



## Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of KLC School of Design, June 2018

### 1 Outcome of the monitoring visit

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit, the review team concludes that KLC School of Design (the School) has made commendable progress with continuing to monitor, evaluate and enhance its higher education provision from the June 2017 [monitoring visit](#).

### 2 Changes since the last QAA monitoring visit

2 There have been no major changes since the review visit in May 2016 or the subsequent monitoring visit in June 2017. The School has approval from the University of Brighton to offer six higher education programmes; a level five diploma offered in full-time, part-time and blended learning modes of delivery, a bachelor degree with honours, and a foundation degree offered through onsite and online modes of delivery. At the time of the visit there were 206 students enrolled on the higher education programmes, a 14 per cent increase since the 2017 monitoring visit.

### 3 Findings from the monitoring visit

3 The School has completed all actions arising from the June 2016 review. Matters identified in the June 2017 monitoring report as requiring further development have been taken to a successful conclusion. Virtual learning environment (VLE) development includes award-winning interactive online teaching (paragraph 4). Students and staff confirmed that engagement with employers and industry more generally is a key feature of the School's strategy (paragraph 4). Students are encouraged to provide formal and informal feedback and to participate in School-level committees to enhance the learning experience (paragraph 6). The School has developed a coherent approach to implementing its enhancement strategy statement (paragraph 7). The School has made significant progress in implementing and embedding a process for analysing, evaluating and acting on student data on retention and achievement (paragraphs 8 and 11). The School's approach to enhancement ensures that admission policies and the quality enhancement and assurance system are monitored and reviewed to continue to take full account of sector expectations (paragraphs 11 and 12).

4 The School continues to build on the features of good practice identified during the May 2016 review visit and the June 2017 monitoring visit. Deliberate steps taken to enhance the quality of existing interactive online teaching materials and methods led to the School winning two awards at the *Independent* Higher Education Awards ceremony in November 2017. Students indicated that all learning, teaching and assessment information they require is available on the VLE and stated that it is a user-friendly and effective resource. Online students continue to value the 'Coffee Shop Forum' facility which enables them to engage informally with other students and staff on a variety of topics. The School is working to enhance its VLE further by sharing videos of student presentations. Engagement with employers remains central to the Schools strategy and involvement with industry specialists continues to be a highlight for students. The School continues to invest in its Careers Service and students were unanimous in their praise for the support available.

5 The School has implemented the recommendations from the 2016 review. Matters noted during the 2017 monitoring visit as requiring further development to strengthen the impact on student engagement with their learning experience have been completed.

6 Student engagement in enhancement of their learning experience takes place at individual course level, and through a range of formal and informal feedback mechanisms. Events included activities to encourage interaction between the various course groups, for example, shared lunches and attendance at galleries of work put on by different cohorts. The training of student representatives is delivered consistently across the course groups and representatives can seek advice informally on their role from course leaders. Students commented that this arrangement reflects the practicalities and needs of the student cohort.

7 The School has developed a clear approach to enable its enhancement strategy to be implemented effectively which includes deliberate enhancement steps and associated measures of success. Activities to enhance student employment opportunities, including core skills development and tutor training, are discussed and monitored by Academic Board. Senior staff commented that the enhancement strategy is seen as a useful tool to encourage students and staff to engage with the School's development.

8 The 2017 monitoring report noted that the School had developed a process for analysing, evaluating and acting on student data on retention and achievement but that this had not been implemented fully. The process is now embedded firmly as part of the School's monitoring and reporting process. Course leaders analyse student retention, progression and achievement information provided by the School Registrar and their observations are taken to Academic Board for discussion. Academic Board use the statistical data to compare retention, achievement and employment information between courses and between cohorts within courses. Actions agreed by Academic Board as a result of their discussions are recorded within the School action plan and progress in addressing actions is monitored at subsequent Board meetings. Once data for 2018 is available the process will include year-on-year comparisons of data to enhance the process further.

9 As noted in the June 2017 monitoring report the School's admission process is aligned to the Expectation of the Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code), *Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education*. Applicants are assessed to ensure they have sufficient English language competence, prior qualifications and suitability to study and a genuine intention to study using interviews, spatial ability tests and creative exercises. Students confirmed that information on admission requirements is clearly and accurately presented on web pages and in promotional material.

10 As noted in the June 2017 monitoring report the School's quality assurance system ensures that the Expectations of the Quality Code, *Chapter B6: Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning* and *Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review* are met. During 2017 the School participated in the awarding body's curriculum design review. This included a review of all module descriptors and programme specifications which were then re-approved by an awarding body panel. As noted in paragraph 6, students are provided with effective and appropriate opportunities to enable them to engage with the School's quality assurance system. Onsite student engagement in quality processes has been enhanced through the introduction of weekly feedback sessions with course leaders to reflect on the past week and prepare for the coming week, known as 'This week next week' sessions.

11 In 2016-17 student achievement for the Diploma Interior Design (full-time) was 85 per cent (46 students from 54). Six students (11 per cent of original cohort) are continuing their studies while the remaining two have left the programme. Student achievement in 2015-16 was 79 per cent and in 2014-15, 94 per cent. Of the 2016-17 cohort for the blended

learning delivery mode, four students from 35 enrolments have transferred to other School courses with the remaining 31 (89 per cent) continuing their studies. Six students enrolled on the BA (Hons) Interior Design in 2016-17 of which five (83 per cent) successfully completed the programme. The FdA Interior Design enrolled 31 students in 2016-17 of which 30 (97 per cent) remain on the programme. Staff commented that the majority of students who discontinue their studies do so for financial or personal reasons associated with cohorts which tend to be mainly female and classed as mature students.

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

12 The School continues to use the Quality Code as a reference point to design policies and procedures for maintaining academic standards and quality. In addition, the School continues to demonstrate highly effective engagement with relevant external reference points through being an active member of, or linked to, a range of professional bodies and associations which enable it to keep up to date with current thinking, research and developments in the interior design field.

#### **5 Background to the monitoring visit**

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

14 The monitoring visit was carried out by Mr Mark Langley, Reviewer, and Mr Grant Horsburgh, Coordinator, on 19 June 2018.

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