



Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) of Sotheby's Institute of Art, London

February 2016

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About this review

This is a report of a Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers) conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at Sotheby's Institute of Art, London (the Institute). The review took place from 22 to 24 February 2016 and was conducted by a team of three reviewers, as follows:

- Professor Mark Hunt
- Mr Mark Langley
- Miss Kate Wicklow (student reviewer).

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

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

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

A check is also made on the provider's financial sustainability, management and governance (FSMG) with the aim of giving students reasonable confidence that they should not be at risk of being unable to complete their course as a result of financial failure.

In reviewing Sotheby's Institute of Art, London the review team has also considered a theme selected for particular focus across higher education in England and Northern Ireland. The [themes](#) for the academic year 2015-16 are Student Employability, and Digital Literacy,² and the provider is required to select, in consultation with student representatives, one of these themes to be explored through the review process.

A summary of the findings can be found in the section starting on page 2. [Explanations of the findings](#) are found on page 5 followed by numbered paragraphs starting on page 6.

The QAA website gives more information [about QAA](#) and its mission.³ A dedicated section explains the method for [Higher Education Review \(Alternative Providers\)](#).⁴ For an explanation of terms see the [glossary](#) at the end of this report.

¹ The UK Quality Code for Higher Education is published at: www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code

² Higher Education Review themes: www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=2859

³ QAA website: www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us.

⁴ Higher Education Review (Alternative Providers): www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Pages/Educational-Oversight.aspx

Key findings

QAA's judgements about Sotheby's Institute of Art, London

The QAA review team formed the following judgements about the higher education provision at Sotheby's Institute of Art, London.

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

Good practice

The QAA review team identified the following features of **good practice** at Sotheby's Institute of Art, London:

- the effective management of the admissions process which impacts on student satisfaction and achievement (Expectation B2)
- the distinctive and shared staff and student research environment which contributes to student learning opportunities (Expectation B3)
- the range and quality of support that enables students to fully engage with their studies (Expectation B4)
- the proactive and comprehensive approach to career development that contributes to student employability (Expectation B4).

Recommendations

The QAA review team makes the following **recommendations** to Sotheby's Institute of Art, London.

By June 2016:

- further develop the means of recording and responding to an overview of all external examiner reports (Expectation B7).

By September 2016:

- establish clear terms of reference for, and the composition of, its committees (Expectations A2.1, A3.1, B1, B5, B7 and B8)
- articulate the strategy to fully embed students as partners at all levels (Expectation B5)
- ensure that all students have access to their programme intended learning outcomes (Expectation B6)
- ensure that the institution-wide annual monitoring process resolves and records all actions within an appropriate timeframe (Expectation B8)
- formalise the procedure which ensures clear lines of responsibility for, and accuracy of, information (Expectation C).

Theme: Student Employability

Dedication to student career development has been central to the Institute's philosophy since its creation in 1969. The Institute provides job-seeking skills and extensive career preparation through the highly sophisticated combination of its lecturers' expertise, programme design and extensive alumni and art world networks.

An underpinning aspect of all programmes is to include professional skills and to introduce students to the nature of the professional art world where projects include staging temporary exhibitions, developing collections or management policies. Assessment and intended learning outcomes reflect the employability agenda. Students confirm that programmes reflect the needs of the international art world and the 2015 graduation survey recorded that over 85 per cent of students feel that the Institute prepared them for employment, and current students agree.

The Institute's art world network gives students access to many outstanding professional speakers from a wide range of fields. The input of these speakers is often highly privileged and unavailable anywhere else. Students especially value the informal networking that follows any session with a professional or guest speaker. The Institute operates a job vacancy management system for employers to advertise to both students and alumni. There are in-house industry and recruitment fairs and industry and employer talks. The emerging alumni network will be truly international, including contacts in New York and Hong Kong.

The Careers Service aims to enhance employability across the curricular offer. Students and alumni can book individual careers appointments; international students can also book careers appointments with the Los Angeles and New York offices. The review team spoke with employers who were very clear that the quality of Sotheby's students is exceptional and that the curriculum ensures that graduates are fully prepared for employment.

Financial sustainability, management and governance

There were no material issues identified at Sotheby's Institute of Art, London during the financial sustainability, management and governance check.

Further explanation of the key findings can be found in the handbook available on the QAA webpage explaining [Higher Education Review \(Alternative Providers\)](#).

About Sotheby's Institute of Art, London

Sotheby's Institute of Art, London is a not-for-profit educational institute which has continually developed since it was founded in 1969 and now offers a wide range of validated programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate level.

The Institute's Strategic Plan, launched in 2012, identifies its mission as: 'To be universally acknowledged as the premier provider of advanced object-based art education, with graduates who combine passion for the visual arts with scholarship and market sophistication in order to flourish as art world leaders'.

In the 1960s, Sotheby's auction house felt that university art history courses were too theoretical in their approach and were not directly training students to work in the professional art world. Sotheby's felt that in recruiting graduate staff to become cataloguers in the expert departments, there was a need for the development of intense critical visual skills and for a multidisciplinary approach via the handling of a wide range of objects at all levels of quality. The auction house provided the ideal setting for the comparative study of works of art in the marketplace throughout the year.

The philosophy of delivering education that prepares students for the realities of working in the art world has remained a core principle of the Institute to the present day. It is underpinned by intensive, specialist teaching, active engagement with all aspects of the art world and its professionals, and the principles of object-based and, in the case of contemporary art, context-based study.

The MA/Postgraduate Diploma in Contemporary Art was validated by the University of Manchester in 1995, with the MA/Postgraduate Diploma in Art Business validated in 1998.

From 2004 to 2008 the Institute expanded its postgraduate provision, to include the MA/Postgraduate Diploma in East Asian Art, the MA/Postgraduate Diploma in Photography and the MA/Postgraduate Diploma in Contemporary Design. A number of shorter courses, at both semester and summer level, were validated by the University of Manchester in 2010 and 2011 to form suites of credit-bearing (Level 6) continuing professional development provision. This provision has since been expanded and developed but is not within the scope of this review.

After initial validation by the Council for National Academic Awards in 1979, the University of Manchester became the Institute's validation partner in 1995. The Institute has a close working relationship with the University's School of Arts, Languages and Cultures, with which it liaises and collaborates, to secure and maintain a five-year, renewable contract. This was recently renewed in 2015, following a successful review in December 2014. The Institute currently offers intensively taught MA/Postgraduate Diploma programmes in:

- Art Business
- Contemporary Art
- Fine and Decorative Art
- East Asian Art
- Photography
- Contemporary Design.

At the time of the review there are 185 students on the programmes, with 22 academic and 41 administrative staff.

From 2000 until 2013 the Institute had an agreement for a separate, five-year split-site PhD whereby students were registered with the University of Manchester and supervised at both institutions. In that time two students successfully completed PhDs. Renewal of this provision is currently under review.

During the 2014-15 academic year, the Institute developed a framework of major amendments to the MA/Postgraduate Diploma programmes, towards a launch in autumn 2016. These changes of structure and content, and in some cases title, are designed to enable students to engage with a choice of courses across the range of programmes and to enhance student employability. The changes are in response to feedback from students and the University of Manchester, and received approval of validation from the University in July 2015. Thus, the portfolio of MA/Postgraduate Diploma programmes in London for the academic year 2016-17 will be as follows:

- Art Business
- Contemporary Art
- Fine and Decorative Art and Design
- Modern and Contemporary Asian Art.

In March 2013, the QAA annual monitoring report recorded that the Institute had made acceptable progress against its action plan and, in March 2014, the annual monitoring report concluded that the Institute had made commendable progress with continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision since the previous visit. The review team considered the progress made by the Institute in implementing the recommendation and concluded that they have all been satisfactorily addressed.

The 2012 QAA Review for Educational Oversight report included four areas of good practice and one desirable recommendation. The review team considered the progress made by the Institute in implementing the recommendation and concludes that they have all been satisfactorily addressed. The review team also concludes that progression of the areas of good practice have been undertaken.

Explanation of the findings about Sotheby's Institute of Art, London

This section explains the review findings in more detail.

Terms that may be unfamiliar to some readers have been included in a [brief glossary](#) at the end of this report. A fuller [glossary of terms](#) is available on the QAA website, and formal definitions of certain terms may be found in the operational description and handbook for the [review method](#), also on the QAA website.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Findings

1.1 The University of Manchester, as the awarding body, is responsible for the academic standards of the awards. As a partner, the Institute must, through its collaborative agreement, demonstrate equivalence with the quality, standard and content of comparable awards at the University. To do this it develops programmes at an initial stage using a university template which refers to the FHEQ and Subject Benchmark Statements.

1.2 The University has overall responsibility for ensuring that qualifications are mapped against national frameworks. Throughout the process of programme approval and validation, the University sets clear expectations about how the Institute should work with University colleagues to embed threshold academic standards into each programme. The Institute must therefore consider a range of Subject Benchmark Statements to ensure elements of their courses are taught to national guidelines. There are no master's level benchmark statements for the History of Art, Architecture and Design, but programme teams have considered relevant honours level statements and master's statement for business. In approving a programme, the University confirms that the award title is consistent with the titling conventions in the FHEQ.

1.3 The policies and procedures of the Institute would allow Expectation A1 to be met.

1.4 The review team considered programme specifications, programme approval procedures, and the University's validation arrangements. The review team explored the application of this process with programme managers and teaching staff within the Institute.

1.5 The Institute's master's qualifications are full-time, 12-month, taught degrees. For each programme the initial 120 credits culminate in a Postgraduate Diploma, and an additional 60-credit dissertation module extends the programmes to a full 180 master's qualification. These are clearly expressed in programme specifications, ensuring that documentation clearly defines the thresholds for both awards. Beyond its programme approval processes, the University's annual monitoring, programme amendment and external examiner processes all evaluate how programmes meet these thresholds and the expectations embedded in the FHEQ.

1.6 The review team concludes that Expectation A1 is met. The associated level of risk is low because the Institute operates within the University's guidelines and because of external examiner oversight.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

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

Findings

1.7 The University is responsible for the overall setting and maintenance of academic standards. The Institute currently meets these standards through its committees, policies and protocols, designed to support its particular focus and size.

1.8 The Institute has developed its governance structures in alignment with the University of Manchester's Procedures for the Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision. It operates a number of discrete policies and procedures on topics such as misconduct, complaints, mentoring, and academic appeals. Courses also conform to the University's assessment regulations.

1.9 The Institute has no Board of Governors, but the parent company comments on any significant developments or programme changes. The conduit for this is the Director, who attends, but does not chair, the Academic Board, which oversees the development of all academic activities within the Institute. The Board receives issues and outcomes raised at the Academic Standards Committee (ASC), chaired by Academic Quality Programme Liaison. These monthly meetings consider quality reports and changes to programmes and policies, but also act as a staff forum. Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) operate in each semester, providing a space for students to raise issues about the provision in a formal environment.

1.10 The policies and procedures of the Institute would allow Expectation A2.1 to be met.

1.11 The review team considered the quality handbook and minutes of meetings to determine how the committee structure within the Institute provides oversight of regulations. The team also met staff and students of the Institute.

1.12 The Institute recognises that it needs to clarify and improve the effectiveness of its committee structure; the review team received during the review proposed draft terms of reference and the composition of key committees. Minutes of committees demonstrate that, although the Institute considers its policies, procedures and academic frameworks, the committee structure does not formally approve these. The Director has ultimate responsibility for oversight of academic standards but this is not apparent in the current or proposed committee structures.

1.13 The monthly ASC provides a discursive environment as it effectively acts as a staff forum. There are currently no defined terms of reference and the proposed terms of reference need to clarify the relative roles and responsibilities. Currently, the Committee merges the appraisal of the quality assurance policies with the impact of their operation, encouraging a reactive approach, rather than a proactive one. The Institute could clarify the distinction between policy and operation in the proposed terms of reference.

1.14 The Institute has concerns about student representatives being in attendance for the staff discussions and there are no student representatives currently on the ASC. The Institute recognises that student representation at committees needs to be addressed and the revised composition of Academic Board makes provision for the inclusion of student

representatives; the Institute will consider the representation of students at ASC. The review team **recommends** that, by September 2016, the Institute establish clear terms of reference for, and the composition of, its Committees.

1.15 The review team concludes that Expectation A2.1 is met. The associated level of risk is moderate because although the Institute is developing its committee structures there are weaknesses in the operation of the governance structure and lack of clarity about responsibilities.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Moderate

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

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

Findings

1.16 The University is responsible for the accuracy and validity of programme specifications. Programme specifications contain the educational aims, the intended learning outcomes, and the expected student achievements, and are developed during the programme approval stage in consultation with the University's Collaborative Academic Advisers. All documentation and version control is maintained centrally by the Institute's Academic Quality team. Unit descriptors are developed from the programme specifications and outline more detailed information on the course delivery, assessment and more focused learning outcomes; this is then shared with students through handbooks. A definitive record is held centrally and appropriate processes are in place to ensure currency of the information.

1.17 The policies and procedures of the Institute would allow Expectation A2.2 to be met.

1.18 The review team saw examples of programme specifications and course descriptors, and met staff and students of the Institute.

1.19 The programme specifications of the Institute are detailed and map the headline learning outcomes to the courses of delivery. Key information about the programme delivery is contained in both the programme specification and the course descriptors and the Institute follows the University's continuous monitoring process to update their records through faculty away days, and programme team meetings.

1.20 Although programme specifications are not available on the public website, details about how the course is structured are available for prospective students. Once enrolled, many students have access to the definitive record through their course handbooks. These are approved annually, signed off by the Programme Director and are checked for accuracy by the quality team.

1.21 The review team concludes that Expectation A2.2 is met. The associated level of risk is low because the Institute has clear procedures to develop and monitor programme specifications.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

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

Findings

1.22 The University and the Institute share responsibility for programme development, approval and modification. A University Collaborative Academic Adviser and Collaborative Partnership Administrative Officer work with staff at the Institute in the development of all new programmes and any subsequent revisions. Final approval is by the University of Manchester.

1.23 The University's Procedures for the Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision describe the mechanisms which the Institute is required to follow in order to meet the requisite standards for initial programme/course approval and for amendments to courses.

1.24 The University is responsible for the academic standards of awards made in its name, irrespective of whether it delivers the programmes itself or whether this is done in whole or part by another institution. Academic standards of awards at the Institute are equivalent to those delivered by the University and are compatible with relevant UK reference points, including the FHEQ and the Quality Code.

1.25 Programmes at the Institute are approved by the University following standard procedures, including the consideration of the programme details, and resource matters (number of students/admissions criteria/staffing/learning infrastructure). The Institute must satisfy the University that any programme approved meets the aims/learning outcomes and standards of comparable programmes offered by the University.

1.26 The policies and procedures of the Institute would allow Expectation A3.1 to be met.

1.27 The review team evaluated arrangements for the approval of new programmes by reading documentation provided by the University and the Institute including the quality handbook, by considering committee and meeting minutes and through meetings with senior and programme staff of the Institute.

1.28 The design, development and approval of a range of programmes reflects the maturity of the relationship with the University and its confidence in the Institute's ability to maintain appropriate academic standards and to enhance student learning opportunities. In line with the University's key principles of collaboration, the Institute maintains the academic standards of the awards in line with all relevant benchmarks and guidance. The first validation by the University was in 1995. Since then, subsequent additional programmes have launched in 2008, 2010, 2011, and most recently in 2015. Dialogue with Collaborative Academic Advisers and other staff at the University indicates a detailed and deliberative process. Students confirmed their involvement in programme design processes.

1.29 When a new programme is developed, the University requires a two-stage approval process. Initially, a proposed programme or changes are discussed in the Institute by the Programme Director, programme teams, Academic Quality Programme Liaison and Deputy Director for formal review by the University in order to gain approval in principle for the development of the programme. This includes a business case to ensure a strategic fit to the

relevant school or faculty of the University. The Institute appoints a course development team, which works with the University to prepare the detailed proposals for the new programme, which are then approved by the University in accordance with its own procedures. The second stage is the development and approval of the detailed structure and content of the programme. The relevant school /faculty nominates an internal and external adviser to provide feedback on the academic coherence of the new programme during the drafting of the final submission. Once submitted to the University for approval it is subsequently forwarded to the University's Vice-President (Teaching, Learning & Students) for University ratification. The approval procedures allow for both internal and external scrutiny of the detailed proposals before the formal approval event; the Institute follows the University's procedures which are clear and rigorous. The review team noted the support provided by senior staff and University representatives throughout the design and approval process.

1.30 Discussions with senior staff confirm the process for the internal approval of programmes and the support and development of staff teams to enable them to work effectively with the University during the process of development and validation. Academic staff confirmed the processes involved for the design of new programmes and courses and incorporating student feedback; they commented on the support provided by senior staff, and those at the University throughout the design and approval process.

1.31 Although it was clear that the Institute was meeting the University's requirements for the design, development and approval of programmes it was less clear how the institute, through its deliberative structure, had always reached and approved a decision. This has led to a recommendation in Expectation A2.1.

1.32 The review team concludes that Expectation A3.1 is met. The associated level of risk is low because the Institute follows the arrangements for assessment set out by its awarding body and carries out its responsibilities effectively to ensure that the achievement of relevant learning outcomes has been demonstrated through assessment.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

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

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

Findings

1.33 All assessments are governed by the University's Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations. Marking and grading of students' work is carried out in line with University requirements. The Institute's Quality Assurance Handbook sets out the principles, policies and procedures relating to examinations and assessment. The Institute's Academic Board has overall responsibility for the oversight of assessment. Operational responsibility lies with the Quality team.

1.34 The achievement of programme, course and course intended learning outcomes are assessed through a variety of student learning activities and approaches: essay writing; examinations; seminar leading and participation; group collaborative writing; and individual, paired and group oral presentations. The assessment type, its weighting and its alignment with both overarching programme/course and course intended learning outcomes are examined and critiqued by the University throughout the approval and validation process, and through annual and periodical monitoring.

1.35 The Institute internally monitors the robustness and efficacy of its learning outcomes to assessment alignment through postgraduate cross-programme/course moderation.

1.36 External examiners are appointed and employed by the University of Manchester on the nomination by the Institute. External examiners advise and monitor curricula and assessment thresholds.

1.37 The Institute follows the University's regulations and guidelines in its assessment of student work. The Quality Assurance Handbook sets out the arrangements for examination and assessment, late submission of assignments, resubmission, mitigating circumstances and the role of the external examiner. The Institute uses the University's postgraduate taught assessed coursework grading criteria and generic grading criteria.

1.38 The policies and procedures of the Institute would allow Expectation A3.2 to be met.

1.39 The review team reviewed the Quality Assurance Handbook and the University's postgraduate taught regulations and met senior staff, programme leaders, teaching staff and students during the review visit.

1.40 Course and programme specifications identify aims and learning outcomes, together with assessment methods and strategies. These are made available to academic staff through the intranet and contained in most, but not all, programme handbooks. Students confirmed that they were aware of learning outcomes through their handbooks and assignment briefs.

1.41 Throughout the approval and validation process, the University examines and critiques the choice of assessment activities, weighting and alignment with programme or course intended learning outcomes. For example, the taught portion of all MAs test student achievement through summative and formative assessment aligned to programme and course-specific intended learning outcomes. The University subsequently monitors the effectiveness of assessment through annual and periodic review and manages any changes through its programme amendment process.

1.42 The Institute implements cross-programme and course moderation to monitor the alignment of assessment activities to learning outcomes. This process involves academic staff from differing disciplines moderating samples for evidence, such as clarity of assessment briefs. This confirms that assessment activities measure the attainment of learning outcomes. External examiner reports assure that the programmes meet UK threshold standards. Opportunities for enhancement of outcome/assessment alignment are further afforded through semester and course student questionnaires and through SSLC feedback.

1.43 An outcomes-based approach is in place at the Institute. Students are clear about the processes for assessment, and staff made reference to the support given to them for assessment design, marking and moderation through work with colleagues and the University, together with documentation in handbooks and on the virtual learning environment (VLE).

1.44 The review team concludes that Expectation A3.2 is met. The associated level of risk is low because the Institute follows the arrangements for assessment set out by its awarding body and carries out its responsibilities effectively to ensure that the achievement of relevant learning outcomes has been demonstrated through assessment.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

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

Findings

1.45 The Institute adheres to the University's processes for annual monitoring and review in accordance with its collaborative agreement. It shares responsibility for annual monitoring with the University, but the University leads on periodic review. The approach is outlined in the 'Guidance and Procedures for the Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision'. It provides a framework against which the Institute structures and approaches its governance, policy and procedural design, faculty support structures and its administrative systems.

1.46 The Institute implements the University's annual and five-year (periodic) monitoring cycles in respect of the Institute's maintenance and enhancement of standards. This includes academic programme/course delivery, adherence to its standards of student and staff support and to its regulations, and to its expectations of standards within the academic governance structure.

1.47 The policies and procedures of the Institute would allow Expectation A3.3 to be met.

1.48 The review team considered annual monitoring reports, periodic review reports, associated action plans and minutes of key committees. The review team also met senior staff, programme leaders, teaching staff, support staff and students.

1.49 The Institute complies with the University's review cycles in a timely manner. The University operates an annual monitoring and a five-year periodic review cycle, for which academic staff and senior management produce reports and data. University Collaborative Academic Advisers regularly provide guidance to the Institute, further supported by ongoing engagement with the University's Teaching and Learning Support Office and the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures' Collaborative Partnership Administrative Officer.

1.50 The University's periodic review process is undertaken in order to ensure that the Institute has the necessary quality assurance structures in place and that those structures and processes for quality management and enhancement of the validated programmes are effective. Following each five-year review, the University approved a new agreement between the University and the Institute.

1.51 The Institute regards monitoring as an ongoing process and key to its quality assurance processes. Teaching teams drive the process at programme level, aided by the Academic Quality Team and other professional services. Individual reports result in a programme-specific action plan, which teams monitor throughout the following year. An Institute programme annual monitoring report draws on the individual programme reports to collate key action points into a single document. Each semester, programme committees consider quality assurance and enhancement issues for consideration by ASC and Academic Board. This process also disseminates good practice.

1.52 Following the University periodic review in December 2013, the University requested a further extraordinary review to evaluate the progress of procedures in connection with academic misconduct. The University had full confidence in this respect and renewed the partnership agreement. The process is one of critical reflection of key data and the Institute's own self-evaluation, produced collaboratively by Programme Directors, members of the Academic Quality Team, Management Team members, Admissions and the Director of the Careers Service.

1.53 Annual monitoring reports review the previous year's action plan as well as staff and student feedback gathered through programme or course committees, external examiners' reports and statistical data. External examiners provide the University with assurance that programmes meet UK academic threshold standards.

1.54 The review team found that the annual monitoring reports are detailed and provide a constructive and well considered overview of the programmes. They draw on a range of information, the process is well understood by managers and staff and allows issues to be addressed including the dissemination of good practice.

1.55 Although it is clear that the Institute is meeting the University's requirements for the monitoring and periodic review of programmes it is less clear how the Institute through its deliberative structure systematically considers and reviews the overall annual monitoring action plan. Through discussion with Institute staff and from the review of evidence, the team concludes that the management and governance structures would benefit from clear protocols and standing orders which clearly set out how key academic decisions are reached and approved. This has led to a recommendation in Expectation A2.1.

1.56 The review team concludes that Expectation A3.3 is met. The associated level of risk is low because the Institute effectively carries out its responsibilities for monitoring and periodic review in accordance with University requirements and these processes ensure that academic standards are being achieved and maintained.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

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

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

Findings

1.57 The University is responsible for the standards of awards. In maintaining academic standards, the Institute draws formally on the external opinion of the University and on feedback from external examiners. Less formally, the Institute draws on a wide range of industry contacts.

1.58 The oversight by the University ensures that external opinion underpins the programme approval process and its subsequent delivery. The University formally seeks external guidance after the first stage of the programme approval process and appoints external examiners for each programme to provide feedback on academic standards. Programme Directors consider the external examiners' reports through programme committees. Informally, the Institute also benefits from a range of networks of external advisers and critical friends.

1.59 The policies and procedures of the Institute would allow Expectation A3.4 to be met.

1.60 The review team considered external examiner reports, programme approval documentation and met managers and teaching staff.

1.61 External examiners' feedback evaluates the Institute's academic standards within the national framework in terms of programme content, approach, assessment and teaching methodology. External examiners review samples of student work in advance of each semester examination board. They also consider the context and robustness of marking criteria and thresholds, ensuring that external subject expertise and good and best practice from other institutions inform staff practice and student outcomes. The Institute draws on constant informal feedback from guest lecturers and part-time professional staff who teach on the programmes.

1.62 The review team concludes that Expectation A3.4 is met. The associated level of risk is low because the Institute observes the University's requirement for external input at all stages of programme validation and delivery.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

1.63 In reaching its judgement about threshold academic standards, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook.

1.64 All of the applicable Expectations in this area have been met and the level of risk is judged to be low except for one which is deemed to be moderate. There is one recommendation relating to the formalisation of the terms of reference and composition of committees.

1.65 The review team concludes that the setting and maintenance of academic standards **meets** UK expectations.

2 Judgement: The quality of student learning opportunities

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

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

Findings

2.1 Responsibility for formal academic approval of awards lies with the awarding University in all cases. Programme development and modification is shared by the Institute with the University. The Institute works with University colleagues to ensure that new programmes or modifications align with University procedures.

2.2 The Institute regards programme design, development, approval and updating as fundamental to the enhancement of the quality of student learning. The instigation for new programmes and updates arises from academic staff or from student feedback, or input from professional service departments and external stakeholders. Faculty retreats, the ASC, Academic Board, Programme Directors' Meetings, Management Team meetings and focus meetings with students all facilitate the subsequent development process. For all validations and major programme amendments, the University requires a detailed written rationale and the input of external advisers.

2.3 The University's Guidance and Procedures for the Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision clearly identify the nature and responsibilities of the collaborative partnership and state that it must comply with the University's key principals of collaboration.

2.4 The policies and procedures of the Institute would allow Expectation B1 to be met.

2.5 The review team read programme approval guidelines and saw examples of programme approval processes. The team also considered the approved programme specifications and spoke with senior staff, programme leaders, teaching staff and students about the process of designing and modifying programmes.

2.6 The Institute implements the University's procedures for programme design, development and approval. The Institute regularly updates its provision so that it remains aligned with student demand, the needs of employers, the changing nature of student learning, the higher education landscape, and the changing nature of the art world.

2.7 The Faculty Retreat and the ASC are used to reflect upon the academic experience of students, examples include student feedback, data on progression and academic achievement, input from departments such as the Marketing Department, the Careers Service, the library and IT, and information from external stakeholders such as employers and the University. In addition, discussions are held at Academic Board, Programme Directors' Meetings, and Management Team meetings. Significant curricular change is led by the Director together with the Deputy Director. For the introduction both of Navigating the Art World in 2014 and the revised MA/Postgraduate Diploma programmes from 2016-17, the Director held focus meetings with all current students. Students are involved in the design of new programmes in response to student feedback and student views are taken seriously.

2.8 The design, development and approval of a range of programmes reflects the maturity of the relationship with the University and the University's confidence in the Institute's ability to maintain appropriate academic standards and to enhance student learning opportunities. In line with the University's key principles of collaboration, the Institute maintains the academic standards of the awards in line with all relevant benchmarks and guidance. These principles also require partner institutions to demonstrate they can successfully deliver programmes to appropriate academic standards.

2.9 The University provides support to the Institute in compiling programme documentation for approval. Reports of validation events demonstrate that the process fully considers academic standards and student learning opportunities, including academic externality. The definitive programme specifications provide examples of documentation made available to staff at the Institute. The review team met employers who confirmed their involvement in curriculum design. The process for the design and validation of programmes, in partnership with the University, is effective in practice.

2.10 Although it is clear that the Institute is meeting the University's requirements for the design, development and approval of programmes it is less clear how the Institute through its deliberative structure reaches an approved decision. Through discussion with Institute staff and from the review of evidence, the team concludes that the Institute's committee structures would benefit from clear terms of reference which set out clearly how key academic decisions are reached and approved. This has led to a recommendation in Expectation A2.1.

2.11 The review team concludes that Expectation B1 is met. The associated level of risk is low because the Institute operates effective processes for the design, development and approval of programmes and discharges its responsibilities to the University with regard to academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

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

Findings

2.12 The Institute has a clear admissions policy which is freely accessible to prospective students; and information about the programme, its admissions process and key information before enrolment is widely available. The admissions procedure is set out in the Graduate Admissions policy which complies with the University admissions policy. The applications process is managed by the Admissions Department and all students are interviewed by academic staff as part of the process. Fifty-six per cent of the Institute's students come from outside the UK and the Institute provides additional support for those needing to apply for a Tier 4 Visa.

2.13 Relevant information is available to prospective students about the programme and the Institute on the website in order for them to make an informed choice of where to study. The process of admissions is made transparent to prospective students through the website, where admissions requirements, financial information and required documentation are clearly available. The Institute also provides additional information for prospective students who have a disability and encourages disabled students to talk with the student support team prior to their application.

2.14 After students have accepted an offer, the Institute supports their transition to the programme through a 'welcome' website. This includes information about moving to London, student support, financial information and course reading lists. When students formally enrol on the course, information is sent to the University to register them for the award.

2.15 The policies and procedures of the Institute would allow Expectation B2 to be met.

2.16 The review team analysed the admissions policies of both the University and the Institute and met staff and students. The team also looked at additional guidance provided to international and disabled students prior to application and enrolment, as well as the public and welcome websites, and the monitoring of admissions decisions.

2.17 Students are provided with detailed information about the application process and of the course content. The Institute monitors its applications and recruitment through management meetings and SSLCs, and measures the success of the recruitment process in programme teams and through annual monitoring and surveys. The Institute has very high retention and completion rates of students and links this to their robust admissions and interview process.

2.18 The admissions team has developed a template for the interview process to ensure consistency and practice is shared between academic staff through faculty away days. A recent away day held a discussion about good practice in admissions. Staff who interview also receive training to undertake this role effectively.

2.19 Although there is no appeals procedure for students who fail to secure a place on the MA/Postgraduate Diploma programmes, they are provided with detailed feedback and, where appropriate, offered a place on a semester or summer course to enhance their subject knowledge.

2.20 The 'welcome' website provides a range of information about London and how to prepare for study and is available to students after they have accepted a place on the course. Students are very happy with the admissions process, stating that staff are friendly, responsive and helpful. International students feel supported through the process. The effective management of the admissions process, which impacts on student satisfaction and achievement, is **good practice**.

2.21 The review team concludes that Expectation B2 is met. The associated level of risk is low because the Institute has a clear admissions policy, relevant information is freely accessible for prospective students to access and there is ongoing monitoring of the policy and its implementation.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

Quality Code, *Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching*

Findings

2.22 The Academic Board has oversight of learning and teaching. Monthly meetings of the ASC and faculty away days provide a forum for teaching staff to discuss common academic issues and share good practice. The ASC, which reports to Academic Board, ensures that the Institute operates within the requirements of the University's Academic Code of Practice.

2.23 The Institute does not have a formal learning and teaching strategy but its Strategic Plan aims to blend different learning and teaching approaches to realise students' potential. Printed and online materials provide information to students about the Institute's strategic view of learning and teaching. Programme and course handbooks detail the practicalities of learning, teaching and assessment.

2.24 The foundation of the Institute's approach to learning and teaching is regular and direct interaction with works of art. Emphasis is on the quality, knowledge and relevance of the staff, visiting lecturers and experts who provide underpinning scholarship. Students on all programmes engage in an extensive schedule of trips, site visits and interactions with the art world to prepare them for employment.

2.25 The University formally approves all staff appointments. A Mentoring Policy for new staff supports transition into their teaching roles. The Study Leave Committee approves applications for short-term research leave and has approved four in the last year.

2.26 The policies and procedures of the Institute would allow Expectation B3 to be met.

2.27 The team considered the University's Academic Code of Practice and the Institute's Strategic Plan and committee minutes. The review team met managers, staff and students.

2.28 All programmes have very high contact hours and students confirm that this, and the reputation of staff, inform their application to the Institute. The Institute aims to appoint accomplished experts and practitioners with a successful higher education teaching background. Of the current staff, 82 per cent have a doctorate, the remainder all have a master's level qualification. Consultant lecturers, who work on a part-time basis, are all active in the profession, such as art dealers or gallery managers, ensuring a clear balance of academic and professional input into the programmes.

2.29 The Institute collects student feedback about the quality of teaching and learning through student surveys and student representatives at the SSLCs. Students confirm that the Institute is highly responsive to student requests and concerns. A recently developed section of the feedback questionnaire addresses student engagement with learning. For example, this has led to significant upgrade of its computer and technical equipment.

2.30 A variety of staff development activities provides opportunities to inform approaches to higher education pedagogy. These include training days and a dedicated staff member to support staff training. The Institute shares best practice between the teaching teams through

training events and retreat days, which staff confirm have a significant impact on their development. The Institute, despite its size, also supports staff research activity. This underpins student learning and the students value this highly. Academic staff can apply for research funding to the Research and Development Committee, and the Institute encourages staff engagement in projects and conferences. Staff actively engage with peer-reviewed articles and publications and often work with students on shared research areas, establishing some highly distinctive research groups. Outcomes of research activity are shared at faculty planning days. The Institute has already produced a series of scholarly publications with its publishing partner and has published two volumes of student dissertations. These demonstrate the students' capacity for highly distinctive analytical, critical and creative thinking. The Institute's commitment to the distinctive and shared staff and student research environment which contributes to student learning opportunities is **good practice**.

2.31 Teaching occurs in a historic, listed building and students appreciate the specialist and focused teaching environment. The Institute has invested in its own VLE to provide students with information about their courses, key reading and timetables. Students have raised concerns about the content and navigation of the VLE and the Institute has used surveys to improve and integrate the VLE with the needs of staff and students. Students recognise that the Institute has responded to their concerns.

2.32 The review team concludes that Expectation B3 is met. The associated level of risk is low because the Institute's approach to students is highly responsive and its support of staff development and research is excellent.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

Quality Code, Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement

Findings

2.33 Institutional policies derive from University documents, where appropriate, and draw on knowledge from the University's support services. The Institute does not have a formal learning and teaching policy but the enhancement of student development and achievement is informally embedded in the Institute's Quality Manual. The Academic Board is responsible for all policies to support student development and achievement.

2.34 University oversight of the Institute, through the annual monitoring and periodic review processes, checks the Institute's actions against the broader national student experience. The Institute monitors student feedback about development and achievement through surveys and focus groups and formal SSLCs. At programme level, action plans feed into annual monitoring reports, which the Academic Board considers before these go to the University.

2.35 The Institute aims to provide an outstanding student experience, from recruitment to post graduation. A key strategic aim is to monitor and enhance the student experience and for the student voice to inform change, ensuring that learning and teaching, services and facilities meet student needs and enhance their learning opportunities. Particular emphasis is on students working within the industry, with the aim of improving career prospects.

2.36 The policies and procedures of the Institute would allow Expectation B4 to be met.

2.37 The review team considered the Institute's strategic plan and policies to determine its overall approach to student development and achievement, read minutes from committees and spoke with staff and students.

2.38 Prior to commencing their studies, students have access to admissions staff and online resources such as the welcome website. In particular, the website provides excellent information about living in London, moving to the UK and visa requirements. The 2012 QAA Review for Educational Oversight cited the welcome website as good practice and the Institute has continued to enhance this service, such as amplifying accommodation information for students.

2.39 The comprehensive student induction and orientation processes highlight expectations, practices and procedures appropriate to master's level study in a highly specialist environment. Given the high proportion of international students, induction places particular emphasis on living in London, including safety talks by the Metropolitan Police, introductions to Student Support, IT, and the Careers and Library Services. Students are clear that the induction is detailed and highly supportive and the Institute monitors the induction process through an entry survey.

2.40 The library is a key resource that houses an extensive collection of specialist printed matter and sales catalogues. Students appreciate the Institute's investment in electronic resources. While students on the MA in Contemporary Art programme would prefer a greater physical stock of printed material in the library, students on all programmes have access to some of London's world-leading libraries and collections, such as the British Library and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Library staff offer extensive support and guidance and students describe the library service as excellent. Likewise, the IT facilities within the Institute respond to student needs.

2.41 All students have a personal tutor with whom they have at least one formal meeting each semester to complete their personal development review. Students recognise that this facilitates their personal, academic and professional development. An institutional open-door policy ensures that students have immediate access to academic advice and support, which students value highly. Students can seek advice from Student Support throughout their studies and this support ranges from rental agreements, personal and online meetings, self-development workshops, health advice or a range of online and social media information and resources. The Institute is currently establishing a counselling service and has already established a night line for out-of-hours support.

2.42 For students with a disability, the Institute aims to make any reasonable adjustments. For example, the Institute recently provided real-time captioning for one profoundly deaf student. All students have the opportunity to disclose any known disability and the Institute provides support equivalent to the Disabled Student Allowance, for example, by loaning laptops to students during the dissertation period or providing specialist tutors. The range and quality of support that enables students to fully engage with their studies is **good practice**.

2.43 The recently developed Navigating the Art World course enables the Institute to provide core teaching for all students in respect of academic practice and expectations of their level of study. A recent extraordinary review by the University cited these approaches as good practice. The Institute continues to sustain a responsive approach to enabling student development and achievement. For example, when student feedback described sessions on plagiarism as repetitive, the Institute changed the delivery of these sessions to reflect the diversity of academic backgrounds.

2.44 Preparation for dissertation writing for MA students is central to the transition in learning modes from the first two semesters of taught material. A Dissertation Protocol sets out the requirements and timeline for dissertations and, at the end of their first semester, students receive the Dissertation Handbook. During the second semester, essay writing workshops and tutorials help students to develop research topics and research methodologies. The recent addition of a 5,000-word essay during the taught programme aims to provide better preparation for students.

2.45 The Institute aims to provide employability skills and enterprise training in every curriculum to facilitate graduate career progression. Programmes prepare students directly for employment through industry specific assessment activities, such as students giving talks at Tate Modern. The research profile of staff (see Expectation B3) places programmes at the forefront of the disciplines, which is complemented by the engagement of consultant and guest lecturers who work in the industry, providing students with insight into current practice and trends. The Careers Service ensures that students have key employment skills, such as interview techniques, and helps to organise extracurricular placement and internships and a jobs vacancy board. Many of these jobs are international, thereby offering support to students whose visas do not permit them to work in the UK. For graduates, the emerging alumni network means they can continue to use the Institute to access employment after they have left. The Institute aims to establish a formal committee of industry advisers to provide a more concentrated form of external advice. The proactive and comprehensive approach to career development that contributes to student employability is **good practice**.

2.46 The review team concludes that Expectation B4 is met. The associated level of risk is low because the Institute has sustained a highly developed approach to enabling student development and achievement.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

Quality Code, Chapter B5: Student Engagement

Findings

2.47 The Institute's approach to student engagement is embedded in the Strategic Plan which conforms to the University's Principles and Guidance for Student Representation and follows further guidance in the University's Procedures for the Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision. The Institute provides a number of ways in which students are able to contribute to the enhancement of their learning experience through committees and surveys. Course representatives are provided with support to undertake this role and the Institute's procedures are compliant with the requirements of the University.

2.48 Student representatives are elected or selected from their cohort and details about the role are given to students at induction. The number of course representatives is based on size of the cohort. Once chosen, student representatives receive additional support to undertake the role from the Academic Quality Team.

2.49 Student representatives are invited to participate in an SSLC twice per year where key staff are able to hear from students any issues they may have about the course or the infrastructure of the Institute. Student representatives also meet University staff during monitoring meetings and periodic review activity. As well as SSLC meetings, representatives are invited to attend one or two Academic Board meetings per year to provide feedback.

2.50 The Institute's Director also holds informal meetings with students, and students are able to give feedback through course surveys, the result of which is reviewed by the course teams and feeds into annual monitoring reports. Discussions about results of surveys also take place at SSLCs.

2.51 The policies and procedures of the Institute would allow Expectation B5 to be met.

2.52 The review team evaluated a range of evidence including the University guidance documents, SSLC minutes, minutes of Academic Board and ASC, annual monitoring reports, and information provided to student representatives. The review team also met staff and students from the Institute.

2.53 Students feel that their opinion is valued by the Institute and can see changes to their programmes after voicing issues. The SSLC minutes note actions that have been taken since the previous meeting and students are generally satisfied with the resolution to problems they raise formally through the SSLC. While the SSLCs are working well as a forum for students to raise issues, it was unclear from the minutes the extent to which the Institute uses these forums to consult with students about strategic initiatives or proactively engage students in discussions which go beyond their engagement at a programme level. Course representatives the review team met had a basic understanding of their role but felt they could be better supported to undertake it effectively.

2.54 The Institute is very responsive to informal feedback from students and the review team heard many examples of where students and staff are able to informally discuss the programme. The student voice is monitored by the Institute through the annual monitoring process and the review team saw examples of programme teams reflecting on student feedback and evaluating course representative's performance through the annual monitoring reports. Students were consulted on the recent curriculum changes, attending forums to

discuss the new Navigating the Art World course and programme developments are regularly discussed at SSLC meetings.

2.55 Students are not formally represented at Institute level committees; however, students have attended some Academic Board meetings in the past for a special agenda item. When present, students are asked to bring a specific issue to the Board's attention and some general feedback from SSLCs. This enables the Institute to gather feedback on some of their strategic priorities, but after this agenda item students are asked to leave the meeting before the main business commences.

2.56 The Institute regularly surveys students through course quizzes to help staff to plan their teaching for next year but this data is not discussed formally at Institute-wide committees and instead is discussed at programme meetings and reviewed centrally by the Quality Team. Students are also able to provide feedback about Student Services, through SSLC and surveys.

2.57 The SSLCs are clearly working as a forum for students to highlight issues and their views are taken seriously, but at Institute level students are absent from key decision-making committees and are not active partners in the development of institutional policies, procedures and strategies. The University has also recommended to the Institute that they look at student representation on committees. During the visit the review team was presented with draft terms of reference and composition for committees which make provision for formal student representation at Academic Board. Discussion is underway on the inclusion of students on ASC. The review team **recommends** that, by September 2016, the Institute articulate the strategy to fully embed students as partners at all levels. This has also led to a recommendation in Expectation A2.1.

2.58 The review team concludes that Expectation B5 is met. The associated level of risk is moderate because, despite mechanisms to collect feedback from students both formally and informally, more could be done to engage students proactively as partners.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Moderate

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

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

Findings

2.59 The University's Assessment Framework document sets our clear principles for assessment for all programmes with which the Institute aligns its policies. The Institute recognises that assessment must be educational in helping students to learn and to reinforce previous learning, ethical in that it is fair, transparent and non-discriminatory and that it is compliant with the regulations, policies, procedures and guidance of the University.

2.60 The University's core principles for assessment underpin the Institute's assessment activities. In line with its agreement, the Institute sets assessment tasks, completes the first marking, moderates student work and returns feedback to students. The University maintains oversight of assessment through its external examiners, examinations boards and through the annual monitoring and period review processes. Each programme includes a series of assessment tasks which make up the assessment scheme and is summarised in the programme specification.

2.61 Responsibility for designing assessment activities rests with the Institute. Staff work closely with the University to design programme specifications, intended learning outcomes and the assessment schemes. The Institute ensures the currency of assessment through modifications and periodic reviews. The Institute makes reasonable adjustments to assessment practice for students with documented disabilities or learning difficulties. Students can apply for mitigating circumstances which the Mitigating Circumstances Committee considers prior to the examination board.

2.62 Institute staff engage with students to explain learning outcomes, assessment tasks and grading criteria. This information is included in student handbooks and written assessment briefs. In addition, the Institute places an emphasis on giving students a good understanding of academic practice and, in particular, what constitutes poor or unacceptable practice. Handbooks include information on plagiarism, referencing, ethical behaviour and responsibilities for assessable group activities.

2.63 The assessment framework for feedback requires that the feedback on assessed work needs to be timely and contains positive and encouraging comments with clear indicators for future improvement. In order that assessment is fair, transparent and not biased, much of the marking is anonymous. Additionally, the Institute makes reasonable adjustments to assessment practice for students with a documented disability including, for example, in-class examinations in a supervised room away from other students; delivering oral presentations away from other students and extended times and deadlines for examinations and submission of assignments.

2.64 The Institute operates a mitigating circumstances process for students who encounter sudden or unforeseen circumstances. A mitigating circumstances panel considers each case and passes a recommendation to the examination board.

2.65 Teaching staff and programme coordinators have an effective system to ensure that the conduct of assessment is carried out securely and in compliance with University policy.

Students submit their work through the VLE which automatically checks the assignments by the production of an originality report. The originality report provides a summary of matching or highly similar text in a submitted assignment with text in a repository of previously submitted work, active and archived internet information and electronic periodicals and journals. Through the VLE, students are able to confirm a declaration that the work is their own. Student marks are held securely on the Institute's network which is both password and identity protected. Students confirm that they are made aware of the plagiarism rules set by the University and upheld by the Institute; students confirmed that they are reminded to monitor their work.

2.66 The Institute has in place an assessment feedback form in which performance is indicated relative to criteria with a section for comments to provide details of strengths and weaknesses. The marking criteria are aligned to Levels 6 and 7 of the FHEQ thresholds. Assessment feedback forms are accompanied by one-to-one tutorials.

2.67 Academic staff monitor and moderate samples of student work, assessment briefs and assessment feedback forms. The process of regular exposure to the marking practices of colleagues is of considerable value in fostering a common and agreed approach to assessment. Cross-programme moderation is structured and facilitated by the Academic Quality Team and by programme coordinators. Summaries of moderation are considered by the ASC. There is a separate moderation process in place for the MA/Postgraduate Diploma shared core course Navigating the Art World, a 10 per cent sample is moderated.

2.68 The composition of examination boards includes teaching staff for the courses under consideration and University appointed external examiners, the Collaborative Academic Advisers and Collaborative Partnership Administrative Officer. Boards are chaired by a designated member of academic staff who is responsible for ensuring that appropriate decisions are reached. Meetings are serviced by administrative staff. Comprehensive minutes of examination boards are taken. Postgraduate programmes hold two examination boards per year (one progression and one final board).

2.69 The policies and procedures of the Institute would allow Expectation B6 to be met.

2.70 The review team considered the quality handbook, programme specifications and policies relating to aspects of the assessment process, external examiner reports and minutes of programme team meetings and assessment boards. The review team also met senior staff, programme leaders, teaching staff and students.

2.71 The induction programme details programme assessment to students which is especially important for non-UK or EU students. Staff explain intended learning outcomes, assessment tasks, grading criteria and how criteria are interpreted and how they enable staff to recognise student achievement. Student handbooks detail plagiarism, referencing, ethical behaviour and student responsibilities for assessment.

2.72 Marking criteria align with Levels 6 and 7 of FHEQ thresholds and students perceive that programmes increase in rigor as the year progresses. In line with University best marking practice, the Institute anonymously double marks work of 3,000 words and above and all MA dissertations. Double-marking teams meet to agree marks; the student receives the agreed mark and copies of both markers' comments. The University has commended the Institute's systematised process of internal moderation. The process is clearly set out, with both first and second markers giving clear feedback and with moderation by colleagues from another programme providing further scrutiny. Students confirm that this process is clear and that grading reflects the adherence to referencing protocols and writing styles. The MA cross-moderation scheme introduced in 2013 has clearly benefited staff of the Institute in ensuring that assessment is consistent, fair and effective.

2.73 The Institute aims to provide positive feedback and feedforward and provide timely feedback for assessed work. Staff use a generic Institute-wide assessment feedback form that encourages tutors to indicate good practice and areas for improvement. This is clearly set out, although some students think that grading criteria could be clearer, but accept that, when requested, staff provide further explanation. Students agree that feedback forms are valid and support individual learning progress. Tutors provide individual tutorials to discuss assessment feedback. The Academic Quality Team compiles summaries of moderation and table these at the ASCs to ensure that moderation continues to be effective.

2.74 Students confirm that the variety of different types of assessment activity is plentiful and clearly set out in programme specifications and assignment briefs. In terms of assessment literacy, students confirm that the requirements and expectations are clearly defined and are academically challenging. In discussion with students, the team recognised a clear understanding of all aspects of assessment.

2.75 The definitive and approved programme specifications have not been published in full to students, but have been adapted for inclusion in some student handbooks using student friendly language. However, key aspects in some handbooks have been omitted, for example, the programme learning outcomes. The review team **recommends** that, by September 2016, the Institute ensures that all students have access to their programme intended learning outcomes.

2.76 The review team concludes that Expectation B6 is met. The associated level of risk is low because the Institute operates equitable, valid and reliable processes of assessment in accordance with the requirements of the University.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

Quality Code, Chapter B7: External Examining

Findings

- 2.77 The University is responsible for the appointment, training and contractual obligations of external examiners to provide feedback on academic standards. The University's Teaching and Learning Support Officer maintains an accurate and up-to-date database of all external examiners and monitors their timely appointment.
- 2.78 The Institute follows the University's procedures for external examining and the University oversees the external examiner process.
- 2.79 The Institute identifies and nominates potential external examiners, drawing on its knowledge of current UK expertise in the specialist areas of study. The University's Teaching and Learning Support Officer and colleagues from the School of Arts, Histories and Cultures review the application before submitting it for final approval by the University Senate. University procedures enable external examiners to express and highlight any serious concerns, but the Institute has had no examples of this to date.
- 2.80 The policies and procedures of the Institute would allow Expectation B7 to be met.
- 2.81 The review team read external examiner reports, quality handbooks and the agreement with the University. The team also spoke with senior and teaching staff.
- 2.82 External examiners scrutinise and report on student handbooks and assignment briefs. They receive an appropriate sample of assessed and moderated assignment work for each course. External examiners view a previously agreed number of dissertations, but also view any failed scripts, or any scripts where the internal markers disagree. External examiners also see every dissertation considered for the award of a distinction.
- 2.83 The Institute holds one progression board and one final board annually. Teaching staff attend the final board along with the external examiner, a University Collaborative Academic Adviser and the Collaborative Partnership Administrative Officer. A designated member of academic staff chairs each board. Examiners give a verbal report at the board and subsequently submit a written report to the office of the Vice President (Teaching, Learning and Students) at the University. The University identifies any issues of concern and then circulates the report internally to the Academic Advisers and Collaborative Partnership Administrative Officer, and externally to the Deputy Director of the Institute. The report then passes to the Academic Quality Team and the relevant Programme Director and team. The Programme Director responds in writing to the external examiner. Students have access to external examiner reports on the VLE.
- 2.84 Programme Directors consider external examiner reports through programme committees, identifying any necessary actions. Annual monitoring reports and their action plans document responses to external examiner comments. Annual monitoring uses information from the reports, and the institutional report for the University should contain an overview of all examiner reports. Because of the lateness of receipt of the examiner reports, the 2014-15 institutional report does not provide the required overview. This is the only document that provides such an overview of all external examiner reports for the Institute's Academic Board, although this process is not clear in the quality handbook or proposed terms of reference of committees. This has led to a recommendation in Expectation A2.1. In the absence of external examiner reports in the annual monitoring report, there is no Institute-wide consideration of key themes arising from the external examiner process.

The review team **recommends** that, by June 2016, the Institute further develops the means of recording and responding to an overview of all external examiner reports.

2.85 The review team concludes that Expectation B7 is met. The associated level of risk is low because the Institute complies with the requirements of the University.

Expectation: Met

Level of risk: Low

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

Quality Code, Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review

Findings

2.86 The Institute implements the University's processes for annual monitoring and review in order to ensure that the academic standards and student learning opportunities set at the time of validation are maintained. Accordingly, the Institute shares responsibility for annual monitoring with the University, but the University leads on periodic review.

The University's Guidance and Procedures for the Quality Assurance of Collaborative Provision provides the procedural framework for programme and course monitoring and comprises both periodic and annual review. These processes (quality assurance and enhancement) enable the University to evaluate the Institute's programmes and courses and the frameworks and resources that support student experience and engagement.

2.87 The Institute regards monitoring as an ongoing process and key to its quality assurance processes. Teaching teams drive the process at programme level, aided by the Academic Quality Team and other professional services. They produce action plans which they monitor throughout the following year. The ASC considers these issues and reports them to the Academic Board. This process also disseminates good practice.

2.88 The University's review process reflects upon a range of information and data including annual monitoring outcomes, external reference points (FHEQ characteristics/ Subject Benchmark Statements) in order to ensure that programmes and courses continue to meet all relevant criteria for the awards to which they lead. In preparation for review, the Institute produces a report collaboratively by Programme Directors, members of the Academic Quality Team, Management Team members, Admissions and the Director of the Careers Service. An external subject specialist nominated by the Institute participates on the University's review panel. The University expressed approval of the Institute's robust developments and initiatives, particularly in respect to its fit-for-practice policy and procedure. The Institute's last full periodic review was in December 2013. The outcome of this was an approval for a renewal of the Partnership Agreement for another five years, but the University asked that a more specific additional review take place in 2014 to monitor progress on the development of processes connected to academic misconduct.

2.89 The policies and procedures of the Institute would allow Expectation B8 to be met.

2.90 The review team evaluated the Institute's arrangements for annual monitoring by reading the Quality Handbook, review reports, annual monitoring reports, associated action plans and committee minutes and through meetings with students, programme leaders, academic staff and senior managers.

2.91 The Institute operates a process of continuous monitoring for institutional programme and course quality assurance aimed at leading to enhancement. Continuous monitoring is driven by teaching teams, the Academic Quality Team, the Management Team, Admissions, the Careers Service, library, IT Services, and Student Support. Support departments are at various stages of developing their own annual monitoring process for their respective services. This is not yet a formalised process, but could add value in the future.

2.92 The review team found that the annual monitoring process is robust and generally effective, with strategic oversight being maintained by the Academic Board. The Institute complies with the University's review cycles in a timely manner. University Collaborative Academic Advisers regularly provide guidance to the institute, further supported by ongoing engagement with the University's Teaching and Learning Support Office and the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures' Collaborative Partnership Administrative Officer. The Institute meets all action plan requirements from these reviews.

2.93 In meetings with senior staff, teaching staff and students, the review team found that the processes for monitoring and review are fully understood. Annual monitoring reports review the previous year's action plan as well as staff and student feedback gathered through programme or course committees, external examiners' reports and statistical data. External examiners provide the University with assurance that programmes meet UK academic threshold standards. The Institute also submits an Institutional Review Report which draws together Institute-wide issues.

2.94 Periodic review and other extraordinary reviews consider the continuing validity and relevance of programmes and the management of provision. The process is one of critical reflection of key data and the Institute's own self-evaluation, produced collaboratively by Programme Directors, members of the Academic Quality Team, Management Team members, Admissions and the Director of the Careers Service. The review panel considers if the provision reflects external reference points to ensure that it meets all relevant criteria for credits or awards. The Institute nominates at least one external subject specialist to participate in the process.

2.95 The review team scrutinised annual monitoring reports and the linked action plans and noted that many actions were either recorded as 'ongoing' or without a specific timed completion date and that the process for annual monitoring actions at committee level is unclear. This does not enable the Institute to keep a sufficiently close eye on key actions at committee level. The review team **recommends** that, by September 2016, the Institute ensures that the institution-wide annual monitoring process resolves and records all actions within an appropriate timeframe. This has also led to a recommendation in Expectation A2.1

2.96 The review team concludes that Expectation B8 is met. The associated level of risk is low because the Institute carries out its responsibility for the monitoring and review of programmes effectively.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

Quality Code, Chapter B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints

Findings

2.97 The Institute complies with the University's complaints and appeals procedure through the development of aligned policies which were approved by the Institute's Academic Board in October 2015. Support is available for students wishing to complain or appeal through their Personal Tutor, Programme Director or Course Leader at the informal stage and the institute's Registrar or Quality Team during the formal process.

2.98 The Institute has a clear complaints and appeal process which enables students to be heard fairly. This is made available to students through appropriate channels and is aligned with the University's policy. It operates a three-stage process for complaints and appeals: informal, formal and final appeal. Once this has been exhausted, the student is able to take their case to the University. If a formal appeal is submitted, the Registrar will convene an Academic Appeals Committee consisting of the Deputy Director and two staff members who are independent from the case being submitted.

2.99 Students are made aware of the policies through their student handbooks, induction and through the 'Canvas' website.

2.100 The policies and procedure of the Institute would allow Expectation B9 to be met.

2.101 The review team considered documentation in relation to the complaints and appeals policies, saw examples of student handbooks and the VLE and met staff and students of the Institute.

2.102 The academic appeals process was considered by Academic Board in December 2015 although the minutes of that meeting do not formally record its approval.

2.103 The complaints and appeals process has an informal initial stage so that students may discuss their issues with an academic tutor or member of professional staff before they commence the formal process. There have been no complaints or appeals in recent years and the informal mechanism is working effectively. The procedures also clearly set out a student's ability to escalate their complaint or appeal to the University after the internal process has been exhausted. As there have been no formal complaints or appeals the review team was unable to view how there is strategic oversight of the process and outcome.

2.104 Students are aware of the procedures and where they could find details of the policy and are very satisfied with the support they receive from staff when they have highlighted an issue, especially in relation to understanding their academic grades through a personalised tutorial.

2.105 The review team concludes that Expectation B9 is met. The associated level of risk is low because the Institute has a clear complaints and appeals policy and procedures which align with the University.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

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

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

2.106 The Institute does not offer placements, therefore this Expectation does not apply.

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

Quality Code, *Chapter B11: Research Degrees*

Findings

2.107 The Institute does not currently offer research degrees, therefore this Expectation does not apply.

The quality of student learning opportunities: Summary of findings

2.108 In reaching its judgement about the quality of student learning opportunities, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook.

2.109 All applicable Expectations have been met and the risk is judged low except for one which is moderate. Four recommendations are made covering five Expectations, four features of good practice are made covering three Expectations.

2.110 The recommendations arising from the Expectations indicate that the Institute should ensure that the terms of reference and composition of its committees are clear, students should be embedded as partners at all levels, all students should have access to their programme intended learning outcomes, the means of recording and responding to an overview of all external examiners' reports should be further developed and the Institution-wide annual monitoring process should resolve and record all actions within an appropriate timeframe. The features of good practice are the effective management of the admissions process which impacts on student satisfaction and achievement, the distinctive and shared staff and student research environment which contributes to student learning opportunities, the range and quality of support that enables students to fully engage with their studies and the proactive and comprehensive approach to career development that contributes to student employability.

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

3 Judgement: The quality of the information about learning opportunities

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

Quality Code, Part C: Information about Higher Education Provision

Findings

3.1 Information for the public and for prospective students is primarily published on the Institute's recently revised website. Comprehensive information is provided to prospective and current students and relevant quality information is available to staff. The admissions process is administered through the website and relevant information regarding the programmes, fees and student experience is detailed on the site. Information on the website is approved before publication by the Director of the Institute and the process is managed by the Director of Global Marketing. The University approves content relating to credit bearing activity. The Institute produces an academic prospectus both digitally and printed and content is developed by staff and signed off by the Institute's Director.

3.2 Before formal enrolment, incoming students are able to access a welcome website which offers information, advice and guidance about transitioning to the Institute. During enrolment, students are given an Institute handbook and programme handbook which details the support services available to students as well as academic information about their course and key policies.

3.3 Students are provided with course handbooks which detail the day-to-day activities of their courses including reading lists, timetables, learning outcomes and assessment activities. Handbooks are developed by the programme team and are reviewed by the course teams and the Registrar. On completion of their studies, students are provided with a transcript from the Institute and a certificate from the University.

3.4 The Institute ensures that its policies and procedures, as set out in the Quality Handbook, are reviewed periodically by the ASC and approved by Academic Board. Staff have access to relevant information through the Institute's shared drive. Changes to University policies are communicated to the Academic Quality Team and passed onto relevant Institute staff.

3.5 The policies and procedures of the Institute would allow Expectation C to be met.

3.6 The review team analysed a variety of documentation including student handbooks, course handbooks, the public website, the internal VLE learning platform (and documentation relating to its development), minutes of Institute committees and met staff and students of the Institute.

3.7 The Institute's website provides a variety of information about its programmes, including the structure of the programmes that it offers. The VLE includes more detailed information for students on programmes and courses, including assessment details and external examiners' reports. The marketing team monitor public engagement with the website and social media network and committees of the Institute discuss public information.

3.8 The welcome website offers students information before arriving for registration including information about accommodation options, visa requirements and pre-reading for

their course. Students are happy with the quality of information available to them before enrolment with 96 per cent agreeing that it was good in the 2015 graduate survey. When students arrive they are given an Institute handbook that details the policies and procedures of the Institute.

3.9 As well as programme handbooks, students also receive course handbooks which detail course learning outcomes, weekly activities and assessment strategies. However, not all handbooks contain programme-level learning outcomes and there is no template for minimum information within student handbooks. This issue is referred to in Expectation B6. Students find these handbooks helpful. To supplement this, the Institute's VLE provides additional information such as interactive reading lists, videos, and discussion boards and provides additional information about the organisation of the course. Handbooks are signed off by the Programme Directors and are monitored by the Quality Team for accuracy. The development of the VLE is ongoing and currently there is no consistency in how each course manages their virtual space. Students find navigation of the VLE difficult. Work is underway by the IT team through SSLC meetings to improve the navigation.

3.10 Staff have access to quality assurance information through a shared computer drive and the Quality Team maintains version control of policies and procedures.

3.11 The self-evaluation document, submitted to QAA as part of this review, outlines responsibilities for the sign-off of information. However, the review team heard in meetings conflicting views of who was responsible for signing off information including policies, documents, handbooks and the website. The review team found a factual inaccuracy on the website which was amended during the review visit. The review team **recommends** that, by September 2016, the Institute formalises the procedure which ensures clear lines of responsibility for, and accuracy of, information.

3.12 The review team concludes that Expectation C is met. The associated level of risk is moderate due to the lack of clarity about responsibilities.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Moderate

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

3.13 In reaching its judgement the review team matched its finding against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook.

3.14 The Expectation is met but the risk is moderate. There is one recommendation that the Institute formalises the procedures which ensures clear lines of responsibility and accuracy of information.

3.15 The review team concludes that the quality of the Institute's information about learning opportunities **meets** UK expectations.

4 Judgement: The enhancement of student learning opportunities

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

Findings

4.1 The enhancement of teaching provision and learning opportunities is a key objective of the Institute's approach to teaching and learning. In this respect there is a clear commitment to enhancement, although it is embedded in strategic aims rather than separately identified. The Institute uses surveys, focus groups and student representation to assess and inform the effectiveness of enhancement activities. Management Team meetings, Programme Directors' meetings, Academic Board, ASCs and programme/course committee meetings all address enhancement issues. Resulting actions have led to curriculum revisions, amendments to policies and procedures, or operational changes (for example library opening times). The Institute does have a number of project examples which indicate that deliberate steps have been taken.

4.2 This Institute's proactive approach to the enhancement of student learning opportunities would allow the Expectation to be met.

4.3 Although the review team did not consider that it was necessary for the Institute to have a single documented enhancement strategy, it did look for explicit evidence of a strategic approach to enhancement being developed, implemented and reviewed in a systematic and planned manner at Institute level. At meetings with staff, and through inspection of the documentation presented, evidence was found that brought initiatives together. The review team considered the Institute's approach to be both strategic and effective. The team reviewed the quality handbook, committee minutes and considered student comments. The team also spoke with managers, teaching staff and students.

4.4 The Institute has put into place actions to drive enhancement at a number of levels including Management Team meetings, Programme Directors' meetings, Academic Board, ASCs and Programme/Course Committee meetings. The ASC in particular is a key meeting for academic staff to engage, discuss challenges, explore new initiatives and share good practice. Examples of improvements include the revision to the core curriculum of the master's programmes by establishing a common core course; changes to policies and procedures and the opening times and borrowing rights in the library. It is not always apparent how ASC focuses on enhancement and prioritising actions and taking deliberate steps to improve its provision although there are key and relevant projects being implemented.

4.5 The Institute has been proactive in holding biannual faculty days (once per semester) and an annual two-day faculty retreat on topics such as staff research, teaching enhancements, curricular issues and good practice items. Teaching staff confirmed the usefulness of the events in supporting their roles at the Institute.

4.6 A key strategic project to drive enhancement is the investment in the VLE. For example, students made observations regarding the number of virtual levels needed to access a range of information (timetable, readings, programme/course announcements), and importation of class schedules to handheld devices. The system was piloted and then rolled out systematically with training for academic and administrative staff. Following student feedback in 2014-15, a number of changes were made to enable ease of access

and improved navigation. The Institute continues to take appropriate steps to improve the system for students following student feedback.

4.7 Changes to programmes have been the result of enhancement driven actions. The Institute's Director established a working group to develop the Navigating the Art World course including its pedagogy, professional aims, interdisciplinary research and curriculum. This has also led to the restructuring all of the MA and postgraduate diplomas to enable the cross-programme teaching and learning initiatives embedded in the Navigating the Art World course. The addition of elective courses, open to all MA and postgraduate diploma students, is an example of enhancement, because it enables students to define additional areas of art world interest. The project has provided a strategic focus for the Institute and has clearly galvanised the academic staff in developing a coherent approach to its academic curriculum.

4.8 The review team concludes that the Enhancement Expectation is met. The associated level of risk is low because the Institute undertakes deliberate and strategic steps to improve the quality of the student learning opportunities by undertaking key enhancement projects.

Expectation: Met
Level of risk: Low

The enhancement of student learning opportunities: Summary of findings

4.9 In reaching its judgement about the enhancement of student learning opportunities, the review team matched its findings against the criteria specified in Annex 2 of the published handbook.

4.10 The Expectation in this area is met.

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

5 Commentary on the Theme: Student Employability

Findings

5.1 Dedication to student career development has been central to the Institute's philosophy since its creation in 1969 (see also Expectation B4). The Institute provides job-seeking skills and extensive career preparation through the highly sophisticated combination of its programme design, lecturers' expertise, and extensive alumni and art world networks.

5.2 During the recruitment process, staff ensure that courses fit student career aims. A core course addresses professional skills and introduces students to the nature of the professional art world. This underpins all programmes, where projects include staging temporary exhibitions, developing collections or management policies. Assessment and intended learning outcomes reflect the employability agenda. Projects are entrepreneurial in their content, requiring students to conceive, research, develop and present projects for an art world enterprise. An optional practice-based dissertation combines the reflective and analytical requirements of a standard research dissertation with a practical project directly related to an aspect of the art world. Master's programmes do not currently feature credit-bearing placements or work-based learning. Students confirm that programmes reflect the needs of the international art world, and the 2015 graduation survey recorded that over 85 per cent of students feel that the Institute prepared them for employment, and current students agree.

5.3 The Institute's art world network gives students access to many outstanding professional speakers from a wide range of fields. Recent figures have included the Director of the National Portrait Gallery, the Director of the Whitechapel Gallery and the founder of Frieze Art Fair. The input of these speakers is often highly privileged and unavailable anywhere else. Even if some speakers are not natural communicators, students respect the insight they can offer. Students especially value the informal networking that follows any session with a professional or guest speaker.

5.4 The Institute operates a job vacancy management system for employers to advertise to both students and alumni. There are in-house industry and recruitment fairs and industry and employer talks. Similarly, the Sotheby's internship programme has included projects with the Peggy Guggenheim Foundation internship programme in Venice and opportunities to lead tours at the London Art Fair. Historically, the Institute has not collected systematic data on graduate career destinations, but is working on a strategy to accelerate this process. The emerging alumni network will be truly international, including contacts in New York and Hong Kong.

5.5 The Careers Service aims to enhance employability across the curricular offer. Students and alumni can book individual careers appointments. The Director of the Careers Service, who has a higher education teaching qualification, is a member of The Work and Placement Learning Association and The Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services. Students describe the Careers Service as very approachable and helpful. International students can also book careers appointments with the Los Angeles and New York offices. The team spoke with employers who were very clear that the quality of Sotheby's students is exceptional and that the curriculum ensures that graduates are fully prepared for employment. Employability is a significant feature of the provision.

Glossary

This glossary is a quick-reference guide to terms in this report that may be unfamiliar to some readers. Definitions of key operational terms are also given on pages 22-25 of the [Higher Education Review \(Alternative Providers\) handbook](#)

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

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

Academic standards

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

Award

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

Awarding organisation

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

Blended learning

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

Credit(s)

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

Degree-awarding body

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

Distance learning

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

See also **blended learning**.

Dual award or double award

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

e-learning

See technology enhanced or enabled learning

Enhancement

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

Expectations

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

Flexible and distributed learning

A programme or module that does not require the student to attend classes or events at particular times and locations.

See also **distance learning**.

Framework

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

Framework for higher education qualifications

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

Good practice

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

Learning opportunities

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

Learning outcomes

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

Multiple awards

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

Operational definition

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

Programme (of study)

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

Programme specifications

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

Quality Code

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

Reference points

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

Self-evaluation document

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

Subject Benchmark Statement

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

Technology enhanced or enabled learning (or e-learning)

Learning that is delivered or supported through the use of technology.

Threshold academic standard

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

Virtual learning environment (VLE)

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

Widening participation

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

QAA1591 - R4921 - May 16

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