



London Film Academy

Review for Educational Oversight
by the Quality Assurance Agency
for Higher Education

November 2012

Key findings about London Film Academy

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in November 2012, the QAA review team (the team) considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the standards of the awards it offers.

The team also considers that there can be **confidence** in how the provider manages its stated responsibilities for the quality and enhancement of the learning opportunities it offers.

The team considers that **reliance** can be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the provider is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.

Good practice

The team has identified the following **good practice**:

- the role of the Advisory Board in maintaining the currency of the curriculum and its relevance to student aspirations (paragraph 2.4)
- the course tutor meetings as a mechanism to share good practice between senior staff and tutors (paragraph 2.5)
- the high level of personally tailored pastoral support (paragraph 2.7)
- the industry-specific careers support for students (paragraph 2.12).

Recommendations

The team has also identified a number of **recommendations** for the enhancement of the higher education provision.

The team considers that it is **advisable** for the provider to:

- establish formal articulation agreements with proposed partner universities (paragraph 1.1)
- review the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook to clarify staff roles and responsibilities (paragraph 1.2)
- introduce a generic set of grading criteria (paragraph 1.4).

The team considers that it would be **desirable** for the provider to:

- increase the frequency of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee meetings (paragraph 1.3)
- develop a comprehensive learning and teaching strategy (paragraph 2.3)
- evaluate the impact of the policies for staff appraisal and development (paragraph 2.10)
- develop a formal induction process for tutors (paragraph 2.10).

About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)¹ (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at the London Film Academy (the provider; the Academy). The purpose of the review is to provide public information about how the provider discharges its stated responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities available to students. The review applies to programmes of study that the provider delivers and awards itself. The review was carried out by Lynn Fulford, Peter Hymans (reviewers), and Paul Hartley (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#).² Evidence in support of the review included:

- staff handbook
- student handbook
- course guides
- course and module specifications
- student induction pack
- the self-evaluation
- the student submission
- samples of student work
- minutes of committee meetings
- written records of staff meetings
- correspondence from proposed partner universities
- induction programme
- student completion data
- minutes of examination boards
- staff appraisal policy
- staff appraisal records.

The review team also considered the provider's use of the relevant external reference points:

- the Academic Infrastructure, including the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*), and relevant subject benchmark statements.

Please note that if you are unfamiliar with any of the terms used in this report you can find them in the [Glossary](#).

The London Film Academy (the Academy) was founded in 2002 and is a non-profit-making trust. It is based on one main site at The Old Church in Fulham, South-West London. It aims to deliver innovative courses of professional standard, which are of direct benefit to students in their career development. The Academy is a partner in Goldsmiths, University of London Skillset Media Academy, and is accredited by the British Accreditation Council. It also holds a Tier 4 highly trusted sponsor (HTS) licence for the recruitment of non-EEA students.

Each year the Academy recruits approximately 40 students onto its full-time higher education diplomas and a further 450 part-time students on a variety of short, foundation and certificate courses in filmmaking, screenwriting, writing/directing and related areas.

¹ www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4.

² www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx.

At the time of the review, the provider offered the following higher education programmes, with student numbers currently enrolled shown in brackets:

- Diploma in Filmmaking (23)
- Diploma in Screenwriting (7)

The provider's stated responsibilities

The management of quality is largely the responsibility of the Head of Academic Governance, who is Chair of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee. She has the role of ensuring that policies and procedures for academic standards are followed.

There is a Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook that applies to all full-time diploma programmes. More detailed information on operational procedures is further described in individual handbooks that are guided largely by the Academic Infrastructure.

Recent developments

The Academy has recently been in discussion with two universities with a view to establishing a formal relationship for the admission of Academy students, who successfully complete the two diplomas indicated above, onto designated university MA courses. These discussions are at an advanced stage, and a curriculum-mapping exercise has already been undertaken.

Students' contribution to the review

Students studying on higher education programmes at the provider were invited to present a submission to the review team. They made a submission in the form of an individual and group video outlining their impressions of the Academy, their tuition, and the support they receive from staff. A group of students also met the review coordinator during the preparatory visit, and a larger group met the review team during the course of the review visit.

Detailed findings about London Film Academy

1 Academic standards

How effectively does the provider fulfil its responsibilities for the management of academic standards?

1.1 At the time of the review, the Academy had no awarding partners. The higher education provision consists of two qualifications, a filmmaking diploma and a screenwriting diploma, both awarded by the Academy. An arrangement exists with Goldsmiths University of London for diploma holders of the two programmes to be considered for entry to a Goldsmiths master's programme. There is some variation in the management of academic standards, which the Academy has recognised. It is currently in discussion with two universities, both of which are mapping the Academy programmes to their own master's courses. One university has confirmed its intention to admit diploma holders to the dissertation stage of its master's course, while the other is intending to accredit the Academy diplomas with advanced standing on its master's. The team considers it advisable for the Academy to complete this process to ensure that formal articulation routes are available to students.

1.2 The Academy has joint principals, one of whom is responsible for academic standards. It employs a consultant as academic adviser, who has made a significant contribution to the Academy's policies for the management of academic standards. Both the diploma programmes are led by a single course leader assisted by two lead tutors. The Academy's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook sets out their responsibilities. This Handbook, however, lacks clarity in its definition of academic standards and is too complex, given the current size of the provision. It contains a guide to the academic committees, some of which had yet to meet at the time of the review. It is advisable for the Academy to review the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook to ensure that responsibilities for the management of academic standards are clearly defined and delegated.

1.3 The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee provides the main focus for the management of academic standards, but had only met once at the time of the review. The agenda and minutes of this meeting indicate that academic standards are being considered appropriately, but it meets only twice per year. It is desirable that the frequency of these meetings is increased to enhance the oversight of academic standards.

1.4 The grading of student work has been reconsidered and the Academy is in the process of implementing a grading system for each module. There is, however, as yet no guidance to staff or students on the criteria for achievement. The Academy is aware of the issue and it has been discussed at staff meetings. It is advisable for the Academy to implement a generic set of grading criteria for the benefit of examiners and students.

How effectively are external reference points used in the management of academic standards?

1.5 The Academy has recently rewritten its two diploma programmes. During the development process it made reference to the subject benchmark statement: Communication, media, film and cultural studies, and *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ). The Academy involved its external examiner and two universities in the development process to assure the academic standards of the programmes. The programme specifications are clear and complete, but in

the case of the Diploma in Filmmaking some of the programme learning outcomes do not fully reflect learning outcomes at level 7 of the FHEQ and would benefit from some rewriting.

How does the provider use external moderation, verification or examining to assure academic standards?

1.6 The Academy has no external awarding partner and is, therefore, entirely responsible for programme design, delivery and assessment and verification. It has recently introduced new processes for assessment and internal verification of marked work, but it is too early in the annual cycle for the evidence of the effectiveness of these processes to be evaluated. The verification documentation as described meets expectations for higher education.

1.7 The comprehensive External Examining Handbook was developed with close reference to the *Code of practice, Section 4: External examining*. The Academy has appointed its external examiner who is suitably qualified and makes a significant contribution to the maintenance of academic standards. Following attendance at the recent assessment board meeting, the external examiner has produced a report confirming the academic standards of the programmes.

1.8 In establishing and maintaining academic standards, the Academy made a number of changes to its structures and procedures. Due to the recent introduction of these policies and procedures, it was not possible to evaluate them at the time of the review. Responsibility for evaluation of the effectiveness of its processes for moderation and examining lies with the Joint Principal (Academic) supported by the Academic Advisor and the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee.

The review team has **confidence** in the provider's management of its responsibilities for the standards of the awards it offers.

2 Quality of learning opportunities

How effectively does the provider fulfil its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities?

2.1 The Academy employs a small full-time staff team that includes a course leader, who manages tutors recruited mainly from the film industry on a part-time and freelance basis. The quality of teaching and learning is overseen by the Joint Principal (Academic). Policies and processes to monitor the quality of learning opportunities have been introduced recently, but have yet to be fully evaluated. However, these do not, as yet, constitute a formal teaching and learning policy. An external examiner has recently been appointed and an annual monitoring report introduced.

2.2 Tutors have high levels of expertise in the film industry, and several have experience of teaching in higher education. Students reported that they highly value the expertise of their tutors, respecting their practical skills and experience of the film industry. The peer appraisal system enables tutors to reflect on their own performance and includes a set of structured questions to enable peers to give feedback on teaching.

2.3 It would be desirable for the Academy to develop a comprehensive learning and teaching strategy that would develop tutors' understanding of different approaches to teaching, and formalise systems for the sharing of effective practice.

How effectively are external reference points used in the management and enhancement of learning opportunities?

2.4 The Academy aims to provide programmes of study that reflect the leading edge of industry practice. Teaching staff are all actively engaged in the industry and contribute to the content of all programmes. The Academy has recently convened an Advisory Board with membership drawn from the film industry, academia and former students. One of the members of the Advisory Board is the newly appointed external examiner, which might raise the question of conflict of interest in the future. The aim of the Advisory Board is to advise on course content in the context of industry trends and employment prospects in order that the curriculum remains relevant. The convening of an Advisory Board represents good practice in ensuring currency of the curriculum and its relevance to student aspirations.

How does the provider assure itself that the quality of teaching and learning is being maintained and enhanced?

2.5 Sharing of good practice among tutors is achieved through a number of processes, including course committee meetings, peer observation, tutor meetings and staff development. Course Tutor meetings, to which all teaching staff are invited, take place termly and provide an excellent forum for the discussion of all issues, including curriculum and resources. This constitutes good practice.

2.6 Student feedback is taken seriously by the Academy, which provides a range of formal and informal means for students to present their views. Student representatives attend committee meetings to report the views of students. Additionally, the Joint Principal (Academic) meets students termly to discuss their courses so that improvements can be made. Online surveys are used to elicit students' views on their courses and indicate high levels of overall satisfaction. Debriefing sessions after film-making are a very valuable means of gaining feedback from students and giving feedback to them. Students highly value the responsiveness of the Academy to their views.

How does the provider assure itself that students are supported effectively?

2.7 The Academy provides good support for its students, who value this aspect of provision very highly. The admissions process is rigorous and includes submission of a portfolio of work and an interview with two members of staff. The Academy sets a high value on selecting students who will benefit from their courses, and its high completion rates are achieved partly because of its robust approach to recruitment. There is a very detailed induction programme. All staff, including the senior managers, are readily available to students to discuss academic and personal issues. Students report high levels of satisfaction with this tutorial and pastoral support. This personally tailored support is good practice.

2.8 Support for students with specific learning needs is provided when requested. The Student Handbook offers good information to students, signposting them to a range of external agencies in addition to support provided within the Academy. The introduction of an Annual College Course Report is beginning to enable a more strategic approach to be adopted towards student support.

What are the provider's arrangements for staff development to maintain and/or enhance the quality of learning opportunities?

2.9 All full-time academic and administrative staff participate in a formal system of appraisal and staff development. This system has, though, only recently been extended to part-time tutors. The reliance of the Academy on freelance tutors and visiting lecturers leads it to recruit tutors who teach in other institutions and who have demonstrated a commitment

to their own professional development. Tutors provide a record of their continuous professional development as part of the recruitment process. The peer appraisal system and student feedback are used as mechanisms to improve the quality of teaching. Staff development opportunities for tutors are limited.

2.10 Students report that their feedback on individual tutors is taken seriously, leading to improvements in the quality of teaching. The appraisal system for full-time staff enables training needs to be identified through self-evaluation. There is currently no formal induction process for tutors. Team teaching in some instances provides useful support for new tutors and opportunities to share good practice. However, these informal mechanisms are not fully embedded across all courses and the Academy would benefit from the development of more formal structures for the identification and dissemination of effective practice. It would be desirable for the Academy to develop more rigorous systems for the evaluation of staff and tutor development and its impact on the quality of teaching and learning. The development of a more formal process of tutor induction is also desirable to help ensure that all tutors are aware of policies and procedures within the Academy.

How effectively does the provider ensure that learning resources are accessible to students and sufficient to enable them to achieve the learning outcomes?

2.11 Effective use is made of resources. Some sophisticated equipment is hired so that resources are state-of-the-art and relevant to the current needs of the film industry. Regular meetings with tutors identify needs, which are then prioritised by the Joint Principal (Academic). A small library is available to students, who also have access to books and films in the British Film Institute. Students are satisfied with the resources available to them.

2.12 The Academy's careers development scheme, Club Panico @LFA, provides students with intranet access to industry-related jobs, enabling them to attend career-enhancing events and networking opportunities. This industry-specific careers support is good practice. The expertise and subject currency of tutors working in the Academy further enhance the employment opportunities of students, several of whom are recommended for positions by those who teach them. Staff and tutors are well informed about the needs of the film industry, ensuring that students develop relevant skills and experiences.

2.13 The Academy's employment data and the satisfaction reported by its past students are evidence of its success in preparing its students for working in the film industry. There is an innovative bursary scheme that enables students to offset their tuition fees by working for the Academy.

The review team has **confidence** that the provider is fulfilling its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of the intended learning opportunities it provides for students.

3 Public information

How effectively does the provider's public information communicate to students and other stakeholders about the higher education it provides?

3.1 The Academy's information is professional in appearance, well presented, current and effective in communicating with prospective students, existing students, staff and other stakeholders. Information about the provision includes a prospectus, course handbooks,

module guides, programme specifications and a very informative website, which is the main source of public information. There is a well managed intranet which is accessible to staff only. Social networking sites are used to publicise and celebrate the Academy's events and successes to its stakeholders.

3.2 Students reported that they are very satisfied with the quality, currency and accuracy of public information available to them, both as candidates for entry and as members of the Academy. They reported that they found the website very supportive and beneficial when considering their programme applications, identifying the transparency of the published tuition fee information as very helpful in enabling them to make comparisons with other providers. They valued the online access to former students' feedback on their courses, indicating that this presents an accurate picture of the student learning experience at the Academy. On admission, all students are given a memory stick, which gives them access to course, module and Academy information.

How effective are the provider's arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of information it has responsibility for publishing?

3.3 There are comprehensive arrangements for assuring the accuracy and completeness of information outlined in the Academy's Publishing Policy and Procedures and Public Information - Sign-off Procedures documentation. The Joint Principal (Operations) has overall responsibility for approving all publicity and course material and for ensuring the accuracy of public information. The Academy takes its responsibility for providing accurate and useful information to its prospective students seriously, including the checking of accommodation for students before publicising it on its website. A small team of staff, including the Joint Principal (Operations) and the Marketing Officer and Admissions Co-ordinator, meets regularly to ensure the accuracy of public information. There are clear processes in place to ensure that new course information and changes to published material are updated on the website.

3.4 Responsibilities for producing course information are clearly defined. Weekly staff meetings include the sharing of course information. The course leader and course tutors are involved in the development of new modules and programmes. There is a clear formal route for new courses to be approved and checked for accuracy prior to publication with a template and distinctive house style being used to ensure consistency of information across programmes. The Joint Principal (Operations) approves all public information, using the staff email and intranet system to document changes and check accuracy before publication. Information to be disseminated on social media sites is approved by the Joint Principal (Operations) before publication. Additionally, regular searches are undertaken by the Marketing Officer to ensure that there is no misuse of the Academy's material. The small size of the Academy and its clear management structure enables changes and developments to be implemented speedily. Appropriate processes and documentation are in place to ensure that these are communicated accurately to relevant stakeholders.

3.5 The intranet provides all essential information about the Academy and its policies and procedures for staff and tutors, acting in effect as a staff handbook. While students are not directly involved in ensuring the accuracy and completeness of public information, they make an effective contribution towards the website through their comments and feedback. Students comment very favourably on the value, accuracy and completeness of information both pre and post-admission to the Academy.

<p>The team concludes that reliance can be placed on the accuracy and completeness of the information that the provider is responsible for publishing about itself and the programmes it delivers.</p>

Action plan³

London Film Academy action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight November 2012						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The review team identified the following areas of good practice that are worthy of wider dissemination within the provider:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the role of the Advisory Board in maintaining the currency of the curriculum and its relevance to student aspirations (paragraph 2.4) 	<p>Set agenda items for each board meeting convened based on prior internal and external reports and meeting minutes to ensure topics for discussion are current and relevant</p> <p>Solicit from Board members prior to a meeting, industry items that are cutting edge topics and allocate time for a short presentation at each meeting</p> <p>Utilise Board members to establish</p>	<p>Two weeks prior to each meeting convened</p> <p>Four weeks prior to each meeting, convened to allow for preparation time</p> <p>23 August 2013</p>	Joint Principal (Academic)	<p>Productive Advisory Board meetings that result in actionable recommendations that could make a positive contribution toward curriculum development</p> <p>Introduction of three new</p>	Head of Academic Governance	<p>Advisory Board meeting minutes</p> <p>External examiner reports</p> <p>Annual Academy and Course Review</p>

³ The provider has been required to develop this action plan to follow up on good practice and address any recommendations arising from the review. QAA monitors progress against the action plan.

	new film industry contacts in order to expand the network available to students and hence enhance and improve employment and/or work placement opportunities			industry contacts who have shown a willingness to provide opportunities for both in-course and post-graduation internships, work placements and permanent employment	Senior Management Team	reports (including graduate employment statistics)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the course tutor meetings as a mechanism to share good practice between senior staff and tutors (paragraph 2.5) 	Tutor meetings to be given greater focus and formality by reconstituting as Course Committee meetings	29 March 2013	Diploma Courses Leader	Production of detailed meetings annual schedule indicating priority agenda items	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee meeting minutes Course Committee meeting minutes Peer observations reports
	Establish regular cycle with clear terms of reference and agenda items Revise tutor feedback questionnaires to solicit comment on effectiveness of committee structures and mechanisms for sharing good practice	26 April 2013	Diploma Courses Leader	Comprehensive tutor feedback questionnaire that addresses all aspects of module delivery, support, assessment and management	Course committees	Tutor feedback questionnaire
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the high level of personally tailored 	Develop a student support intranet	13 December 2013	Joint Principal	Operational intranet platform	Quality Assurance and	Intranet system

tutorial and pastoral support (paragraph 2.7)	platform on which all student support policy, procedure and guidance documents can be readily accessed To cover all stages of the student life cycle from the induction programmes to careers guidance		(Operations) working with Information Technology Services and Student Support Officer	with secure password protected student login access All relevant Academy documents uploaded to the intranet prior to the new academic year	Enhancement Committee	Student feedback questionnaires Student/Staff Liaison Committee meeting minutes Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee meeting minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the industry-specific careers support for students (paragraph 2.12). 	Integrate the Club Panico@LFA intranet system for careers development with the planned student support intranet	13 December 2013	Joint principals working with Information Technology Services	Integrated student intranet providing a 'one-stop' location for all Academy support services	Senior Management Team	Intranet system Senior Management Team meeting minutes
Advisable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is advisable for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> establish formal articulation agreements with proposed partner universities (paragraph 1.1) 	Finalise agreements with the two universities that the Academy is currently in discussions with and hence acquire external reference points for the	29 March 2013	Academic Consultant/ Acting Head of Academic Governance	Two signed articulation agreements that clearly state academic level of the Academy Filmmaking Diploma, credit	Senior Management Team	University Articulation Agreements Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee meeting minutes

	academic standard of the Filmmaking Diploma			transfer rating (if applicable) and progression opportunities		
	Extend current university agreements to include the Academy Screenwriting Diploma and Writer/Director Diploma	14 June 2013	Joint Principal (Academic)	At least one university articulation or progression agreement for each diploma	Senior Management Team	University Articulation agreements
	Initiate discussions with additional universities willing to consider the validation of the Academy Diplomas for the award of PGCert, PGDip and MA	27 September 2013	Joint Principal (Operations)	Record of constructive and positive meetings and joint institutional visits resulting in agreement to further advance validation discussions	Senior Management Team	University letter of intent/memorandum of understanding
	Secure university validation agreement	April 2014	Joint Principals	Positive validation report with launch planned for September 2014	Senior Management Team	University validation agreement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook to clarify staff roles and responsibilities 	Review Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook and table proposed amendments for	6 September 2013	Diploma Courses Leader working with Academic Consultant	Revised handbook with clearly defined staff roles and responsibilities for the management	Head of Academic Governance	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook

(paragraph 1.2)	open discussion at the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee meeting scheduled for August 2013			of academic standards		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduce a generic set of grading criteria (paragraph 1.4). 	Consult course teams and external examiner, to develop a generic set of grading criteria	9 August 2013	Diploma Courses Leader	Revised assessment policy reflecting new generic grading criteria	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee	Assessment Policy Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee meeting minutes
	Implement new grading system	1 October 2013	Diploma Courses Leader	Inclusion of new grading system in the tutor induction and internal training programmes	Course Committee	Course Committee meeting minutes
Desirable	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The team considers that it is desirable for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the frequency of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee meetings (paragraph 1.3) 	Table intention to increase frequency of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee meetings at the next meeting event currently scheduled for February 2013	Three meetings per academic year to be introduced from September 2013	Academic Consultant/ Acting Head of Academic Governance	Increased frequency of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee events to fit with academic structure of the annual calendar	Senior Management Team	Senior Management Team meeting minutes Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee meetings annual calendar

				(termly meetings, three in total)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a comprehensive learning and teaching strategy (paragraph 2.3) 	Develop and approve a learning and teaching strategy	1 July 2013	Acting Head of Academic Governance	Learning and teaching strategy documented and approved	Senior Management Team	Senior Management Team meeting minutes
	Implement the learning and teaching strategy	30 September 2013	Diploma Courses Leader	Positive reaction and adoption by tutors and high levels of student satisfaction	Course Committees	Course Committee meeting minutes Learning and teaching strategy document
	Annually evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy and modify procedures accordingly	31 October 2014	Joint Principal (Academic)	Critical evaluation report with recommendations and action points	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee	Student feedback questionnaires Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee meeting minutes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluate the impact of the policies for staff appraisal and development (paragraph 2.10) 	Review Appraisal and Development policies in order to identify effectiveness in enhancing the learning opportunities for students Consideration to extend staff/tutor development budget	23 August 2013	Head of Academic Governance	Improved identification of training needs Greater attendance to staff/tutor development events evidenced through continuing professional development annual records	Senior Management Team	Staff/Tutor Appraisal and Development policies Annual staff/tutor appraisal records Student feedback reports

				Raised levels of student satisfaction		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a formal induction process for tutors (paragraph 2.10). 	Identify key areas to be included in a pre-contract induction programme plus ongoing activities post course commencement	30 August 2013	Diploma Courses Leader	<p>Positive feedback from newly appointed tutors with regards to familiarising and engaging them with all aspects of the Academy and the delivery, assessment and management of courses</p> <p>Operational mentoring system with clearly defined responsibilities</p>	Head of Academic Governance	<p>Tutor Induction Programme</p> <p>Tutor Induction Handbook</p>

About QAA

QAA is the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. QAA's mission is to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK higher education.

QAA's aims are to:

- meet students' needs and be valued by them
- safeguard standards in an increasingly diverse UK and international context
- drive improvements in UK higher education
- improve public understanding of higher education standards and quality.

QAA conducts reviews of higher education institutions and publishes reports on the findings. QAA also publishes a range of guidance documents to help safeguard standards and improve quality.

More information about the work of QAA is available at: www.qaa.ac.uk.

More detail about Review for Educational Oversight can be found at: www.qaa.ac.uk/institutionreports/types-of-review/tier-4.

Glossary

This glossary explains terms used in this report. You can find a fuller glossary at: www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary. Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#)⁴

Academic Infrastructure Guidance developed and agreed by the higher education community and published by QAA, which is used by institutions to ensure that their courses meet national expectations for academic standards and that students have access to a suitable environment for learning (academic quality). It consists of four groups of reference points: the **frameworks for higher education qualifications**, the **subject benchmark statements**, the **programme specifications** and the **Code of practice**. Work is underway (2011-12) to revise the Academic Infrastructure as the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

academic quality A comprehensive term referring to how, and how well, institutions manage teaching and learning opportunities to help students progress and succeed.

academic standards The standards set and maintained by institutions for their courses and expected for their awards. See also **threshold academic standard**.

awarding body A body with the authority to award academic qualifications located on the **framework for higher education qualifications**, such as diplomas or degrees.

awarding organisation An organisation with the authority to award academic qualifications located on the Qualifications and Credit Framework for England and Northern Ireland (these qualifications are at levels 1 to 8, with levels 4 and above being classed as 'higher education').

Code of practice *The Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*, published by QAA: a set of interrelated documents giving guidance for higher education institutions.

designated body An organisation that has been formally appointed to perform a particular function.

differentiated judgements In a Review for Educational Oversight, separate judgements respectively for the provision validated by separate awarding bodies.

enhancement Taking deliberate steps at institutional level to improve the quality of **learning opportunities**. It is used as a technical term in QAA's audit and review processes.

feature of good practice A positive aspect of the way a higher education institution manages quality and standards, which may be seen as exemplary to others.

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:

⁴ www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx.

The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) and The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland.

highly trusted sponsor An education provider that the UK government trusts to admit migrant students from overseas, according to Tier 4 of the UK Border Agency's points-based immigration system. Higher education providers wishing to obtain this status must undergo a successful review by QAA.

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

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

operational definition A formal definition of a term, which establishes exactly what QAA means when using it in reports.

programme (of study) An approved course of study which 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.

provider An institution that offers courses of higher education, typically on behalf of a separate **awarding body or organisation**. In the context of REO, the term means an independent college.

public information Information that is freely available to the public (sometimes referred to as being 'in the public domain').

reference points Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured. Internal reference points may be used by providers for purposes of self-regulation; external ones are used and accepted throughout the higher education community for the checking of standards and quality.

quality See **academic quality**.

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.

threshold academic standard The minimum standard that a student should reach in order to gain a particular qualification or award, as set out in the **subject benchmark statements** and national qualifications frameworks. Threshold standards are distinct from the standards of performance that students need to achieve in order to gain any particular class of award, for example a first-class bachelor's degree. See also **academic standard**.

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

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