



# **The London Film School**

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

September 2012

## Key findings about The London Film School

As a result of its Review for Educational Oversight carried out in September 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 on behalf of London Metropolitan University, Birkbeck, University of London, and University of Exeter.

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 on behalf of its awarding bodies.

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 School's use of external reference points to develop and enhance the curriculum (paragraph 1.7)
- the development of students' responsibilities, budgetary and technical skills in the MA Filmmaking (paragraph 2.20).

## 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:

- implement and embed the new committee structure without delay (paragraph 1.3)
- review its processes for ensuring the accuracy of published data about students' achievement (paragraph 1.5)
- ensure that agreements with London Metropolitan University are signed and approved prior to student enrolment (paragraph 1.6)
- clearly communicate assessment policies and practices to staff (paragraph 1.11)
- develop a formal mechanism to identify and implement enhancement opportunities (paragraph 2.1)
- introduce and implement a formal process of teaching observation (paragraph 2.6)
- develop a formal organisational staff development strategy (paragraph 2.15)
- improve communications to ensure that published documents are thoroughly checked and updated before being approved and given to students (paragraph 3.2)
- implement a publication production schedule which is aligned with the School's quality assurance cycle (paragraph 3.4).

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

- further extend the opportunity for student representation on the new committees (paragraph 1.3)
- review and formalise mechanisms for the identification and dissemination of good practice (paragraphs 1.9 and 2.17)

- formalise the process for reporting back to students the outcomes of actions arising from student feedback (paragraph 2.9)
- continue to develop the virtual learning environment to include online assessment and feedback, communication with students and materials to support learning (paragraph 3.5).

## About this report

This report presents the findings of the [Review for Educational Oversight](#)<sup>1</sup> (REO) conducted by [QAA](#) at The London Film School (the provider; the School). 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 courses of study that the provider delivers on behalf of London Metropolitan University, Birkbeck, University of London, and University of Exeter. The review was carried out by Ana Almeida, Ann Hill, Rob Mason (reviewers), and Alan Soutter (coordinator).

The review team conducted the review in agreement with the provider and in accordance with the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#).<sup>2</sup> Evidence in support of the review included a range of documentation supplied by the provider and its awarding bodies and meetings with staff and students.

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

- the Academic Infrastructure
- the UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- London Metropolitan University Taught Collaborative Provision Manual, regulations and memorandum of agreement
- University of Exeter regulations and memorandum of agreement
- Creative Skillset
- London Consortium website.

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 School (formerly London School of Film Technique and London International Film School) was established in 1956 to provide professional training in the art and technique of film production. It has, since the 1960s, occupied premises in central London close to Covent Garden. It also leases office and teaching space nearby. The School recruits between 130 and 140 students each year. Since 2002, it has had a taught collaborative agreement with London Metropolitan University and, in 2010, it became one of the only three national Skillset Film academies, enabling it to receive bursaries for UK students.

In 2003, the School entered into a Connected Institution Agreement with London Metropolitan University, which enables it to obtain Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) funding for specified activities.

At the time of the review, the provider offered the following higher education courses, listed beneath their awarding bodies:

### **London Metropolitan University**

- MA Filmmaking (147 students 2011-12)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Filmmaking (exit award)
- Postgraduate Certificate in Filmmaking (exit award)
- MA Screenwriting (15 students 2011-12)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Screenwriting (exit award)

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<sup>1</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/tier-4).

<sup>2</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx).

- Postgraduate Certificate in Screenwriting (exit award)

#### **Birkbeck, University of London**

- MA Film Curating (discontinued from 2012-13)

#### **University of Exeter**

- PhD Film by Practice (2 students 2011-12)

### **The provider's stated responsibilities**

Under the partnership agreement with London Metropolitan University, the MA Filmmaking and the MA Screenwriting courses remain the overall responsibility of the University, with operational responsibilities coming under the direction of the School. The University of Exeter retains overall responsibility for the PhD Film by Practice, but has shared responsibilities for supervision. The responsibilities for the consortium arrangement for the MA Curating were inadequately defined.

### **Recent developments**

The School signed a partnership agreement in January 2012 with the University of Exeter to contribute to a PhD course in Film by Practice. It has terminated its agreement with the London Consortium and has ceased its MA Film Curating, which was validated by Birkbeck, University of London, with effect from 2012-13, but may consider reinstating a similar course directly with Birkbeck, University of London in the future. It is also in discussion with the University of Exeter to establish an MA Independent Film Business from 2013-14. The School is currently in the process of reorganising its decision-making structures with the formalisation of new committees and policies, and a revised management structure. In the long term, the School is intending to move out of its current limited accommodation in Covent Garden and has signed a lease for new premises at the Barbican Centre from 2017.

### **Students' contribution to the review**

Students studying on higher education programmes at the provider were invited to present a submission to the review team. A student submission was submitted and a number of students met the review team. The students were enthusiastic advocates for the teaching and support they had received from the School and suggested some topics for consideration and enhancement.

## Detailed findings about The London Film School

### 1 Academic standards

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

1.1 The School demonstrates a clear understanding of its respective responsibilities in respect of academic standards. There is a coherent and clear delineation of the management of academic standards. Under the partnership agreement with London Metropolitan University for the MA Filmmaking and the MA Screenwriting courses, the School is responsible for assessment, staffing, student admission, guidance and support. For other aspects, including teaching and learning, staff development, resources, quality reviews and collection and use of student feedback, responsibilities lie with London Metropolitan University or are shared. The School has withdrawn, from 2012-13, its participation in the MA Film Curating, which was delivered through the London Consortium (an institutional agreement between five institutions) and awarded by Birkbeck, University of London. The School has a partnership agreement with the University of Exeter for joint supervision of the PhD Film by Practice. Most aspects of provision are the University's responsibility, but responsibility for supervision is shared.

1.2 The School has an organisational structure which is in transition. A new management structure is intended to be established in 2012-13. Currently, executive responsibility for higher education rests with the Director, who reports to the Board of Governors. Senior management responsibility for the oversight of academic standards is delegated to the Deputy Director, who is also Head of Studies and reports through the Director to the governors on academic matters. The Deputy Director is supported by five heads of department. The Management Group, comprising the Director, Deputy Director/ Head of Studies and Head of Resources, meets weekly.

1.3 The Academic Board is responsible for the overall academic management, direction and development of higher education courses with a subordinate committee responsible for each MA programme (Curriculum Working Party for the MA Filmmaking and Course Committee for the MA Screenwriting), but the terms of reference are not clearly defined. A new, more formal, committee structure, which has clear reporting arrangements and representation from London Metropolitan University, will operate from the academic year 2012-13 and has the potential to secure and enhance the overall quality of academic standards. A formal schedule of meetings has not been identified and it is too early to evidence whether the structure will be effective. Within the new committee structure, it is planned that student representatives will sit on the revised MA Filmmaking Curriculum Working Party and the MA Screenwriting Working Party. The School should consider further extending the opportunity for student representation on the new committees so that students are provided with increased opportunities to play a role in the management of academic standards and the development and enhancement of learning opportunities. The School should implement and embed the new committee structure without delay so that meetings are scheduled, agendas set and minutes formally recorded.

1.4 The School complies with the requirements of London Metropolitan University to produce an annual quality course monitoring report. Course leaders are responsible for all quality issues and the overall management of each course team, and they act as link tutors with London Metropolitan University. Each course leader drafts a report which is formally considered by the Academic Board prior to consideration at the Performance Enhancement Meeting (which includes membership from London Metropolitan University). The reports

clearly evaluate the course and incorporate an action plan, which is carried through to the next meeting with a report on action taken from the previous meeting.

1.5 The School is inconsistent in its presentation of data relating to cohorts. Each cohort should have outcomes which add up to the total intake. The School needs to review its processes to ensure that the published levels of achievement for each cohort of students in all documentation are consistent.

1.6 The formal institutional agreement with London Metropolitan University was signed and post-dated subsequent to student enrolment. This oversight does not currently put students at risk, but it is critical that, in future, the agreement is signed prior to student enrolment.

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

1.7 The School makes effective use of external reference points, such as the Academic Infrastructure and Creative Skillset. It uses the criteria of the Creative Skillset Accreditation to design and develop the curriculum, which, by its nature, is practice-focused, and to confirm that student work and outcomes are at an appropriate industry standard. London Metropolitan University confirmed that standards meet the level for master's awards.

1.8 The School has recently undertaken a mapping exercise of its operations against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code), which identifies a number of actions for implementation to ensure full engagement with the Quality Code. At the time of the review, no actions had been undertaken. The new committee structure has been devised with the precepts of the Quality Code as a principal reference point and the School has recently begun to audit its operations against the indicators outlined within the Quality Code. The mapping exercise should further embed coherent structures in the organisation and management of academic standards.

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

1.9 Course leaders are responsible for processing external examiners' reports. Relevant actions are identified in course logs, which are fed into the annual monitoring process (see paragraph 1.4). Where good practice has been identified, it is disseminated informally. There is not a formal process for the feedback of good practice. The School should introduce procedures to formalise the dissemination of good practice.

1.10 External examiners are appointed by London Metropolitan University. Internal verifiers or moderators are appointed from within the School to assure the academic standards of its courses. Where the School is responsible for conducting assessments on behalf of London Metropolitan University, the external examiners confirm that the academic standards of the School meet national expectations. The School responds positively to recommendations of external examiners. For example, a merit component mark was added to the range for the marking of course units relating to the Work and Research Journals that students produce. For the PhD, lead and second supervisors are appointed by the University of Exeter and an external supervisor with specialist subject knowledge is nominated by the School for appointment by the University of Exeter.

1.11 Assessment practice is not consistent with the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education, Section 6: Assessment of students*. Information regarding assessment strategies is contained in student handbooks. From the sampling of student work, it is not evident how the marking of assignment briefs provided to

students matches the unit's stated aims and learning outcomes or specific assessment criteria. It is also unclear how strategic and operational information relating to assessment processes is provided to staff. Tutor feedback provided to students is, however, thoughtful, evaluative and of a high standard. Internal moderation is confirmed as effective by the external examiners and all student work is double marked. Assessment policies and practices must be clearly communicated to all staff. Appropriate guidance and training must also be provided to staff.

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

## 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 School's responsibilities for the management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities are set out in paragraph 1.1. The overall management of the quality of learning opportunities is informal and is not systematic. Oversight of the management of the quality of learning opportunities lies with the Academic Board. The revised terms of reference of the Academic Board and of its subordinate committees (Teaching and Learning Committee and Quality and Collaboration Committee) do not sufficiently recognise the need to enhance and improve quality and must be amended to include reference to the identification and implementation of enhancement opportunities.

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

2.2 Full-time tutors have a satisfactory knowledge of the Academic Infrastructure and the Quality Code and were able to demonstrate this knowledge during the review. The School recognises that part-time tutors' knowledge is limited. As set out in paragraph 1.7, the School uses the criteria of the Creative Skillset Accreditation to design and develop the curriculum to appropriate industry standards. External professional mentors are organised by the School through the support of Creative Skillset to work with students in their final year.

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

2.3 The School ensures that new tutors have the appropriate skills, knowledge and professional background to deliver courses at master's level through an interview and recruitment process. London Metropolitan University also checks tutor suitability when validating and revalidating courses, and also the curriculum vitae of new tutors. There is no requirement for staff to hold an appropriate teaching qualification and no tutor holds one.

2.4 The School has approved a teaching and learning strategy for implementation in 2012-13, which should formalise and enhance the current arrangements.

2.5 The monitoring of teaching and learning quality of full-time tutors takes place informally within departments. Tutors teach in pairs and groups, and have the opportunity to discuss teaching practice and give verbal feedback. Visiting tutors receive verbal feedback



from heads of department. Students confirm that teaching is good and they benefit from personalised and individual teaching, particularly in a practical and technical setting.

2.6 The identification of any issues relating to performance or good practice in teaching and learning is informal and inconsistent across departments. There is no organisational policy for formal training. The School has recognised the need for appropriate mechanisms to be introduced. The School would benefit from a formal process of teaching observation to enable all tutors to develop and improve their performance.

2.7 The University of Exeter sets out in the partnership agreement the joint arrangements for the supervision of students. Recent training has been provided to appropriate School staff by the University to ensure that supervision is of the required standard.

2.8 New full and part-time staff receive a staff handbook. Induction and familiarisation with the School and its procedures for new staff is carried out at departmental level.

2.9 Feedback from students occurs through course committees and an annual evaluation questionnaire. Feedback from the questionnaires is recorded in the annual monitoring report for each course. Course committees meet termly and staff and students find this a valuable and effective forum for discussion. Mostly, the discussion relates to administration, timetabling, and resourcing. Students confirm that they are satisfied with the actions taken. Specific issues relating to students' feedback are communicated to the Academic Board by the Curriculum Working Party and the Course Committee. There is currently no formal structure for communicating the action taken to students. The School should formalise the process for reporting back to students the outcomes of actions arising from student feedback.

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

2.10 Support for students is comprehensive and wide-ranging. The School has well established arrangements for the admission of students onto London Metropolitan University awards. These conform to postgraduate threshold standards set out in their academic regulations. Applicants are given clear guidance on entry criteria through the website and prospectus. All applicants are interviewed, either face to face or, for overseas applicants, via computer-based communication or telephone. The application process for research students is managed jointly between the University of Exeter and the School.

2.11 At the start of their course, all new students are given a comprehensive information pack of administrative and domestic details, rules and regulations. All students attend an induction meeting at the start of each term to discuss the content of their course. Course handbooks in hard copy format provide course details, information on plagiarism, appeals, and other important academic regulations. Students confirm that this information is helpful and informative.

2.12 The School's tutorial policy sets out guidelines for individual student tutorials. Tutors meet students at least twice a term and outcomes are recorded and followed up at subsequent meetings. The School operates an open-door policy where students are able to seek advice and guidance in person or via email from staff at any reasonable time. Specific support for assignment work is also available individually by appointment. Students also discuss their progress with course leaders and personal tutors each term. They are given effective and helpful guidance on career expectations and opportunities, which they value.

2.13 All final term students have the opportunity to select a mentor to work with them during this period. Mentors are typically professionals from an appropriate media-related industry. Due to professional commitments and other reasons beyond the School's control,

it is not always possible to provide mentors for all students. Over half of the students benefit from this process.

2.14 Student representatives, through their membership of key committees, are responsible for communicating decisions taken at management level to their fellow students.

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

2.15 There is no School-wide formal system for the identification of staff development needs, although some staff development takes place at departmental level. This is largely technical and equipment training. There are opportunities for staff to attend London Metropolitan University events and its annual teaching and learning conference, but uptake is very low. Funding is available, should individual members of staff request training. Evaluation of staff development is mainly informal and does not effectively identify its impact or contribution to enhancement. There is no formal staff appraisal scheme or policy. The School considers one to be unnecessary due to the small size of the full-time staff body and limited opportunities for underperformance to be concealed. Some departments operate informal reviews, some of which are documented. There is scope for a larger and more systematic School staff development course and appropriate evaluation process, which supports the enhancement of higher education teaching, learning and assessment. The School is advised to develop a formal organisational staff development strategy, which includes appraisal, the identification of training needs, annual action plans, and effective recording and monitoring systems.

2.16 The School offers opportunities for staff to take work-related leave in an associated industry to improve their knowledge and skills in their specialist fields, and pass on their expertise to students.

2.17 There is limited or no evidence of the dissemination of good practice in general and specifically resulting from the analyses of annual monitoring reports. The School should review its existing mechanisms for the identification and dissemination of good practice, to ensure that there is a clear and effective process, along with an action plan for cross-school quality enhancement.

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

2.18 Space and access limitations of the premises may result in unpredictability in timetabling or the use of specialist facilities. On a day-to-day basis, the School manages to resolve these problems adequately. The School has recently signed a lease to move to larger premises at the Barbican.

2.19 The School operates an effective rolling renewal process for equipment, software and other course-related resources. The School has an appropriate range of up-to-date and industry-standard equipment and facilities suitable for teaching, learning and assessment. Wireless to the internet is available at specific areas on the site. Students are able to access library resources at the British Film Institute and partners. DVDs for research use are available. Students enrolled with the universities have access to the universities' libraries and web-based resources.

2.20 Each student on the MA Filmmaking course is provided with £3,500 to produce a film as part of their assessment. Students can pool their allowance with other students.

In addition to the School allocation, students can seek additional external funding. This enables students to collaborate, communicate and work together, which helps prepare them for the professional world of the film industry. This practice helps develop the students' ability to effectively manage budgets, resources and technical skills.

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 School effectively communicates with its students through a range of media, such as printed material, website, social media and the virtual learning environment. A range of academic and administrative documents in both printed and electronic formats is available for prospective and current students and staff. The School is also responsible for marketing its master's courses. Marketing material must be approved by London Metropolitan University. The School is not responsible for documents relating to the PhD at the University of Exeter. These are the responsibility of the University, especially with regards to the use of the University's logos.

3.2 The School produces course handbooks and a series of documents and policies for the MA Screenwriting and MA Filmmaking against a template provided by London Metropolitan University. Revisions to these documents are drafted by the School and approved by London Metropolitan University on a yearly basis and also following periodic review. The School is advised to improve communication with London Metropolitan University to ensure that documents are thoroughly checked and updated before being approved and given to students.

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

3.3 The School has an appropriate management structure responsible for the accuracy and currency of published information. The Head of Marketing has day-to-day operational responsibility for publications, liaising with the heads of departments and the marketing link officer at London Metropolitan University as required, with the final School's sign-off responsibility lying with the Director. The IT Manager is responsible for implementing changes approved by the Head of Marketing to the website or to the virtual learning environment.

3.4 The School has appropriate mechanisms for publishing material and making it available to their stakeholders. The process of redesigning the website has led to a review of the website, which has involved student and staff participation. The School and London Metropolitan University share responsibility for the production of the MA course handbooks in accordance with a template approved by the University. The School must ensure that the production schedule for review, amendments and sign-off of handbooks aligns with the quality assurance cycle.

3.5 The virtual learning environment, in its current state, is limited in content and usage. The School should continue to develop the virtual learning environment by, for example, materials to support learning.

3.6 The School does not have a formal system of identifying inaccuracies in publications, relying on ongoing updating by the Head of Marketing and the ad hoc contribution by students or staff. The School is revising this process and will assign editing powers to individuals for particular documents. Day-to-day responsibility will remain with the Head of Marketing. The planned use of version control software should allow the School to store and manage printed and online documents in a more effective manner.

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.

## Action plan<sup>3</sup>

The London Film School action plan relating to the Review for Educational Oversight September 2012						
Good practice	Action to be taken	Target date	Action by	Success indicators	Reported to	Evaluation
The review team identified the following areas of <b>good practice</b> that are worthy of wider dissemination within the provider:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the School's use of external reference points to develop and enhance the curriculum (paragraph 1.7)</li> </ul>	Quality and Collaboration committee to identify opportunities for dissemination of good practice in the use of reference points with the London Metropolitan University Collaboration, Creative Skillset and Advisory Panels to ensure development and enhancement academic standards	From Jan 2013 every term	Quality and Collaboration committee	Best practice dissemination opportunities taken up  Teaching and learning augmented by new professional practices and enhanced employability reflected in student work practices and positive surveys	Academic Board	Minutes of Quality and Collaboration Committee and Academic Board

<sup>3</sup> 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, in conjunction with the provider's awarding bodies.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the development of students' responsibilities, budgetary and technical skills in the MA Filmmaking (paragraph 2.20).</li> </ul>	Teaching and Learning Committee to identify opportunities to disseminate good practice in the development of students' responsibilities, budgeting and technical skills	From Jan 2013 every term	Teaching and Learning Committee	Best practice dissemination opportunities taken up  Evidenced in curriculum changes in teaching of professional producers' practices	Academic Board	Minutes of Teaching and Learning Committee and Academic Board
<b>Advisable</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Success indicators</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
The team considers that it is <b>advisable</b> for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>implement and embed the new committee structure without delay (paragraph 1.3)</li> </ul>	<p>All four new deliberative committees establish their remit, responsibilities and membership</p> <p>Assign formal minute-taking responsibilities and reporting lines with termly cycle of meetings for each committee</p> <p>New committees to</p>	13 Jan 2013	Action by the four new committees: Quality and Collaboration; Teaching and Learning; Public Information, and Academic Marketing and Recruitment	<p>All new committees have embedded formal remit, agenda with scheduled meeting dates and clear reporting line and cycle for monitoring and review</p> <p>Committee structure enhances good practice in communication</p>	Academic Board	<p>Academic Board minutes</p> <p>Minutes of new committees</p>

	<p>report termly to Academic Board</p> <p>Implement system of recording and tracking actions and outcomes of new committees</p>			<p>All committee report minutes with action points to Academic Board meeting</p> <p>Academic Board minutes report when the cycle of action points are tracked until completed and closed</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review its processes for ensuring the accuracy of published data about students' achievement (paragraph 1.5)</li> </ul>	<p>Revise data fields</p> <p>Introduce new procedure for acquiring and entering data</p> <p>Develop new report forms</p>	Week 4 January term 2013	Head of Information Technology and Admissions Manager	<p>Data quickly and accurately entered</p> <p>Data easily available</p> <p>Data correct</p>	Academic Board April 2013	<p>Minutes of Quality and Collaboration Committee</p> <p>Consistent cohort documentation available</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure that agreements with London Metropolitan University are signed and approved prior to student enrolment (paragraph 1.6)</li> </ul>	Create schedule of meetings preparing for next signing (July 2014)	September 2013	Head of Operations	Schedule of meetings followed and agreement signed in timely fashion	Management Board	Agreements signed prior to student enrolment

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clearly communicate assessment policies and practices to staff (paragraph 1.11)</li> </ul>	<p>Marking of assignment briefs revised to ensure the students learning outcome and performance is appropriately measured, matched and judged against the published assessment aims and criteria</p> <p>Training of staff in assessment policies and practices put in place</p>	<p>Week 12 of January term 2013</p>	<p>Head of Studies for MA Filmmaking; Course leader for MA Screenwriting; part-time Academic Registrar</p>	<p>Revised briefs published</p> <p>Training sessions completed</p> <p>Progress recorded in Quality and Collaboration Meeting minutes</p> <p>Outcomes reflected in improved feedback to students</p>	<p>Academic Board May 2013</p>	<p>Minutes of Academic Board</p> <p>Revised marking of assignment briefs</p> <p>Evidence of completed training</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop a formal mechanism to identify and implement enhancement opportunities (paragraph 2.1)</li> </ul>	<p>Incorporate the identification and development of quality enhancement in the agendas of the relevant committees in the new committee structure</p>	<p>First week of January 2013</p>	<p>Head of Studies, New Academic Registrar, Teaching and Learning Committee</p>	<p>Quality enhancement opportunities formally recognised and implemented</p>	<p>Academic Board May 2013</p>	<p>Minutes of Academic board</p> <p>Examples of processes of identification and implementation through committee structure</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>introduce and implement a formal process of teaching observation (paragraph 2.6)</li> </ul>	<p>Prepare, introduce and document full teaching observation scheme</p>	<p>Operation by beginning of May 2013 term</p>	<p>Department Heads, Head of Studies and Course Leader MA Screenwriting to implement the scheme</p>	<p>Observations in place and reports being made</p> <p>Improvements in teaching practices</p>	<p>Academic Board September 2013</p>	<p>Minutes of Academic Board</p> <p>Department documentation, observation reports</p>



				identified and reported in minutes of Teaching and Learning as well as Quality and Collaboration Committee minutes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop a formal organisational staff development strategy (paragraph 2.15)</li> </ul>	Formalise current Staff Development strategy/policy with a policy to support enhancement teaching, learning and assessment	January 2013	Head of Operation	Training plan for the year completed	Senior Management Team	Senior Management Team minutes
	Implement annual reviews with regular team performance	January/February every year	Heads of department	Heads of department submitted staff appraisals with written records of reviews, action plans and training required	Senior Management Team	Appraisal documentation
	Feedback from heads of department	March each year	Heads of department	Two-way communications allowing the individual to question, comment and ask for support		Action plan for training
	Coaching, training programme or other support to address poor performance	March each year	Heads of departments/Head of Operations			
	Individual training appropriate to job				Coaching and training program completed	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>improve communications to ensure that published documents are thoroughly checked and updated before being approved and given to students (paragraph 3.2)</li> </ul>	<p>Agree procedures with London Metropolitan University covering the checking and updating, and approval of documents to be published for students</p>	<p>Completed for September 2013 entry and each September after</p>	<p>Head of Studies and Course Leader MA Screenwriting and Academic Registrar</p>	<p>Documents fully updated and checked before publication</p>	<p>Academic Board September 2013</p>	<p>Procedures available</p> <p>Documents available</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>implement a publication production schedule which is aligned with the School's quality assurance cycle (paragraph 3.4).</li> </ul>	<p>Agree a schedule with London Metropolitan University covering the updating of existing handbooks that aligns with quality cycle</p> <p>Allocate oversight responsibility to Quality and Collaboration Committee</p>	<p>Completed for September 2013 entry</p>	<p>Head of studies and Course Leader MA Screenwriting and Academic Registrar</p>	<p>Handbooks and other documents regularly updated according to London Metropolitan University templates</p>	<p>Academic Board September 2013</p>	<p>Schedule available</p> <p>Updated documents published in line with quality review cycle</p>
<b>Desirable</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Success indicators</b>	<b>Reported to</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
The team considers that it is <b>desirable</b> for the provider to:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>further extend the opportunity for student representation on</li> </ul>	<p>Formulate procedure with Students Union</p>	<p>January term 2013</p>	<p>Head of Studies Academic Registrar</p>	<p>Committee constitutions include student representation</p>	<p>Academic Board January 2013</p>	<p>Minutes of relevant committees and Academic Board</p>

the new committees (paragraph 1.3)	<p>Include requirement for student attendance in terms of committees</p> <p>Publicise details of meetings for students</p>			Student attendees or apologies		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review and formalise mechanisms for the identification and dissemination of good practice (paragraphs 1.9 and 2.17)</li> </ul>	<p>Teaching and Learning</p> <p>Quality and Collaboration, Public Information and Marketing and Recruitment Committees to have fixed agenda items to take responsibility for the dissemination of best practice</p>	January term 2013 and each term thereafter	Committee convenors	Best practice effectively disseminated through School	Academic Board	<p>Minutes of all committees</p> <p>Examples of best practice dissemination</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>formalise the process for reporting back to students the outcomes of actions arising from student feedback (paragraph 2.9)</li> </ul>	<p>Curriculum Working Party (MA Filmmaking) and MA Screenwriting Course Committee to report back to students quickly</p> <p>Set up virtual learning environment site</p>	End of January term 2013	Head of Studies, Information Technology Manager	Published actions and outcomes	Academic Board April 2013	<p>Actions and outcomes published for students</p> <p>Minutes of Academic Board</p>

	<p>Include student publication times in action points</p> <p>Supervise by Academic Board</p>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continue to develop the virtual learning environment to include online assessment and feedback, communication with students and materials to support learning (paragraph 3.5).</li> </ul>	<p>Journal assessment and feedback move to virtual learning environment</p> <p>Teaching and Learning Committee and Quality and Collaboration committees examine virtual learning environment possibilities at fixed agenda points</p>	<p>Beginning of January term 2013 and at relevant committee meetings each term</p>	<p>Chairs of committees, Information Technology Manager</p>	<p>New developments completed in virtual learning environment</p> <p>Assessment and feedback of journals on virtual learning environment</p> <p>Discussions on further development</p>	<p>Academic Board September 2013</p>	<p>Developments in place; minutes of Teaching and Learning Committee, Quality and Collaboration Committee</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](http://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](http://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](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/aboutus/glossary). Formal definitions of key terms can be found in the [Review for Educational Oversight: Handbook](#)<sup>4</sup>

**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 **course 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:

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<sup>4</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/reo-handbook.aspx](http://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 **courses 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.

**course (of study)** An approved course of study which provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification.

**course specifications** Published statements about the intended **learning outcomes** of **courses 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 School.

**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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**The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education**

Southgate House  
Southgate Street  
Gloucester  
GL1 1UB

Tel 01452 557000  
Fax 01452 557070  
Email [comms@qaa.ac.uk](mailto:comms@qaa.ac.uk)  
Web [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)

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