



Higher Education Review (Foreign Providers) of NYU in London

March 2021

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About this review

This is a report of a Higher Education Review (Foreign Providers) conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at NYU in London. The review took place from 2 to 3 March 2021 and was conducted by a team of two reviewers, as follows:

- Barbara Howell
- Dr Terence Clifford-Amos.

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 (and the associated Core and Common practices) 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 (Foreign Providers) the QAA review team:

- makes judgements on
 - the quality of student learning opportunities
- provides a commentary on academic standards
- 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 \(Foreign Providers\)](#).³ For an explanation of terms see the glossary at the end of this report.

The impact of COVID-19

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the review of NYU London was subject to an interim outcome in June 2020 and was concluded in March 2021. The review was conducted online and included meetings with the senior, academic and support staff and with students. The scope of the evidence considered, and the nature of the judgements and operational milestones have remained the same but with some adjustments due to the online format and availability of students. A risk assessment was carried out prior to the review to identify and mitigate any potential risks. Annual monitoring will resume in 2021-22.

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 (Foreign Providers) handbook: www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/guidance/her-fp-handbook-for-providers.pdf

Key findings

Judgements

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

- The quality of student learning opportunities **meets** UK expectations.

The QAA review team also provided a commentary on academic standards.

- The provider satisfactorily manages its responsibilities for academic standards, as set out in contractual arrangements with its academic partners.

Good practice

The QAA review team identified the following feature of **good practice**.

- As a consequence of COVID-19, the innovative provision of internships undertaken by blended delivery enabling students to engage with employers with support from internship mentors. (Q8)

Recommendations

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

By September 2021:

- It is **advisable** that London partnership contracts are renegotiated and resumed as a matter of urgency. The formal agreements should set out the rights and obligations of all parties and should be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. (Q8)
- It is **advisable** that assessment feedback for all students is comprehensive, helpful and timely. (Q9)

About the provider

New York University in London (NYUL) is one of New York University's (NYU) Study Away sites. NYU validates all of the academic programmes taught at NYUL at undergraduate and graduate levels and is the awarding body. NYU in London was established in 1999 at 6 Bedford Square, London. The operations in London follows NYU's larger mission - for students to study in other countries as part of a global network designed to allow faculty and students to enrich their research and learning by offering immersion leading centres of thought with connections to the rest of the university. NYUL has a distinctive place within the global network with local responsibilities to ensure high-quality student learning.

In February 2020, it had 533 undergraduate students (including 70 Liberal Studies first years) and 11 masters students studying its programmes. In spring 2020, there were also 22 Graduate Research Institute (GRI) fellows - faculty and PhD research students who spend some time undertaking specific research at NYUL while studying at the NYU New York campus - based onsite for varying periods of time during the spring semester. The majority of undergraduate students on the NYUL programme study for one semester - fall (late August/early September until mid-December), or spring (late January until mid-May).⁴ Two programmes are taught for the full academic year: the Liberal Studies First Year Away Program and the MA programme in Historical and Sustainable Architecture.

The NYUL programme is under the management of the Director, assisted by an Associate Director, who has a staff of 29, of whom two are part-time. NYUL employs over 100 local faculty members on a part-time basis, mainly drawn from universities in the Greater London area. Academics are recruited locally in collaboration with academic colleagues at NYU.

In 2019, the arrangement to use laboratory facilities at Kings College ended and improved facilities have now been arranged with Birkbeck College.

Since the last review in 2019, NYUL has introduced additional programmes in Law, Creative Writing, Art History and Youth Culture.

Challenges facing NYUL include possible effects of Brexit and continuing concerns around the safety and security of students. While the first one is still uncertain, NYUL has increased security measures at its Bedford Square site and provided more comprehensive safeguarding information to students.

⁴ NYUL semester dates academic year 2019-20

Explanation of findings

This section explains the review findings in greater detail.

1 **Commentary: The provider satisfactorily manages its responsibilities for academic standards, as set out in contractual arrangements with its academic partners**

Findings

1.1 New York University in London (NYUL) operates under the awarding powers and academic standards of New York University (NYU). NYU is accredited in the USA by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. NYU provision, including the programmes offered by NYUL, was inspected during a 2014 review with the subsequent NYU self-study evaluation to take place in 2023-24 and Mid-Point Peer Review expected in 2019, midway through the accreditation cycle. This was conducted in March 2021. All NYUL students are working toward NYU degrees. Therefore, the ultimate responsibility for the setting and maintenance of academic standards offered at NYUL rests with NYU, as awarding body. The team confirmed that the ultimate responsibility for the setting and maintenance of academic standards of all programmes offered at NYUL rests with NYU as set out in the Statement of Accreditation Status. The team further confirmed that NYU is accredited in the USA by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. The MA programme is also further accredited by the state of New York. However, the team noted that the MA programme is not operating in 2020-21 due to the current pandemic conditions.

1.2 The expected 2019 Middle States Commission on Higher Education Mid-Point Peer Review (MPPR) has been conducted and concluded on 4 March 2021 with the subsequent evaluation to take place 2023-24 as indicated on the institution's SAS Commission's website. Therefore, the points of reference for NYUL are consistent with the relevant national qualifications frameworks.

1.3 NYUL follow the NYU Global Policies and Procedures for students when studying abroad, including grade appeals, plagiarism investigations, mitigating circumstances and home school policies where appropriate. The MA programme follows policies standard within The Graduate School of Arts and Science (GSAS) and as set out in the MA handbook.

1.4 NYUL uses standard syllabi templates for both the undergraduate and graduate programmes. These ensure consistent delivery and enable NYUL Academic Office staff to check every semester for compliance with NYU standards for course descriptions, objectives, assessment criteria and advice, attendance policy, session details and recommended readings.

1.5 NYUL classes follow a model of continual assessment (with typically three points of assessment, usually including an unseen written examination), with their local lecturers charged with all marking. Students' work is marked according to clear marking and grading criteria as set out in the individual syllabi, with grading standards and feedback discussed with teaching staff at faculty meetings. There is also the potential to have final grades reviewed by the home department and schools to ensure congruity with NYU marking standards and expectations. NYUL follows NYU practice but do not double mark student work, except in grade dispute cases. The NYUL Academic Staff Policies and Procedures Handbook sets out how faculty should comply with university standards on assessment.

1.6 The team tested the providers management of academic standards through a review of the Syllabus Templates, Course Descriptors, The Graduate School of Arts and Science (GSAS) Policies and Procedures, NYUL Graduate Handbook, Academic Staff Policies and Practices Manual, Global Policies and Procedures, Mid-Term Grade Submission, NYUL Board Reports, Job Description Senior Faculty Advisor and meetings with the staff and students. The Staff Handbook provides specific guidance on the syllabus's content, assessment procedures, grading and marking

1.7 All aspects of the academic programmes are monitored carefully and regularly through a network of panels and meetings to govern and manage the processes and outcomes. NYU Global site directors meet twice a year to discuss and share issues of mutual interest, concerns and future provision. Regular meetings also occur between the Associate Director and Assistant Directors and key NYU stakeholders. Scrutiny of all NYUL aspect also takes place through communication by Director at bi-annual meetings with the NYUL Board of Trustees. Once a month, NYUL senior manager meetings are held to share updates, plan, and hear reports from each department's regular meetings (Academic Affairs, Student Life, Finance and Operations). There are fortnightly informal directors' meetings involving the five most senior NYUL staff members, and the Director and Associate Director meet or speak daily. NYUL holds faculty meetings at least twice per semester, with supplemental workshops depending on the need and/or interest at the time. For the MA programme, faculty meetings are held once per semester. The design allows for the Common practice to be met.

The provider satisfactorily manages its responsibilities for academic standards, as set out in contractual arrangements with its academic partners: Summary of findings

1.8 The review team considered its findings against the three questions specified in Annex 2 of the review handbook. The team concludes that the provider satisfactorily manages its responsibilities for academic standards. NYUL operates under the academic standards umbrella of New York University; therefore, the responsibility for the academic standards of any award lies with NYU. NYUL ensures these standards are upheld through its management processes and regular review. NYUL has an integrated governance and management structure to oversee academic standards to ensure these are maintained at a high level. All aspects of the academic programmes are monitored carefully and regularly through a network of panels and meetings to govern and manage the processes and outcomes.

1.9 The review team concludes that the provider satisfactorily manages its responsibilities for academic standards.

2 Judgement: The quality of student learning opportunities

Core practice (Q1): The provider has a reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system.

Findings

2.1 NYUL holds affiliate status with NYU and therefore does not have primary responsibility for the admission of students. Admissions and academic oversight are managed by NYU. In the 2018-19 cycle, the total number of applicants to all three degree-awarding campuses was 84,000. The admission's process for the MA programme is run by the Graduate School of Arts and Science (GSAS) at NYU. NYUL supports the applications for graduate students to apply for Tier 4 visas.

2.2 The team tested the evidence through scrutiny of related documents pertaining to admissions and recruitment, student responses to the admission's process and arrangements for students with disabilities. The admissions process is rigorous and transparent, appropriate to a leading university and is a highly competitive process. The Office of Global Programmes (OGP) manages the entire application process and liaises with home schools' advising centres in determining eligibility to study away. All applicants should have a 3.0 cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) or above and must have completed at least two semesters prior to applications. A good academic record on their home campus without any major disciplinary concerns are prerequisites to enrolment at NYUL. The Tisch School of the Arts programme requires an interview or audition (for actors). Similarly, interviews and portfolios are required in the admission process for the Screenwriting pathway students. Applications are made to the Tisch Special Programmes office in liaison with OGP throughout. These special programmes also require a GPA minimum of 3.0 but, if justified by the audition process, applicants who fall below that figure might be considered. MA programme admissions are coordinated by the Graduate School of Arts and Science at NYU. Application to study for a semester or a year at NYUL requires a check that students have a sufficient standard of the English language. This is compliant with UKVI visa regulations.

2.3 Students receive an Academic Staff Handbook and a Policies and Procedures Manual. An induction session is held a few weeks before the start of the away semester. This involves a review of the policies and procedures together with their agreed contracts; there is an orientation to the facilities including classrooms and IT provision, together with guidance how to use NYU Home, affiliated applications such as NYU email and the virtual learning environment (VLE). A draft syllabus is reviewed both by the home university and locally, and new instructors who teach on the programmes can request one-to-one training from the Academic Office staff. Inclusivity and diversity, are highly important to NYU and there are extensive scholarships offered for students who require financial assistance. Students who receive accommodations from NYU, signifying one or more disabilities, can benefit from particular support offered by the London Moses Centre.

2.4 Students met by the team were following the Go Local programme in which students can attend NYUL if they are resident with family in London for the duration of their studies there. They can attend any of the 12 campuses, provided they satisfy the residency requirements. There are no additional fees other than home US university fees and organisation is largely in the hands of home universities. All courses carry credits towards US degrees. All students interviewed had an adviser in their home campus. The Go Local programme was an extraordinary measure devised for academic year 2020-21 in response to the exigencies of the pandemic and is unlikely to be repeated.

2.5 The admissions system works effectively in that NYUL receives students who have been carefully selected to make a success of the study facilities and flexibilities on offer. Potential students are treated with care, respect and courtesy within a positive and encouraging environment and culture. The comprehensive admissions policies, procedures and expertise at NYU and NYUL enable the Core practice to be met with a low level of risk.

Core practice Met

Level of risk: Low

Core practice (Q2): The provider designs and/or delivers high-quality courses.

Findings

2.6 There are procedures developed and monitored by the parent awarding body, NYU, in place for the design and delivery of high-quality courses. NYUL operates courses that contribute to final degrees which comply with requirements approved by the state of New York. These requirements are further certified by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. The MA programme is also further accredited by the state of New York.

2.7 The review team tested the evidence through examination of documentation relating to the arrangements in place with NYU, the development and validation of programmes, and the quality of delivery to students. They held discussions with staff and students.

2.8 NYU study away programmes are also subject to validation by the US Middle States Conference for Higher Education (MSCHE). However, NYUL is not responsible for course design as this is the responsibility of NYU's degree-granting schools and specific departments. NYUL's primary responsibility is with course delivery.

2.9 Students who met with the review team spoke about fairly normal procedures in operation during lockdown due to COVID-19. Systems and restrictions are in line with UK Government guidelines and there are clear guidelines for online teaching and learning. Students are tested for COVID-19 every week in the classroom with testing kits available in their residences and they meet online in NYUL classes twice a week where blended learning is provided. Students mentioned that it is harder learning during lecture-based online sessions as distractions can occur and they preferred in-person learning which allows for greater participation with smaller classes helping with interaction. Blended learning was the standard model for fall 2020, but changed to fully online delivery in line with UK Government guidelines. Students have remote access to the NYU library which now offers a greater number of online texts. All students have mentors and contact can be made remotely with tutors. Online resources at NYUL include access to wellness counsellors. There is a Faculty Liaison Panel for discussions on experiences in classroom-teaching needs which reports to NYUL senior management.

2.10 NYUL delivers courses assured by alignment with the expectations of the home university. Despite the above-mentioned problems with teaching online, students consider remote learning to be effective. Course delivery is creative and likely to include short papers, research essays, participation grades, group-work grades, presentation grades, quizzes and mid-term examinations. These will contribute to the final cumulative grade for the course. Evaluative comments are generally very positive. In the Fall Student Survey of 2019, one student remarked that the away study could be improved by adding in team-building exercises dealing with real-world issues. Whenever faculty and staff members from the home campus visit NYUL, they concentrate on student satisfaction, quality and comparability.

2.11 While delivery of courses has moved online during the COVID-19 pandemic, NYUL has taken steps to ensure that delivery of courses and support for student learning remain undiminished. The Core practice is effective and met as NYUL has thorough procedures in place for the delivery of appropriately high-quality programmes. There is a low level of risk.

Core practice: Met

Level of risk: Low

Core practice (Q3): The provider has sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience.

Findings

2.12 The majority of the academic faculty are educated to PhD level or equivalent. Where training is the main mode of delivery, a high level of specialism is provided. Faculty appointments are subject to approval by NYU academic departments who assess the quality of established research, teaching and publication records. Care is taken to ensure that appointed lecturers have the appropriate credentials, pedagogic relevance, teaching philosophy and experience. This is evident in the strong expressions of student satisfaction with teaching and learning. There is a very high response rate to student surveys and evaluations.

2.13 The review team examined the effectiveness of these practices and procedures operated by NYUL, together with the staff-development provision and a range of CVs. The team met with NYUL staff.

2.14 Mid-term surveys and course evaluations play an important role in maintaining and improving the quality of teaching. Together with OGP staff and NYU departments, the Director and Assistant Director for Academics review these standards each semester. Evaluation meetings enable any issues to be scrutinised, pursued and resolved where required in executing and monitoring improvements.

2.15 The MA programme is taught by teaching instructors who are specialist architects with a focus on landscape design, sustainability and the reuse of historic structures in their own firms. Other specialists work for preservation organisations, such as the National Trust, historic palaces and local councils. They provide education related to professional outcomes, pertinent to the work in which students will be engaged upon graduation. The same professional culture applies to undergraduate students selected for study at RADA.

2.16 Staff development is facilitative, practical and novel. For example, initiatives for all full-time staff development include staff away days, which can include practical training and team building in the form of simulated exercises to promote 'Emergency Preparedness'. Other staff development is often 'light-hearted' providing activities for staff to work in different modes and enjoy time and space together. Academic staff who are faculty members are eligible for up to £500 per year for international conference travel/fees and £300 for events within the UK. There is a Staff Wellness Committee which offers support services and social events. A Green Committee has been assembled to assist NYUL in making more sustainable choices and pathways. Students are invited to join this committee.

2.17 NYUL is strongly equipped administratively for academic, social and welfare support. NYUL recruits high-calibre colleagues with proven standards in terms of qualifications and experience. Study-away experience is preferable in the selection of new appointees. Rigorous in-house training is provided for all new colleagues, who also have unlimited access to LinkedIn Learning's online platform and NYU's iLearn and Lynda.com.

Appropriately qualified and skilled staff complement and support a high-quality academic experience that is operating effectively and allows the Core practice to be met with a low level of risk.

Core practice: Met

Level of risk: Low

Core practice (Q4): The provider has sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience.

Findings

2.18 The Academic Centre at 4/5/6 Bedford Square is the centre for NYUL's entire operation. There are two halls of residence - Byron Court and Guilford House. The accommodation at Bedford Square includes well-provisioned classrooms. There are three labs with computer equipment which are externally hired facilities. There is a Residential Resource Centre in Guilford House and regular staff and student interaction between Bedford Square and the Residential Resource Centre.

2.19 The review team evaluated the arrangements in place through examination of student guidance information, statements made within the self-evaluation document (SED), related documentation and through discussions with a range of staff and students. The review team also explored student access to, and the availability of, books and IT resources and the availability of online resources and academic support available to students during the pandemic. Students were positive about learning resources provided. Current students and staff were satisfied with the current level of resources available.

2.20 There is student access to IT services, computer labs and printing in Bedford Square and also in the halls of residence. The Global Librarians based in New York, provide online support to students and NYUL. There is in-person library staff support and physical access to libraries and resources provided by the arrangement with Senate House Library. NYUL employs a writing tutor and remote tutoring is available via the Global Writing Centre based in New York. Reports on student Writing Centre usage are provided.

2.21 All students benefit from private medical insurance. There is a 24/7 duty phone for the handling of any support issues. Student Affairs promotes general health support and wellness and provides contact with counselling services, when and where necessary. NYUL provides for one full-time and one part-time wellness counsellor on staff. These professionals operate in liaison with the Wellness Exchange in New York.

2.22 While studying at NYUL, the Moses Centre provides facilities for students with disabilities. Students may receive approved accommodations to ensure they receive fair and equal treatment in all aspects of study. Certain dispensations are provided including assistance with note taking and scribe facilities for the visually impaired. The Academic Office staff liaises with lecturers to ensure that disability accommodations are clear and that they are implemented. The review team found strong evidence clearly illustrating that facilities, learning resources and support are operating effectively. The Core practice is met with a low level of risk.

Core practice: Met

Level of risk: Low

Core practice (Q5): The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience.

Findings

2.23 The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience, mostly through evaluative feedback mechanisms. The review team considered student involvement outlined in the SED and student feedback mechanisms. Regular and end-of-term student feedback is important in making adjustments towards the continuous improvement of various aspects of the student experience, from the initial onsite orientation to academic progress and residential life. Recent findings on Global Study at NYU reveal several cognitive benefits while engaging in new environments, which include openness to diversity, boundary-crossing, challenges to pre-existing beliefs, empathy and intercultural communication skills, civic values and sense of social responsibility and community engagement.

2.24 Students are well represented throughout the work of NYUL through reviews undertaken by the Office of Global Programmes, the NYUL Director, and staff at NYUL. Individual student feedback is regularly collected by the Student Affairs team, which also holds student meetings for feedback. The Student Experience Survey contains six categories of questions: academic life; engagement with local culture; community, orientation, and advising; student life, health and wellness, and technology; residential life and overall satisfaction. The results are reviewed by the Office of Global Programmes, the NYUL Director and appropriate staff at NYUL so that satisfaction can be noted and that changes and modifications may be addressed.

2.25 Academic life, for individual courses and the study experiences, are ranked very highly indicating confidence and satisfaction. Any problems students experience, such as issues concerning teaching are treated very seriously and are addressed by the NYUL Director. A review of surveys is undertaken to identify trends for staff to consider in view of any desirable changes. NYUL has introduced the, 'You said, we did' process. Most students attend NYUL for one or two semesters and those met by the team had not had reason to raise a complaint.

2.26 The Student Affairs Team and Liberal Studies Student Council provide feedback. Until recently, students held Town Hall meetings conducted by student ambassadors, as a forum for open discussion. The Town Hall facility has been arranged earlier in the semester to provide more timely responses. There are now academic drop-in sessions in the Academic Centre's student lounge. Issues are communicated to the Student Affairs Senior Programme Manager for consideration by the senior management team. Student feedback is also gathered through the orientation and housing surveys. There is generally strong satisfaction with the provision. The level of individual and collective student involvement in the quality of their experience enables the Core practice to be met with a low level of risk.

Core practice: Met

Level of risk: Low

Core practice (Q6): The provider has fair and transparent procedures for handling complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students.

Findings

2.27 The review team considered all documents relating to complaints and appeals, their protocols and procedures and evidence from student and staff interviews. Through the staff

handbooks, faculty who teach on the programmes are aware of the processes for appeals and complaints. References are made to other policies and complaints about various matters are often resolved informally, though procedures for formal routes are clearly outlined in cases where informal resolution has not been achieved. Students met by the team were aware of the complaints and appeals procedures but had no reason to use the formal complaints process.

2.28 Students are able to appeal grades and can informally or formally raise academic concerns through the Assistant Director of Academics, Programme Manager for Liberal Studies and Creative Arts, or the Director. Home departments and academic advisers can also deal with appeals and complaints. Grading in the programme is not always a straightforward process, as UK academic staff are not used to the American system. There are no examination boards, externals, or automatic second markers. However, the system does not disadvantage the student, who is permitted to contest a grade within the first 30 days of its official receipt. MA students are provided with a very detailed handbook containing academic policies and processes for appeals.

2.29 The Global Judicial Process document outlines expected standards in student conduct as well as the appeals process. Bias, discrimination, or harassment issues can be reported through an NYU hotline. A poster is widely communicated, illustrating ways in which to report any instances of bias. Students also have the right to file complaints with the US Department of Education's Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts Office, in cases where an institution has failed to comply with the Family Educational Records Privacy Act of 1974. The comprehensive and thorough procedures in place have a strong capacity for effectiveness, enabling the Core practice to be met with a low level of risk. Students can request clarification about the mark breakdown in a course from both the instructor and Academic Office staff. If students feel a serious error, injustice, or misapplication of consistent standards has occurred for any of their marks, they can file a grade dispute with the site director. NYUL is subject to regular visits by colleagues across the different schools, and academic and administrative departments of the degree-awarding campuses who discuss and review processes; they also review the quality of academic classes, of student support and learning opportunities, and they observe classes. The NYUL Assistant Director for Academic Affairs also visits NYU annually for an extensive programme of meetings and training.

Core practice: Met

Level of risk: Low

Core practice (Q7): Where the provider offers research degrees, it delivers these in appropriate and supportive research environments.

Findings

2.30 NYUL does not offer research degrees. Some students on research degree programmes at NYU can spend some time undertaking research at NYUL.

Core practice (Q8): Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the academic experience is high-quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered and who delivers them.

Findings

2.31 NYUL has offered and developed a range of progressive, supportive partnerships, which have enabled students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential. NYUL has established six primary partnerships with institutions in the UK for students studying away for one or two semesters. These have been with EUSA - a third party provider, dealing with internship placements - Birkbeck, Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts, National Film and Television School, School of Oriental and African Studies and Senate House. The team researched NYUL's partnership provision held discussions with students and staff and examined programme documentation.

2.32 The partnership with EUSA has not been in formal agreement since 2013. Other partnerships, with agreements that have expired, are RADA, NTFs and Senate House. It is unclear about the expiry date with SOAS. The partnership between NYUL and Birkbeck will conclude in August 2021. The agreement with the Senate House for the use of the library terminated during the pandemic (30 June 2020). In light of the pandemic, some arrangements were put on pause as they would have obliged NYUL to provide payment and take on responsibilities that were not appropriate or necessary as students could not travel to the UK and enrol in NYUL programmes. NYUL staff have kept in contact with the providers with the understanding that arrangements would resume when conditions permitted, and students could return to NYUL. NYUL has worked closely with these providers for a number of years and staff are confident of re-establishing agreements as pandemic circumstances change. As NYUL is not a degree-granting institution, these external relationships are not intrinsic to student completion of their degrees and alternatives can be found (primarily via resources at the home campuses) to ensure students remain on degree-progress throughout the pandemic.

2.33 NYU's Tisch School of the Arts relates to the provision delivered by RADA and the newer provision with NTFs. RADA and NTFs have liaised regularly with NYUL staff and the Executive Director of the Tisch Office. Visits are made to these institutions and meetings take place with instructors. Both organisations offer higher learning, specialist teaching and training. NYU course evaluations for the courses are completed by students. Any matters of concern have normally been addressed by NYUL staff. In light of the pandemic, no NYU students could study away at RADA in 2020-21, therefore, NYU did not take the step to finalise this new draft contract. The student actors were supported by their home departments in Tisch School of the Arts to do alternative coursework. Given the pandemic conditions and greatly reduced student numbers under the Go Local scheme in 2020-21, NYUL was not in a position to send students to NTFs in the spring semester of 2021 (NTFs is a spring-only program). If it becomes clear that NYUL can again enrol students onto this programme for spring semester 2022, NYUL will arrange a second amendment to the NTFs agreement.

2.34 The legal studies arrangement has been based on an agreement with the Birkbeck School of Law. Classes have operated in Bedford Square. In this specific instance, NYUL contracted with a whole department. Hitherto, Birkbeck has determined which lecturers are available and suitable for the teaching provision. NYUL hired Dr Jeremy Pilcher and Dr Serene John-Richards as full-time academic staff to bring all the instruction for the Legal Studies programme in-house. Drs Pilcher and John-Richards will take on the teaching for all five courses, develop co-curricular programming, legal sector internships, and advise students on the Solicitors Qualifying Examination route for those who are interested in

qualifying in the UK. Both staff members will liaise closely with NYU Admissions and provide advice to students before they come to study in London.

2.35 For arrangements with SOAS, NYUL students have been able to take three designated SOAS classes in Term 1 and SOAS students can attend two designated NYUL classes in the NYUL fall semester. There has been access to the SOAS library, VLE, SOAS email and any other provision in support of their studies. NYUL staff have liaised closely with the SOAS Study Abroad Office. NYUL is sent a transcript of marks for translation into the US grading system. As with all partner institutions, NYUL students complete NYU-style course evaluations for the SOAS courses. Given the significant drop in student numbers because of the pandemic in fall 2020, NYUL did not offer any of its SOAS-related courses in that semester or send any students to SOAS in fall 2021. NYUL is currently in virtual communication with SOAS about the future of the joint arrangement.

2.36 Academic online internships continue with EUSA under the Go Local programme for four students during which one day each week is based on the student's interest area. Placement supervisors set students tasks, which are mainly research based. The course component supervisor provides quality oversight. No grade is given for placement, as the experience is integrated into a course. On completion there is a virtual meeting and forum with students. An online link is provided for students' pre-departure support. There is no handbook, but information is provided by NYU. Courses can be completed without the co-requisite of the placement, which is part of the academic experience. NYU works with EUSA at multiple European locations, and there is an annual addendum to the agreement for UK operations. Contracts with EUSA continued throughout the pandemic on a semester to semester basis instead of an annual basis. NYU's Global Office is currently negotiating a fall 2021 contract

2.37 Throughout the pandemic, NYUL students have been able to obtain membership at Senate House Library, which has also been provided in partnership. The library maintains dedicated stack space for NYUL-required texts. Students have enjoyed full access to library resources, book collection, subject-specialist librarians, including online NYU Library services. A new agreement covers the period July 2020-June 2021. This meant the NYUL faculty had continuity of service from Senate House Library and Go Local students had access to physical library resources.

2.38 The review team **recommends** that London partnership contracts are renegotiated and resumed as a matter of urgency. The formal agreements should set out the rights and obligations of all parties and monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. The review team consider that, since COVID-19, the innovative provision of internships undertaken by blended delivery, enabling students to engage with employers with support from internship mentors, is considered **good practice**. The review team concludes that the Core practice is met. Contractual issues around the delivery at other institutions which have expired are expected to be renegotiated in time for fall 2021 recruitment which means that the associated level of risk is moderate.

Core practice: Met

Level of risk: Moderate

Core practice (Q9): The provider supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes.

Findings

2.39 NYU's global network is purposed to allow students to enrich and enhance their learning and research in offering opportunities with some of the world's leading centres as a complement to their home university. The indispensable elements and structures such as course objectives, desired learning outcomes, key assessment requirements, designated textbooks, grading criteria and other related areas are all grounded in the curricula and pedagogy at the home university. This ensures parity with courses delivered in NYU New York, NYU Shanghai, NYU Abu Dhabi, or NYU London. The team discussed the inclusion and achievement of academic and professional outcomes with staff and students, and examined a range of documentation.

2.40 Pre-pandemic, the Faculty Committee on the Future of Technology-Enhanced Education at NYU explored several possible pedagogic innovations to assist with the implementation of blended delivery including: the inclusion of easy integration of specialised third-party tools; enhanced design and delivery of fully online, hybrid, synchronous and asynchronous courses and programmes; easier construction and delivery of e-learning modules and other digital assets; maximising the efficiency of course management and offering a platform that is digitally accessible which performs seamlessly at and across NYU's global locations. The Committee was convened to monitor and manage this transition to the new Learning Management System (NYU Classes). It is intended that this outcome-orientated work will continue post-pandemic and will be rolled out by September 2021.

2.41 In other innovatory designs, NYUL academic staff have encouraged the use of the twice-weekly pattern, similar to freshmen courses, where there are evident benefits to undergraduate learning outcomes when first-year students meet more frequently and for shorter periods of time and the spreading out of assignments. This helps to support more effective monitoring of student progress and to identify any emerging issues. NYUL also publishes a process and outcome set of guidelines for all staff: 'Guide to using NYU Classes at NYUL'.

2.42 Findings from a Consortium for the Analysis of Student Success through International Education (CASSIE) illustrates how the global sites enhance student professional outcomes. NYU students who studied away were five percentage points more certain than their peers to graduate within the normal study time, that is, in four years. Study away also tended to raise student GPAs slightly. All indicators suggest that, post-graduation, the global experience motivates them towards stronger professional outcomes. The EUSA experiential learning facility in internship is strongly grounded in professional outcomes.

2.43 The NYUL Academic Staff Policies and Procedures Handbook sets out how faculty should comply with university standards for assessment. All classes typically comprise three assessment points of assessment, usually including an unseen written examination. Local lecturers are responsible for marking, with double marking usually only taking place in dispute cases. The home NYU department and schools can review those marks to ensure alignment with NYU marking standards and expectations.

2.44 It is the expectation that assessed work is returned with full and clear commentary about achievement and steps towards improvement, with faculty encouraged to return a piece of graded work before the mid-point of the semester. Similar information is contained within the student handbooks, which were found to provide clear information on grading, pass/fail requirements of the respective sending schools, guidance on academic integrity and procedures for grade appeals. The team also verified that NYUL courses descriptors

follow standard syllabus templates as indicated.

2.45 Assessed work is returned with full and clear commentary about achievement and steps towards improvement, with faculty encouraged to return a piece of graded work before the mid-point of the semester, sometime between weeks 5-7. Mid-term grades also are due just before the pass/fail and withdrawal deadline, giving students ample data to make informed decisions about taking a class as pass/fail or withdrawing from the class. All pass/fail results are approved by their home department, with NYUL submitting a detailed summary of each final grade component.

2.46 All of the NYUL programmes follow NYU standards, policies and procedure, as set out by the Office of Global Programmes. NYUL further follows standard course templates, and these were found to be consistent across the reviewed course descriptors. Responsibility for creating the assessment rests with the local NYUL professors, and these are approved by NYUL management.

2.47 The team found the students receive comprehensive student handbooks, which provide information on the academic requirements of the sending NYU school, grading, guidance on academic integrity and procedures for grade appeals. The students met confirmed that they understood the assessment requirements. If less clear about the requirements, they always had the opportunity to ask their professors.

2.48 The staff handbook sets out the essential nature of providing written feedback that enables the students to fully understand how and why they have received the mark they have been awarded. The feedback is expected to include critical comments on how they might have done better and how the work fell short of the lecturers' expectations. The team noted that feedback varied between the professors, with some just giving back the marks. The team, therefore, recommends that it is **advisable** to ensure all students are entitled to comprehensive, helpful and timely feedback following assessment.

2.49 The team noted that all the indicators from the Findings on Global Study at NYU suggest that the global experience propels them into successful future trajectories, and they attribute their time in study-away sites directly to their professional success after graduation. The positive contribution of the respective undergraduate and postgraduate course content was also noted by the team.

2.50 NYUL reports that MA programme graduates find opportunities in a range of government offices and agencies, with firms in design, planning, development and construction, and property development companies. Opportunities are also found in cultural institutions, historic sites, and non-profit advocacy groups. Further study in advanced graduate programmes in leading UK and US universities has also been possible. The MA programme has provided enrichment lectures towards enhanced career planning. Learning and professional outcomes are explored in their possibilities and implemented effectively, thus enabling the Core practice to be met with a low level of risk.

Core practice: Met

Level of risk: Low

Common practice (1): The provider reviews its Core practices for quality regularly and uses the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement.

Findings

2.51 Every semester, Academic Affairs colleagues review all the syllabi to verify that the vital core NYU requirements are met. New courses receive particular scrutiny by the Assistant Director for Academics and any courses which have undergone any significant modifications. Particular attention is given to new courses, courses which have had substantial changes and proposals for new developments. The Programme Manager for Creative Arts at NYUL remains in contact with senior staff at RADA to ensure the provision is maintaining high standards across the programmes. External reference points are used in all reviews of syllabi and their concomitants. Feedback from students is also material in such periodic surveys and evaluations. The review team considered a range of documents in relation to quality and enhancement and interviewed staff and students.

2.52 The London Site Specific Advisory Committee includes Global Coordinators from academic units that sponsor courses at NYUL and contribute to discussions and debates on academic standards and academic cohesion across the London provision. Visits to London are made by the Global Coordinator, or other delegations, to meet with NYUL teaching colleagues, visit their classes, or remotely to examine the reliability and equity of students' coursework. NYUL receives regular visits by colleagues across the different schools and academic and administrative departments. These are made by staff from the degree-awarding campuses. They also assess quality of observed academic classes, student support resources and learning opportunities. The QAA monitoring report 2019, draws attention to the NYU London Site Specific Advisory Committee, which 'provides a high level of scrutiny of the provision'. The committee maintains a very broad brief, liaising with NYU and OGP.

2.53 The 2016 HER and subsequent monitoring reports commend NYUL for enhancing its internship programme; support for student wellness, for adding further Wellness Counselling staff to support provision; pastoral and personal support of students, including the Wasserman career development counsellors visiting from NYC; housing; commitment to inclusion and diversity; and the introduction of an Equity Fellow from fall 2018 onward. The 2019 report comments on NYU's standards and clarity in continuous assessment. As a further cross-checking and comparative evaluation, further trend analysis across time (and against other locations) involving both local and New York staff, provide and suggest ideas for addressing current and future practice.

2.54 The Graduate Coordinator for the MA works closely with the Director, Associate Director, Senior Academic Affairs staff and with the Art History department at NYU in the review of the programme and any proposals for changes. The Director of Programmes is responsible for its review and considers any proposals for changes. Specific online enhancements available to NYUL include students benefiting from comprehensive research and learning resources and participation in the expansive Bobst Library system, its considerable collection of electronic resources and two specialist librarians.

2.55 Recent London visitors include Professor Lorcan Folan, Head of Physics, on 25 May 2018, who met with NYUL staff and physics colleagues and inspected classroom and laboratory facilities. This initiated the start of planning for a physics lecture and lab course and a mathematics course for engineering students. The confirmation was that NYUL quality and standards were in complete parity with NYU. In a similar way, the Tisch School of the Arts faculty visits London institutions, reviews the premises, holds meetings with colleagues and discusses any future planning. The regularity of contact, review and inspection of curricula, teaching and development shows that the drive for improvement and

enhancement is fit-for-purpose and is working effectively. The Common practice is met with a low level of risk.

Common practice: Met

Level of risk: Low

Common practice (2): The provider's approach to managing quality takes account of external expertise.

Findings

2.56 The UK Quality Code for Higher Education is a major external reference point which assists in all quality matters concerning NYUL delivery in the UK and alignment with UK higher education levels of qualifications, expectations and practices. Additionally, NYUL has to meet the standards set by New York University and follow the policies and procedures of the Office of Global Programmes (OGP). NYUL is guided by OGP, which provides advice on any specific requirements and issues concerning local implementation. The review team considered all documentation concerned with managing quality in relation to external expertise and interviewed staff and students.

2.57 The Tandon School of Engineering - BS Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, BS Civil Engineering, BS Computer Engineering, BS Electrical Engineering, and BS Mechanical Engineering programmes receive accreditation by the Engineering Accreditation Commission. The BS in Chemistry is approved by the American Chemical Society. The Tandon School of Engineering reviewed the pilot programme in June 2019 in conjunction with OGP. This principally involved a review of the April 2019 visit by a Tandon faculty member, course evaluations, and communication/feedback between advisers and students who studied away in London.

2.58 NYUL is guided by the three NYU campuses throughout the development of new courses and in modifying existing ones. Course planning originates within NYU departments. NYU departments and schools operate 'global pathways' to facilitate students studying away. OGP liaises closely with faculty Global Coordinators. In November 2019, at the inaugural NYU Alumni in Europe Conference, some NYUL faculty members were invited to participate on panels and the site director liaised with others within the global community.

2.59 For the future, NYUL is analytically prospective, believing that the world situation will be permanently altered when the pandemic is over. External preparation over the past year has meant that NYUL had already been engaging with 'global' aspects of climate change and student travel, which are now further magnified and amplified by the current pandemic crisis. The reconfiguring of global education in these challenging times is perceived to be central to how these issues will inform teaching, particularly in existing NYUL Global Public Health, Politics, Sociology, and Environmental Studies courses. It is intended, in conjunction with home campuses, NYUL will create new courses which will address these developing and critical educational circumstances. The external reference points and the guidance they offer towards a high-quality provision are numerous and comprehensive in professional viewpoint, enabling the Common practice to be met with a low level of risk.

Common practice: Met

Level of risk: Low

Common practice (3): The provider engages students individually and collectively in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience.

Findings

2.60 The end of semester course evaluations are the summative means of engaging students individually and collectively in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience. The framework of student learning is overseen by NYU. The review team considered documentation relating to student engagement and interviewed students and staff.

2.61 Students are supported in their learning, special learning requirements and needs. Beyond the classroom, NYUL's study-away programme is important to the combining of experiential and formal learning. This is considered to be an effective educational synthesis. Provision for cultural programming, co-curricular visits, opportunities to live with British families, internships and volunteering are integral and have been designed to provide students with a full and rounded education. NYUL places considerable pedagogic emphasis on research-led undergraduate and graduate education. The VLE is well-developed and teaching experience of repute is provided by the appointed London higher education institutions.

2.62 Student evaluations are highly important instruments in assessing future practice of study away. Course evaluations are made available for the faculty members following submission of all final grades. OGP and the senior Academic Office staff in London oversee and review all course evaluations and make any recommendations to the Site Director and/or Associate Director of NYUL. Contact can also be made directly with the sponsoring department or faculty members. The sponsoring departments undertake their own review of all evaluations relating to the global sites. In any concerns about academic conduct or quality of teaching, the Site Director and Assistant Director of Academics meet with the appropriate faculty member for discussion and to make recommendations for future practice. Disciplinary processes can be called upon in cases where little or no improvement has been made. Review mechanisms for the MA programme are in the hands of programme directors. Individual students can provide feedback through their academic adviser and are free to email tutors. They are able to switch classes where necessary. Despite the very positive culture in evidence, students interviewed said they were not aware of any changes being made as a result of feedback and they were unaware of 'You said, we did'. However, perceived changes by study-away students from one semester to another, especially during a pandemic, may be an unrealistic expectation.

2.63 NYUL's enhancement of its action plan through further development of new courses was noted in the QAA 2019 monitoring report: 'A total of ten new courses have been introduced, including courses in drama, engineering, mathematics, science and legal studies, with the intention of providing opportunities for study abroad to students in disciplines for which it might otherwise not be available'. The new courses aim to provide opportunities to students in disciplines which have traditionally not been part of study away. For example, engineering, historically was unable to meet specialist requirements of sequential coursework arrangements. The 2019 report also makes reference to intentions towards diversifying the student body and, in autumn 2018, the appointment of a student Equity Fellow. Students directly benefit from the enhancements that stem from research-led teaching. NYUL courses are taught, wherever possible, by faculty members who are currently engaged in research in their respective fields. This valuable pedagogic benefit and enhancement means that students can share in new and developing findings currently being researched by teachers. This is especially applicable for the MA programme, where teachers are primarily practitioners and researchers. The numerous venues, procedures and

opportunities for individual and collective involvement of students in the assurance and enhancement of quality ensures that the Common practice is met with a low level of risk.

Common practice: Met

Level of risk: Low

The quality of student learning opportunities: Summary of findings

2.64 Admissions are managed centrally by NYC in New York. This is a competitive process which students felt was clear and fair. Students are interviewed and all relevant information and guidance is provided. Programmes at NYUL carry credits towards final degrees at NYU. Students who attended interview spoke about fairly normal procedures in operation during lockdown. Systems and restrictions are in line with UK government guidelines and there are clear guidelines for online teaching and learning. Most academic staff are qualified to PhD level with appointments approved by NYU. There are adequate teaching accommodation and resources at the Bedford Square centre with opportunities for specialist teaching at partner institutions. There are efficient processes for gathering, considering and acting upon student views. Students met by the team expressed satisfaction with the opportunities for representation.

2.65 NYUL's provision is monitored each semester with regular reporting to NYU and inspection by the Middle States Association as part of its monitoring of all NYU provision. External expertise includes the UK Quality Code and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Students met by the team felt well-supported in their studies and that their feedback was used effectively in improving provision and student involvement.

2.66 The Go Local programme at NYUL is a temporary measure available to those students who can reside locally while studying at NYUL. The review team **recommends** NYUL should clearly define the Go Local programme so that it is completely understood as a programme and not perceived as a study facility. The review team consider that, since COVID-19, the innovative provision of internships undertaken by blended delivery, enabling students to engage with employers with support from internship mentors is considered **good practice**.

2.67 Responsibility for creating the assessment rests with the local NYUL professors and these are approved by NYUL management. The team noted that feedback varied between the professors, with some just giving back the marks. The team, therefore, recommends that it is **advisable** to ensure all students are entitled to comprehensive, helpful and timely feedback following assessment. The review team concludes that the quality of student learning opportunities at the provider **meets** UK expectations.

Glossary

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

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**).

Common practices

Practices included in the UK Quality Code that will be applied by providers in line with their missions, their regulatory context and the needs of their students. These are practices common to the underpinning of quality in all UK providers but are not regulatory requirements for providers in England (registered with the Office for Students).

Core practices

Practices included in the UK Quality Code that must be demonstrated by all UK higher education providers as part of assuring their standards and quality.

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.

Expectations

Statements in the **Quality Code** which clearly and succinctly express the outcomes providers should achieve in setting and maintaining the standards of their awards, and for managing the quality of their provision.

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** (and associated, applicable, Core and Common practices) that 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.

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