **good practice**.
30. Student support services are well-integrated across the institution. Academic and wellbeing support is available via Student Services, including additional workshops for English as a Second Language (ESL), time management, and critical thinking. Subject librarians play a proactive role in supporting academic development through one-to-one tutorials and workshops on referencing, research strategies, and evaluating information. Information on these services reviewed by the team is consistently presented across undergraduate and postgraduate handbooks, as well as on the website, the virtual learning environment (VLE) and myAUB, AUB's digital information repository.
31. In meetings with AUB staff, the review team heard evidence that the Disability and Wellbeing teams provide confidential 1:1 support to students who disclose a disability and that, on enrolment, all students are invited to complete a Quickscreen screening to assess learning preferences and potential indicators of specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia. Where appropriate, referrals are made to an educational psychologist. The resulting guidance is used to agree reasonable adjustments, which are recorded on a student's dashboard and shared with academic staff to inform inclusive practice.
32. AUB's commitment to employability is further demonstrated through the planned introduction of a placement year for all undergraduate programmes, with the first placements scheduled for 2026-27. AUB demonstrated that this initiative is supported by the LTAF and informed by ongoing collaboration with Industry Patrons, who contribute to course development and delivery.
33. The AUB's regulatory framework is communicated through the Regulations Handbooks for undergraduate, postgraduate taught, and online programmes, along with concise "quick guide" summaries. These documents demonstrate that clear guidance is provided on academic processes, including assessment, credits, referrals, mitigating circumstances, and qualification criteria. Students are provided with timely information on assessment criteria and academic integrity expectations through the institutional VLE. The review team confirmed that information includes a standardised set of course information, jargon busters, and weekly schedule updates. Some staff communicate expectations via Friday emails and maintain lesson planning through VLE templates, fostering transparency and autonomy, particularly in the later stages of study.

34. In meetings with students, those who had applied through alternative routes or taken gap years noted that, while deferral and re-entry processes were generally supportive, they experienced some challenges related to late communication about accommodation and registration. Similarly, although services such as Careers and Disability Support were praised by those who accessed them, a few students reported initial difficulty locating these services, often only discovering them through peers or after personal disclosure. On further exploration, students noted that communication was often by email which student did not access as readily as other media forms. While the AUB makes considerable efforts to communicate through email, social media, and its digital platforms, some students described relying on word-of-mouth to locate help. The review team **recommends** AUB reviews its methods of communication with students, both those currently enrolled and those joining following deferral, to ensure more effective dissemination of information through multiple methods.
35. AUB's Appeals Policy for Higher Education Taught Courses outlines the processes available to students who wish to challenge assessment outcomes and provides clear information on the routes for challenge. Grounds for appeal include previously undisclosed mitigating circumstances, procedural irregularities, or administrative errors. Students studying at partner institutions follow the approved appeals procedures of those organisations, with oversight and escalation routes to AUB. Research degree students are directed to the University of the Arts London's (UAL) appeals process as the awarding body. Similarly, the Student Complaints Procedure, supported by detailed guidance, enables students to raise concerns about academic provision or institutional services. Early resolution is encouraged, and mediation support is available via trained staff. Where informal routes are not appropriate, students complete a formal complaints form. Academic integrity is addressed through the Academic Misconduct Policy, which clearly articulates behavioural expectations and outlines the procedures followed in cases of alleged misconduct, and updated Policy Statement which includes notice on use of AI in assessment.
36. The review team was confident that admissions and induction processes are supported by a clear regulatory framework and accessible student-facing policies. The documentary and verbal evidence examined by the review team confirms that AUB's practices are well-aligned with the expectations of ESG 1.4, with particularly notable strengths in the areas of student-centred induction and inclusive support. The review team concludes that AUB's systems for student admission, progression, recognition, and certification are clear, well-embedded, and demonstrably responsive to the evolving needs of its student community.
37. Overall, the review team concluded that pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle" are consistently applied. The review team therefore concludes that the provider **meets** this Standard.



## 1.5 Teaching staff

**Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff.**

### Findings

38. At the time of the review, the provider was registered with the Office for Students (OfS) and was not subject to any regulatory activity by the OfS regarding potential or actual non-compliance with the ongoing conditions of registration articulated in its regulatory framework, [Securing student success: Regulatory framework for higher education in England, November 2022](#).
39. QAA has undertaken a detailed mapping of the OfS conditions for quality and standards (B1-B5) against Part 1 of the ESG and consider there to be a partial overlap between the requirements of the regulatory body and the provisions within the ESG Standard 1.5. The provider was therefore only requested to provide information relating to the latter part of this standard namely *'They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff'*.
40. AUB demonstrates a strong commitment to fair and transparent staff recruitment processes, as is evidenced by its comprehensive Recruitment Policy and Procedure documents, alongside its Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan 2030. The Recruitment Policy demonstrates that clear principles are outlined that are aimed at attracting and retaining high-calibre staff while ensuring fairness and transparency. The policy emphasises equality of opportunity, requiring all recruitment activities to comply with employment law and best practice, and explicitly prohibits discrimination based on protected characteristics. It further highlights the AUB's commitment to disabled applicants, guaranteeing interviews for those who meet the essential criteria for a role and providing reasonable adjustments throughout the recruitment process, reflecting its Disability Confident Employer status.
41. The Recruitment Procedure operationalises these principles, outlining a rigorous and structured process that spans from identifying resourcing needs to making employment offers. This process requires the use of updated job descriptions, diverse interview panels, and predetermined evaluation criteria to minimise potential bias. Vacancies are advertised both internally and externally to attract a broad talent pool, with careful attention given to avoiding discriminatory language. Shortlisting and interviews also follow a standardised approach, with evidence of panels using structured scoring systems to facilitate transparency and fairness.
42. A Staffing Request Form is systematically used to justify and approve all staffing requests. For example, staff replacement requests must include an explanation of the role's criticality to curriculum delivery or the student experience, while requests for new posts require evidence of increased student demand or external funding. This rigorous

justification process prevents arbitrary recruitment decisions and ensures that resources are allocated where they are most needed.

43. The team reviewed the standardised job descriptions and person specifications for Lecturer and Senior Lecturer roles and found that they further promote fair and transparent recruitment processes at AUB by facilitating consistency, objectivity, and equity in candidate evaluation, establishing clear expectations regarding the qualifications, skills, and responsibilities required for each role.
44. The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan 2030 further embeds equity and inclusion into recruitment practices by including targets to increase workforce diversity, such as raising ethnic minority and disabled staff representation. Training for recruitment panels on inclusive practices has already been introduced, and AUB aims to achieve Race Equality Charter accreditation by Advance HE soon.
45. AUB's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Policy provides a framework that enables staff to achieve excellence in their roles, maintain professional currency, and align with AUB's mission, vision, and values. This policy is designed to ensure there is a structured approach for decision making and support regarding CPD, encompassing both formal and structured activities as well as informal and self-directed learning which contribute to maintaining or enhancing relevant staff skills and knowledge. For example, the policy identifies a wide range of professional development opportunities available to staff, including shadowing, coaching, mentoring, peer learning, committee memberships, pursuing external qualifications, conference attendance, and participation in short courses. CPD is integrated into AUB's Staff Performance Review process, enabling staff to identify potential professional development opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge while ensuring that performance issues are addressed fairly and consistently.
46. In meetings with staff, recently appointed academic colleagues described to the review team how they were supported to obtain a teaching qualification or Fellowship of Advance HE within three years of appointment. This opportunity is now available through a newly introduced Postgraduate Certificate in Creative Teaching and Learning Design programme that offers a progression route to Postgraduate Diploma and masters qualifications, reinforcing AUB's commitment to the CPD of its staff. In addition, AUB has recently received accreditation by Advance HE for its Fellowship Scheme. Staff described the opportunities that CPD have given them to adopt innovation in their teaching, to share good practice, and reflect on teaching practice across AUB. The review team concluded that the opportunities and support provided to new members of academic staff, particularly the newly established HEA fellowship programme facilitates the speedy development of skills and knowledge is an example of **good practice**.
47. The institutional peer observation 'Teaching Review' scheme further reinforces AUB's culture of reflective practice and knowledge dissemination, particularly in identifying and sharing good practice and pedagogical innovation. By focusing on innovative practice, such as student-led online sessions or using digital platforms to enhance student engagement, the scheme explicitly promotes the exploration of new teaching methods and technologies, aligning with AUB's strategic priorities.

48. The review team reviewed records of AUB's recent continuing professional development opportunities. These include staff pursuing teaching qualifications and external training programmes, such as Advance HE's Race Equity training and the Council for Higher Education in Art and Design Technical Alliance Leadership Programme, alongside mandatory training in safeguarding, health and safety, and UK General Data Protection Regulation compliance. AUB also provides extensive CPD opportunities for teaching staff via proprietary online platforms, as well as training in new technologies.
49. The review team met with academic and professional support staff during the review visit, who provided examples of the opportunities available for them to develop their teaching practice and engage in scholarly activity, including research, such as emerging technologies through university-led forums like the 'Artificial Intelligence (AI) Working Group' and 'Innovation Lab' initiatives. Teaching staff are particularly encouraged to explore pedagogical innovation, notably through AUB's biannual Learning and Teaching Symposia. Staff also confirmed that AUB actively encourages innovation in teaching and the use of new technologies, and that the institutional peer observation scheme supports their CPD.
50. Overall, the review team concluded that AUB applies fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of its staff through its systematic use of clear policies and structured staff procedures, underpinned by a strong commitment to equity and inclusion. Staff development is supported through a comprehensive range of formal and informal professional learning opportunities, a structured performance review process, and externally accredited teaching qualifications. The review team therefore concludes that the provider **meets** this Standard.

## 1.6 Learning resources and student support

**Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided.**

### Findings

51. At the time of the review, the provider was registered with the Office for Students (OfS) was not subject to any regulatory activity by the OfS regarding potential or actual non-compliance with the ongoing conditions of registration articulated in its regulatory framework, [Securing student success: Regulatory framework for higher education in England, November 2022](#).
52. QAA has undertaken a detailed mapping of the OfS conditions for quality and standards (B1-B5) against Part 1 of the ESG and consider there to be a comprehensive overlap between the requirements of the regulatory body and the provisions within the ESG Standard 1.6. The provider was not therefore requested to provide information for this Standard due to the unnecessary duplication of assessment that this presents.
53. The QAA considers therefore that the provider **meets** this Standard on account of the provider fulfilling its obligations to the regulator in England with regards to the OfS ongoing conditions for quality and standards. Nothing in this assessment should be taken as evidence or assurance that OfS conditions are met as that is a matter for the OfS.

## 1.7. Information management

**Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.**

### Findings

54. The review team found that AUB systematically gathers and analyses key programme performance data, such as student referral, continuation, and completion rates, as well as graduate progression statistics, to inform its quality management processes. Additionally, student satisfaction data, sourced from the National Student Survey (NSS) and the AUB Student Perception Survey, are systematically collected, and analysed to evaluate performance in relation to the student experience, supporting informed decision-making and identifying areas of success as well as those requiring improvement through its committee reporting structures.
55. These metrics underpin both AUB's Annual Course Review process and the Annual Reports presented by the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee to the Academic Board on the academic standards and quality of higher education awards, demonstrating that information management plays a central role in AUB's approach to maintaining appropriate oversight of academic standards and the enhancement of the student experience.
56. The Annual Course Review process is designed to be highly data-driven, incorporating both quantitative performance metrics and qualitative insights to evaluate the performance of programmes. The review team scrutinised the most recent Annual Course Review reports for the BA (Hons) Film Production, BA (Hons) Fine Art, and BA (Hons) Model Making programmes, and found that AUB consistently adopts a structured, action-oriented approach to the use of student data. Drawing on a range of sources, including student feedback, external examiner reports, retention rates, and employability metrics, each report uses a 'Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats' (SWOT) framework to analyse the programme's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The associated action plans further illustrate a cyclical process of evaluation and improvement, with actions from previous years marked as 'met' or 'not met', thereby ensuring both accountability and continuity. The team thus formed the view that this approach supports the development of timely interventions and ensures that emerging trends and issues are promptly identified and addressed.
57. The review team also examined a sample of datasets for the programmes mentioned above, which are provided to academic staff to support the completion of their Annual Course Review reports. The team found that AUB systematically tracks key performance indicators and compares them against both internal targets and external benchmarks. For example, the datasets demonstrate consistent monitoring of retention and referral rates, average marks, and NSS scores across multiple academic years. This longitudinal analysis enables AUB to identify performance trends, such as the improvement in Film Production's retention rate from 87% in 2020-21 to 97% in 2022-23, exceeding AUB's

95% target. NSS scores are also rigorously analysed, with results benchmarked against Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) standards.

58. The team reviewed AUB's Annual Reports from 2022 to 2024 and found clear evidence of a data-driven approach to managing programmes and evaluating student outcomes. The reports include systematic analyses of cohort data, integrating key performance indicators such as continuation, completion, and graduate progression rates. These metrics are tracked over time and benchmarked against national thresholds set by the OfS. The Annual Reports also include disaggregated analyses by subject, ethnicity, and disability, demonstrating AUB's commitment to monitoring outcomes across diverse student groups and using the findings to inform institutional decision making. Similarly, the Annual Reports detail the oversight of validation partners like the Northern School of Art and Bournemouth and Poole College.
59. AUB's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion is also underpinned by its systematic review of student performance and satisfaction by demographic group. For example, the review team found that the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee undertakes an annual analysis of performance disparities, including concerns about the awarding gap for Black and other minoritised ethnic groups of students, in alignment with AUB's Access and Participation Plan.
60. The EDI Plan Progress Reports from 2024 and 2025 further demonstrate that AUB systematically analyses and applies relevant information to manage its activities effectively, enhance accountability for meeting targets, and drive meaningful institutional change. For example, AUB monitors workforce and student diversity targets, such as representation of disabled and ethnic minority groups, and reviews recruitment practices to promote inclusivity. The reports also highlight specific actions, including updating diversity monitoring forms to capture socio-economic background data and exploring the use of proprietary AI tools to assess job descriptions for potential bias.
61. The 'Your Voice, Your Curriculum' Participatory Research Project (2023-24) is a strong example of how AUB collects, analyses, and applies relevant information to manage its programmes effectively. For example, the project engaged minoritised ethnic students and those with disabilities or neurodivergent conditions through structured focus groups, using thematic analysis to identify key barriers and enablers in their learning experiences, ensuring their perspectives inform course content. It generated actionable insights beyond the scope of quantitative surveys, highlighting areas for improvement such as staff training on disability inclusion, better access to disclosure information for visiting tutors, and the need for more diverse industry role models. Students valued the opportunity to share their experiences, fostering a greater sense of belonging and institutional trust. The review team noted that this was a time limited project that had now ended and **recommends** that AUB build upon the learning, outcomes, and successes of the 'Your Voice Your Curriculum' participatory research project to ensure that its impact is further exploited and embedded into the culture of the provider.
62. Overall, the review team concluded that AUB collects, analyses, and uses relevant data effectively to manage its programmes and other activities. This is supported by AUB's structured and systematic approach to information management, underpinned by robust and timely enhancement actions that ensure effective oversight of both programme-level

and institutional activities. The review team therefore concludes that the provider **meets** this Standard.

## 1.8 Public information

**Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.**

### Findings

63. AUB has appropriate frameworks in place to ensure that comprehensive, accurate, and accessible information is made publicly available through a variety of platforms, including its website, printed materials, and social media. Prospective and current students, staff, as well as external stakeholders, can access detailed course information via dedicated web pages. Each course page provides an overview informed by the programme specification, outlines of each year of study, staff profiles, examples of previous student work, student testimonials, and course-related costs. Accompanying videos further illustrate the course experience, and a chat function is available via Unibuddy, enabling real-time interaction with trained student ambassadors.
64. AUB's commitment to transparency is further demonstrated through the publication of key institutional documents such as the Degree Outcomes Statement, which includes data disaggregated by protected characteristics. The statement outlines the classification profile for awards, contextualises assessment outcomes, and describes the governance processes in place to ensure academic standards. In addition, AUB publishes terms and conditions of enrolment, which link directly to relevant and up-to-date policy documents, ensuring prospective students are fully informed prior to entry.
65. Students and staff confirmed that the website is their key access point for information, particularly during the application and induction stages. Of the student representatives with whom the review team spoke, they heard appreciation for the clear layout and ease of access to bursary information and pre-arrival content. However, some students noted challenges in navigating the AUB app and locating the correct contact points for specific queries; while once directed to the appropriate person, support was reported as responsive and effective.
66. In the view of the team, AUB operates an effective internal process for ensuring public-facing course information remains current. Course Leaders are prompted annually, typically in the summer term, to review and update course cost information, which is then reflected in public materials such as welcome letters and website listings. These updates may be discussed with students to maintain transparency around additional costs and optional elements such as overseas trips. Minor web content changes can be submitted directly by departmental staff to the Digital Team, with approval processes varying depending on the scale of the change, enabling a devolved yet quality-assured approach for responsiveness and accountability. The Marketing and Communications Team maintains oversight of filmed content for course promotion. Course Leads collaborate with the Photo and Video Team to co-develop briefs for new content. Drafts are reviewed and refined before publication on the website or social media channels. The review team



noted the breadth and professionalism of this approach, with high-quality video materials available for most programmes.

67. AUB's use of Unibuddy to connect applicants with trained student ambassadors was also noted as an effective feature of its public engagement. Ambassadors are recruited via a formal process led by Course Leaders and professional staff, and they receive structured training from the Digital Marketing team. Training materials include FAQs and key links to ensure consistent and informative responses. The system is monitored, and ambassadors are expected to respond within 48 hours, with escalation pathways available for more complex enquiries.
68. In meetings with academic and professional services staff, it was noted that an institutional priority has been the maintenance of a unified information framework, with systems and communications managed by designated owners. This strategic approach enables consistency across public and internal platforms and supports students in finding accurate information when needed. Some Industry Patrons had contributed to promotional videos or course briefings and felt well-informed about programme aims and developments. There was, however, an appetite for increased collaboration in shaping course content and enhancing visibility of industry engagement in public materials.
69. Overall, the evidence indicates that AUB's approach to public information is well-developed, strategically coordinated, and actively maintained. The integration of digital and print communications, responsive internal workflows, and multi-channel engagement mechanisms represent a strength of institutional practice. Continued efforts to clarify signposting and expand collaborative promotion with industry are encouraged to enhance the experience further.
70. Overall, the review team concluded that AUB publishes information, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily. The review team therefore concludes that the provider **meets** this Standard.

## 1.9 Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes

**Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.**

### Findings

71. In key documents and through meetings with staff, the review team found that AUB has established comprehensive processes for the monitoring and periodic review of its programmes, to ensure that they meet their intended objectives and respond to student and societal needs. Their processes facilitate continuous improvement, with planned actions communicated to relevant stakeholders.
72. AUB's Annual Course Review process, discussed earlier in this report, is a key mechanism for ongoing monitoring, combining quantitative data analysis with qualitative reflection on disciplinary developments. Each course formulates a strategic SWOT analysis and action plan as part of this process, which is monitored throughout the year and formally reviewed annually. Evidence confirms that these reports are subsequently scrutinised by School Boards with oversight by AUB's Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee. Progress on action plans arising from the Annual Course Review process is communicated to students through termly programme meetings and via student representatives participating in Course Planning Groups.
73. The review team reviewed a sample of recent Annual Course Review reports and the minutes of Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee meetings where these reports were considered, confirming that AUB takes a systematic approach to continuous improvement and remains responsive to the needs of students and wider society. The reviews go beyond the mere identification of issues, resulting in concrete action plans that lead to measurable enhancements. For example, the BA (Hons) Film Production programme recently responded to low NSS scores in assessment and student voice by introducing staff training, clarifying learning outcomes, and enhancing feedback mechanisms. Likewise, the BA (Hons) Fine Art programme addressed issues such as split-site studio access and low student retention rates by relocating teaching to the main campus and establishing bi-weekly team meetings to improve communication with students.
74. In addition to the Annual Course Review, all programmes undergo formal periodic reviews. These periodic programme reviews incorporate internal as well as external panel members, who provide disciplinary expertise, enabling the academic coherence, currency, and relevance of the curriculum to be considered.
75. While the course review cycle is seven years, to enable flexibility in response to the new regulatory framework for higher education in England and to changes in the external

environment, the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee introduced a 'triggering' mechanism allowing for earlier formal reviews if, for example, substantial programme changes are being planned, if the Director of a programme requests an earlier review, or if there were perceived risks to a programme's academic quality or standards. Students and other stakeholders reported that they are kept informed about the outcomes of periodic programme reviews through communication from academic programme leaders, discussions at Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee meetings, and updates shared by the Students' Union Sabbatical Officers via student representatives, student emails, social media communications, and a monthly student newsletter.

76. The recent implementation of the LTAF required all programmes at AUB to undergo periodic review in 2024 (see also 1.3 and Enhancement Initiative 1). This initiative ensured that LTAF expectations were fully embedded across all programmes for new starters in 2024-25 and facilitated the thematic identification of strengths and areas for development across the whole academic portfolio, reflecting a systematic and strategic approach to programme monitoring and review.
77. Notable themes from recent periodic review include strong industry engagement, particularly in programmes where students benefit from industry-relevant projects and professional networking opportunities. Collaborative learning also emerged as a key strength, with initiatives like the 'Creative Match' scheme in BA (Hons) Commercial Photography fostering interdisciplinary teamwork. AUB's supportive and student-centred learning environment was consistently praised, with staff recognised for their passion and dedication. Courses were further commended for their alignment with the LTAF, particularly in promoting graduate employability and transferable skills. Alongside these strengths, the review process also identified areas for continued improvement: some courses were advised to align learning outcomes more closely with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) to ensure greater academic rigour and consistency. From meetings with staff, the review team understood that this had arisen because of all courses being reviewed and revalidated in a short time. They were reassured that work was being completed to confirm alignment with the FHEQ and consistency across AUB's portfolio of taught awards. Other recommendations included updating reading lists to maintain relevance, and strengthening the alignment between assessments, unit descriptors, and learning outcomes to provide greater clarity to students.
78. By addressing these areas while building on its recognised strengths, AUB demonstrates a proactive and reflective approach to the ongoing monitoring and periodic review of its programmes, offering a structured roadmap for continuous enhancement.
79. To ensure consistency in assessment and uphold academic standards across its undergraduate programmes, AUB conducts an Annual Verification Exercise. Led by an Academic Director and involving a small panel of academic staff, the exercise reviews a representative sample of student work from across all undergraduate programmes. Its primary aim is to confirm the consistent application of marking criteria within and across grade boundaries. Through a structured and cross-disciplinary approach, the exercise identifies both strengths and areas for improvement in assessment practices. Key observations have included variations in the clarity and specificity of student feedback, the number of learning outcomes assessed, and the appropriate use of digital tools. The

documentation demonstrates that the Annual Verification Exercise also serves as a valuable calibration tool, enabling academic staff to reflect on and align their assessment and feedback practices. In addition to supporting consistency, the exercise informs institution-wide enhancements, such as refining feedback to be more structured, specific, and student centred, thereby improving learning outcomes and student satisfaction. The review team formed the view that the annual verification exercise enables staff at AUB to calibrate their approach to assessment and feedback of their students and is an example of **good practice**.

80. Overall, the review team concluded that AUB monitors and periodically reviews its programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society, and that these reviews lead to continuous improvement of the programmes, with resulting actions communicated widely. AUB has established a comprehensive and structured approach to programme monitoring and review, integrating Annual Course Reviews, periodic programme reviews, and an institution-wide Annual Verification Exercise. These processes promote academic quality, consistency in assessment, and responsiveness to student and industry needs. AUB's focus on continuous improvement is evidenced by clear action planning, stakeholder engagement, and good practice in areas such as curriculum review and assessment calibration. Collectively, these measures reflect a proactive, reflective, and student-centred ethos that underpins AUB's commitment to academic excellence. The review team therefore concludes that the provider **meets** this Standard.

## 1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance

**Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.**

### Findings

81. Under the OfS regulatory framework, the regulator in England undertakes a risk-based approach to regulation and providers are therefore not subject to mandatory external quality assurance on a scheduled cyclical basis.
82. EQR takes account of the requirements of the legislative framework through its eligibility checks and observance of the regulatory framework that governs providers in England in offering providers the opportunity to undertake cyclical external quality assurance on a voluntary basis.
83. By undertaking this Elective Quality Review, AUB has demonstrated a commitment to a cyclical external review process by an independent external quality assurance body on the European Quality Assurance Register. AUB is therefore part of an external quality assurance process that enables the effectiveness of its internal quality assurance to be scrutinised and published to assure stakeholders of the quality of higher education. It also enables improvements to be identified and ensures that progress made against recommendations for change are taken into account in preparation for the next review.
84. The QAA considers therefore that AUB **meets** this Standard on account of the institution committing to a process of external cyclical review designed to meet the requirements of the Standard.

## Enhancement initiatives

### Commentary on institutional approach to enhancement

85. The Curriculum Innovation Group, which makes recommendations directly to the Vice-Chancellors Group, is the primary forum for the discussion of potential enhancements. It has responsibilities that emphasise development of initiatives and enhancement work in teaching, learning and student engagement and initiates projects and programmes intended to enhance AUB's capabilities, performance, and pedagogic innovation across all parts of the organisation. For example, it was the forum at which enhancement initiatives such as the LTAF, and the Industry Patron Scheme, were discussed and agreed.

### 1 - Development and implementation of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework (LTAF)

#### Findings

86. The LTAF was introduced as a central enhancement initiative at AUB to unify and clarify its approach to learning, teaching, and assessment. Developed as part of the Portfolio Plan, the LTAF articulates AUB's approach to learning and teaching, and provides a single, authoritative point of reference for both staff and students regarding expectations for contact hours, assessment, and feedback. The framework draws directly on AUB's values and strategic vision, aiming to educate the "whole student" in a holistic and consistent manner. Its creation responded to a recognised need for greater clarity and parity in the student experience, particularly after evidence from periodic reviews and NSS highlighted inconsistencies in course delivery and feedback between programmes. The LTAF represents a deliberate and structured effort to ensure all students benefit from a coherent and equitable academic environment.
87. The evidence demonstrates that the LTAF has been developed and implemented through a thorough and consultative process. Staff spoke very highly of the initiative and now regularly use it as a central pillar of all discussions, but particularly for teaching, learning and assessment activity at AUB. Multiple members of staff commented that if an activity or initiative does not align with the LTAF then it would be rejected.
88. Initially, the draft framework was shared with academic staff, professional services, and student representatives, and discussed at the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee, with feedback from staff focus groups and student sabbatical officers directly shaping its final form. Following its approval, all courses underwent periodic review to ensure alignment with the LTAF's principles, and the themes highlighted from this process, for example industry engagement, collaborative opportunities, student-centred learning, and sustainability and social responsibility, shows the framework's tangible influence on course design and delivery across the institution. Notably, meetings with staff at the visit confirmed that the LTAF has enabled greater consistency in student expectations regarding contact hours and assessment, while still allowing for disciplinary

distinctiveness. Examples include the alignment of units to promote collaboration, the integration of disciplines within the Bournemouth Film School, and the introduction of an optional work placement year across the undergraduate portfolio. These developments indicate that the LTAF is achieving its aim of supporting both consistency and innovation across AUB's academic provision.

89. While it is too early for comprehensive evaluation data on the LTAF's long-term impact, initial feedback and early indicators suggest positive outcomes. AUB acknowledges that consistency is a critical factor for students, and the LTAF has already created much greater clarity about reasonable expectations for contact hours, assessment, and feedback. Staff have been supported in the implementation of the framework through professional development activities and resources, and the framework's influence is being monitored through periodic reviews and ongoing consultation with stakeholders. Further information is needed on how students themselves have experienced the changes, and on the specific impact on student satisfaction and achievement, but the review team considered the LTAF to be an example of **good practice** for its systematic approach, clear articulation of pedagogical principles, collaborative development process and its subsequent employment in a university-wide approach to review of the taught portfolio which had resulted in a renewed, congruent and coherent set of courses.

## 2 - Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI): embedding within the work of AUB

90. The establishment of AUB's AI Working Group represents a strategic institutional enhancement initiative designed to explore and guide the ethical and pedagogical use of generative artificial intelligence across teaching, learning, and assessment. Convened in response to the increasing presence of AI tools in education and industry, the group brings together academic, technical, and professional services staff and students to develop a unifying position that ensures the effective integration of generative AI without compromising academic integrity. Its work has resulted in the creation of a dedicated AI Policy Statement and associated guidance for both students and staff, which articulate AUB's expectations for ethical use, clarify definitions, and link explicitly to the Academic Misconduct Policy.
91. This initiative is aligned with the principles of the LTAF, particularly in its focus on academic judgement, assessment clarity, and consistency of student experience. The development process has been iterative and consultative: the policy and guidance were informed by sector research and shaped by internal working group discussions, including engagement with staff and students through symposia, an exhibition, and user groups. Dissemination has included presentations at the Learning and Teaching Conference, workshops with academic teams, and student-facing sessions exploring the creative and critical implications of AI in practice.
92. The AI guidance is being embedded through multiple channels, including curriculum workshops, assessment discussions, and knowledge-sharing events featuring external speakers from industry. While students expressed interest in the initiative and praised the clarity of the guidance, feedback also indicated varied awareness levels and

highlighted the importance of continued engagement and support. The AI Working Group meets regularly throughout the academic year and has also contributed to the launch of a new Student Literacy Framework, which is designed to support student understanding of assessment language, academic expectations, and constructive feedback. This framework aligns with broader institutional values around assessment literacy and academic standards.

93. As the policy is still in the early stages of implementation, further evaluation is required to understand its full impact on practice and student outcomes. However, the strategic institutional approach, clear policy articulation, and efforts to embed AI education into the curriculum indicate that AUB's response to the challenges and opportunities of generative AI constitutes a considered and timely enhancement initiative.

### 3 - Introduction of Industry Patron Scheme

#### Findings

94. The introduction of the Industry Patron Scheme at AUB in the 2023-24 academic year represents a significant strategic initiative aimed at strengthening the integration of industry expertise and practice within undergraduate programmes. Designed as part of a broader enhancement agenda, the scheme supports the LTAF, particularly in preparing graduates for diverse career pathways within the creative industries. In alignment with AUB's strategic objective to positively impact society, industry and stakeholders through relevant practice and research, the scheme places employer engagement and professional readiness at the heart of AUB's approach to curriculum design and delivery.
95. Under this scheme, each undergraduate course is supported by a designated 'Industry Patron', a professional or organisation drawn from a relevant creative discipline. These Patrons are tasked with ensuring that the curriculum remains closely aligned with current sector practices, innovations, and the needs of the future workforce. They contribute to programmes in a variety of ways, such as advising on curriculum development, leading guest lectures, offering mentorship opportunities, and co-creating live project briefs that mirror the challenges and dynamics of a professional environment. The review team found that this approach supports the practical application of learning and enables students to gain first-hand insights into the creative industries.
96. The implementation of the scheme was informed by recommendations from the Curriculum Innovation Group, which identified the need for stronger and more formalised links between academic learning and professional practice as a means of meeting the objectives set out in AUB's LTAF. The scheme also supports AUB's existing mechanisms for quality assurance and curriculum enhancement, ensuring that courses remain responsive to both student expectations and evolving industry standards. Since the launch of the scheme, Industry Patrons have engaged actively with students across a range of undergraduate programmes, providing tangible opportunities for professional development and authentic learning (see paragraphs 11, 19, 35 and 72 for examples of impact of the scheme).



97. To further integrate the scheme into AUB's enhancement framework, a dedicated networking event was held in April 2024, bringing together 12 Patrons and 19 academic staff members from across the institution. The event was designed to promote meaningful dialogue between students, staff, and industry professionals, enabling them to share insights, strengthen collaborative relationships, and identify opportunities for curriculum development. AUB has confirmed its intention to repeat the event in 2025, with plans for expansion in future years to maximise the scheme's impact and reach.
98. The April 2024 networking event also provided a platform for direct student engagement with industry professionals. A graduate intern panel discussion featured former AUB students reflecting on their transition from university to the workplace. These graduates highlighted the critical role of mentorship, confidence-building, and the ability to understand organisational contexts when starting their careers. They also emphasised the importance of making values-led career decisions, insights which were particularly resonant for current students navigating their own professional journeys. The review team reinforced the value of the Industry Patron Scheme in preparing students not only for employment, but for sustainable, meaningful careers in the creative sector.
99. Through active dialogue with Industry Patrons, students gained clarity on professional expectations, the value of their academic qualifications, and how best to prepare for roles in the creative industries. Patrons offered advice on CV preparation, portfolio presentation, and how to seek international opportunities, demonstrating the scheme's wider relevance in supporting global employability.
100. Though still in its early stages, the Industry Patron Scheme has already demonstrated its value in enhancing curriculum relevance, supporting graduate employability, and fostering lasting collaboration with industry professionals. External examiner reports have praised AUB for offering practical, professionally focused learning opportunities that contribute to strong graduate portfolios. The review team received confirmation that AUB is committed to expanding the scheme in the future and developing mechanisms to formally evaluate its impact.
101. The review team formed the view that by embedding meaningful industry engagement across all undergraduate courses, the scheme equips students with the insight, confidence, and adaptability needed to navigate the complexities of the creative sector and sustain long-term career success. The team concluded that the scheme's continued development reflects AUB's commitment to delivering an education that is both academically rigorous and rooted in real-world practice. Plans to grow the scheme, repeat networking events, and develop formal evaluation mechanisms underscore its significance as a core element of AUB's educational and strategic vision. The review team concluded that, due to the opportunities provided to students through the Industry Patrons scheme for professional development, authentic learning, and to gain clarity on professional expectations, together with helping students to develop the insight, confidence, and adaptability needed to navigate the complexities of the creative sector this is an example of **good practice**.

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