



Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight: desk-based analysis of NYU in London, March 2022

Outcome of the desk-based analysis

1 From the annual return and documentary evidence, the monitoring team concludes that NYU in London (NYUL) is continuing to maintain academic standards and the quality of student learning opportunities since the [March 2021 Higher Education Review \(Foreign Providers\)](#).

Changes since the last QAA review

2 NYUL currently has 15 students on the one-year MA Historical and Sustainable Architecture. This is an increase of four students from 2019-20. There are 88 first-year students from the Stern and the Liberal Studies First Year London (FYLO) programmes. A further 11 upper class students will be studying for the full year. 164 students were enrolled in the fall of 2021 and 222 in spring 2022. Student enrolments for the academic year 2021-22 total 500, which is lower than pre-pandemic levels (827 during 2019-20).

3 During the pandemic, NYUL operated a 'Go Local' programme which enabled a small number of students to study closer to home. As NYUL hopes to return to pre-covid numbers by fall 2022, the 'Go Local' programme has been discontinued.

4 NYUL has three full-time members of staff who are currently teaching and one part-time instructor on a fixed-term contract who teaches and gives pastoral support for the FYLO programme. In addition, for spring term 2022, there are 62 part-time instructors on a four-month fixed-term contract. The number of fixed contract instructors varies each semester depending on teaching requirements.

Findings from the monitoring visit

5 From the Annual Monitoring Return, and the supporting evidence submitted by NYUL, the team concludes that NYUL has continued to maintain academic standards and the quality of student learning opportunities since the Higher Education Review (Foreign Providers) (HER(FP)) of 2021. NYUL has put in place a detailed action plan to address the recommendations made in the HER(FP) of March 2021, and these are discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs. Partnership contracts have been renegotiated (paragraph 6), processes have been introduced to ensure more helpful and timely feedback on assessed work (paragraph 7), and the 'Go Local' programme has been discontinued (paragraph 8). As students have returned to NYUL, the online internships have been discontinued, but NYUL continues to monitor this as an area of good practice (paragraph 9). NYUL continues to use the faculties and schools which send students on the one year, or one/two semester programmes as their main external reference point. Although NYUL's policies and procedures are in line with the Core and Common practices of the revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code), they do not reference the Quality Code directly (paragraphs 11 and 12).

6 NYUL has contracts with a number of London partners for the provision of teaching rooms, internships, library resources and laboratory facilities. The original contract with

EUSA for internship support, has been renewed until spring 2022 and will continue to be renewed on an annual basis. NYUL has decided to end the partnership with SOAS in view of low student numbers and the non-synchronous nature of the two courses offered by SOAS and student term dates at NYUL. The contract with Senate House Library was extended for one year in June 2021 and will be reviewed in spring 2022. Arrangements with RADA and NFTS, suspended during the pandemic, have been reinstated and both now have fully signed agreements. UCL has indicated that NYUL can no longer use its chemistry laboratories as the University has a large number of students who require access to catch up with the practical work they missed during the pandemic. NYUL is actively looking for alternative accommodation for the academic year 2022-23. An inventory assessment has been undertaken to facilitate a move to new premises. NYUL will not be running the Physics laboratory courses this academic year because the specialist instructor required is not available. However, NYUL remains in contact with Birbeck about future use of their physics laboratories.

7 The advisable recommendation in respect of the receipt of helpful and timely feedback following assessment is being addressed through the return of at least one piece of summative assessment by week 7 and the uploading of an indicative grade, by the tutor at the mid-term point. Examples of mid-term grades and the identification of 'missing grades' were submitted as additional evidence by NYUL. Mid-term surveys for two modules indicate that some first-year students in the early part of their studies do not fully understand how grades are constructed. The mid-term surveys are intended to identify any issues early on so that they can be addressed. The four pieces of assessed work examined by the review team provide examples of detailed feedback from the tutor in the form of 'in text' comments. Further examples of email feedback indicated effective interaction between the students and the tutors. Students are able to book appointments to discuss their grades with the tutors. The Assistant Director of Academics oversees newly-appointed staff to ensure they are engaging with students and providing suitable feedback.

8 NYUL has indicated that the 'Go Local' programme was implemented as a temporary measure during the pandemic in response to students' inability to travel. It has now been discontinued, and therefore there is no need for further explanation of its purpose, as recommended in the HER(FP) March 2021 report.

9 The Action Plan provides commentary on the area of good practice identified by the Review, namely *the innovative provision of internships undertaken by blended delivery, enabling students to engage with employers with support from internship mentors*. As students are now attending NYUL in person, the provision of online internships was discontinued in spring 2021. Student satisfaction with the internship at EUSA is being monitored through course evaluations. Student feedback at the end of the internship. Evaluations for fall 2020 for the EUSA internship are positive.

10 As this is a study abroad programme there is no data on student performance and progression. One student left the MA programme prior to completion for personal reasons. Several students deferred their enrolment to 2022 due to the pandemic, but the number of students in this category is unclear. NYU's recent findings on global study indicates that students who study away are five percentage points more certain than their peers to graduate within the normal study time, that is, in four years. Study away also tends to raise student GPAs slightly. All indicators suggest that post-graduation, the global experience motivates students towards stronger professional outcomes.

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

11 The documentation provided for annual monitoring does not reference the Core and Common practices of the Quality Code. However, the HER(FP) of March 2021 indicates that NYU effectively aligns its policies, procedures and practices with the Quality Code. NYUL and the sponsoring department review the expectations of academic quality of courses and ensure that students are effectively supported to enable them to succeed in and benefit from their studies at NYUL.

12 The main external reference points for NYU continue to be the faculties and schools which send students on the one year, or one/two semester programmes. NYUL is overseen and reviewed by the Office for Global Programmes (OGP) and the sponsoring departments at NYU New York, and NYU Abu Dhabi. This includes hiring of new faculty, monitoring new faculty, the development and introduction of new courses, and updating the curriculum for existing courses. Course evaluations are also referred to faculty in the sponsoring departments.

13 NYUL launched the First Year London programme for Stern business students in fall 2021. A part-time adviser/lecturer has been hired to take on a pastoral role for this programme, and the team meets regularly with the Stern advising team and school leadership team which it uses as external reference points for monitoring quality and standards.

14 A new virtual learning environment called NYU Brightspace was launched in May 2021, and this is now being used by all classes. Extensive training has been provided by instructors at NYU in New York via Zoom. A detailed guide to the new system has also been developed to support staff.

15 NYUL has adhered to national guidelines regarding COVID-19 and produced an updated set of policies and procedures for students and staff together with guidance on co-curricular trips. A staggered start for the spring 2022 cohort has been implemented to further protect students.

Background to the desk-based analysis

16 The desk-based analysis 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/annual monitoring. 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 process or review.

17 The desk-based analysis was carried out by Brenda Eade, Reviewer, and Julian Ellis, QAA Officer, in March 2022. No meetings were held with students or staff, and the conclusions presented in this report are based on the analysis of documentary evidence submitted by the provider.

QAA2659 - R13181 - May 22

© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2022
Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester GL1 1UB
Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786

Tel 01452 557000
Web www.qaa.ac.uk