

## Specific Course Designation: report of the monitoring visit of The Interactive Design Institute Ltd, November 2015

### Section 1: Outcome of the monitoring visit

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit, the review team concludes that The Interactive Design Institute Ltd (the Institute) has made acceptable progress with implementing the action plan from the November 2013 [Review for Specific Course Designation](#).

2 The Institute submitted an annual return in August 2014 that demonstrated that it is continuing to maintain academic standards and enhance the quality of student learning opportunities and information about learning opportunities.

### Section 2: Changes since the last QAA review

3 The Institute reported in the 2015 annual return an increase of more than 100 students since the review visit in November 2013. There are now 592 students enrolled on 10 higher education programmes; six bachelor's with honours and four master's programmes awarded by the University of Hertfordshire (the University). At the time of the November 2013 review visit there were 423 students enrolled on five bachelor's with honours programmes.

4 Student achievement and progression information for academic session 2014-15 was unavailable at the time of the visit as the Institute's annual monitoring cycle does not conclude until December. However, undergraduate student progression statistics for academic session 2013-14 meet University expectations of 90 per cent of students continuing their studies across all years of each undergraduate programme. Since academic session 2011-12, an average of 60 per cent of undergraduate students have been awarded a bachelor's degree with honours.

### Section 3: Findings from the monitoring visit

5 Students confirmed that the Institute continues to make effective use of the virtual learning environment to encourage student engagement with their learning and enhancement activities. While there is no formal student representation system in place, students spoke enthusiastically about the effectiveness of formal online feedback forums and the support provided by Course Coordinators and Student Support Advisors. The Institute undertakes thorough analysis of feedback received from students, external examiners and other stakeholders. A review of existing mechanisms for gathering and acting on student feedback indicates that students have access to appropriate levels of representation. Students confirmed that they are confident that their views are welcomed, listened to and acted upon.

6 For technical reasons the Institute has postponed the planned creation of an online liaison function for alumni and employers. Discussion with staff indicated that the platform proposed by the Institute's web developers did not meet their security or accessibility specifications. The Institute is currently developing a new online study platform with a planned launch date of February 2016. Forums for alumni and employers will then be scoped and incorporated into the new platform.

7 Students continue to speak favourably about their ability to influence the development and enhancement of the design and content of the virtual studio. Students

have the opportunity to discuss and make suggestions relating to the design of the virtual studio in wider Programme Committee Forums.

8 The Institute continues to operate effective student support mechanisms which can identify students who are not engaging with their learning. Recent enhancements include the addition of electronic engagement registers which enable tutors and Student Support Advisors to monitor student engagement more effectively and to write to students who do not respond to email or telephone calls.

9 The Institute continues to develop a formal mechanism for identifying professional development opportunities for all staff. A professional development fund has been introduced and an effective application process to gain funding is in place. The development of an organisational map of levels of professional activity has begun and the format and purpose of tutor performance appraisals is currently under review.

10 The Institute operates an admission process which adheres to the entry requirements of the University. The process is aligned to the expectation of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code), *Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education*. For those applicants whose first language is not English evidence of completion of an appropriate level of English language competence is required. Following the start of each intake a report on admission decisions is sent to the University.

11 The Institute has developed and implemented an effective and coherent quality assurance and enhancement system which ensure that the expectation of *Chapter B6: Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning* and the expectation of *Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review* are met. Student engagement with the quality system is through discussion forums. Students are given the opportunity to comment and provide feedback on all proposed actions. Institute action plans are monitored effectively through weekly meetings involving all core teams.

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

12 The Institute has completed a mapping of policy and procedures to the Quality Code. The mapping exercise was undertaken in partnership with the Director of Academic Quality Assurance at the University. Discussions with staff confirmed an appropriate awareness of the purpose of the Quality Code and of the mapping document.

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

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

14 The monitoring visit was carried out by Mr Grant Horsburgh (Coordinator) and Mr Millard Parkinson (Reviewer) on 10 November 2015.

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