About this review

The review visit took place on 25 and 26 May 2022 and was conducted by a team of three reviewers, as follows:

Mrs Lorraine Lavery
Dr Fiona Thompson
Mr Bradley Woodridge (Student Reviewer)

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The overall aim of Gateway Quality Review: Wales is to:

Judgement area: Reliability and comparability of academic standards

The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)

1 London Studio Centre (LSC) works with two validating universities - Middlesex University and the University for the Creative Arts (UCA). The responsibilities are clearly outlined and understood via partnership agreements, memorandum of cooperation, validation agreement, and responsibilities checklists.

2 The partnership with UCA is relatively new and, to support the introduction of another validating body, LSC drew up effective implementation plans and mapped the regulations for both universities to support staff in the transition.

3 The awarding bodies have overall responsibility for setting and maintaining the academic standards of their awards. However, this is deemed to be a partnership between the LSC and the universities as set out in the responsibilities checklists and as evidenced through the minutes of Middlesex University's Board of Studies.

4 LSC, through the validation process, maps its provision against the FHEQ to ensure that it meets the threshold standards for the qualifications. Programme specifications for every award are made available to prospective and current students via its website. The programme specifications reference the FHEQ as well as the relevant Subject Benchmark Statements and the validating bodies regulations.

5 LSC runs a Student Progress and Achievement Board which considers summative grades and student progress prior to the University Assessment Boards. In addition, LSC monitors the degree to which academic standards meet or exceed the threshold standards through the appropriate use of external examiners, university annual monitoring processes, the analysis of student outcome data via the Student Support and Progress Committee and the Student Progress and Achievement Board, and through scrutiny of relevant documents by Academic Board.

6 The Centre is professionally accredited by the Council for Dance, Drama and Musical Theatre (CDMT) and the latest report is thorough and positive.

The Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW)

7 *The Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales* (CQFW) does not apply to this review as the provider is located outside Wales and validated by universities that are not signatories to the CQFW.

The Core and Common practices of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code)

Core practice: The provider ensures that the threshold standards for its

opportunity to have an aspect of their professional work considered for assessment in lieu of a final performance piece.

reports, university annual monitoring processes and the analysis of student outcome data. External examiners confirmed that threshold standards are consistent with national qualifications frameworks and assessment and classification processes are appropriate. Their reports are rigorously scrutinised by LSC. LSC makes extensive use of industry representatives to ensure its provision remains relevant and current. Overall, these arrangements and the evidence provided by LSC demonstrate that programmes meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications frameworks and the value of qualifications awarded to students are in line with sector-recognised standards.

20 The review team concluded that the LSC is effective in the delivery of Core and Common practices and maintains the standards of the awards, thereby meeting the Expectations for standards of the Quality Code.

Judgement

21 In order to reach the following judgement, the review team was able to explore a wide range of documentary evidence, including a self-evaluation document; and the review

monitoring and student feedback, and ongoing monitoring through the extensive range of committees including the Learning and Teaching Assessment Committee. Programmes are also accredited by the Council for Dance, Drama and Musical Theatre. Students are very positive about the quality of teaching and this is reflected in the Gold rating from the Teaching Excellence and Students Outcomes Framework (TEF).

Core practice: The provider has sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience.

29 The Faculty Appointment Procedure ensures that staff are recruited from a professional theatre background to ensure currency of practice. New staff are provided with an initial induction and ongoing assessment mentoring support and peer observation opportunities. Staff were provided with additional support to undertake online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic.

30 The provision of continuous professional development opportunities is identified

Representatives Forum. Students were assigned a personal tutor during their induction week

External examiner reports are considered by programme teams as part of the annual monitoring process.

Common practice: The provider engages students individually and collectively in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience.

49 The student representation system and student involvement in a range of committees demonstrates LSC's ongoing engagement of students in the review and enhancement of their educational experience. Students are involved in a range of committees and these responsibilities are allocated between student representatives/presidents. The weekly bulletins and Student Representatives Forums provide examples of enhancements that are taking place on a regular basis in response to student feedback. Issues and concerns raised by students are resolved in a timely manner.

50 Overall, it was clear that students felt well represented and that they had many different mechanisms where they could raise concerns/seek support. Students expressed how helpful staff were and that they could reach out to staff whenever needed, highlighting the open-door policy that staff had advocated. Students were encouraged to provide feedback on the course they studied, both positive and negative, to ensure that relevant changes could be made to enhance the provision. Students also spoke about their involvement in validation events to provide their views on the programmes they studied and various mechanisms for student input were highlighted for validation in documentation.

The Expectations for Quality of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code)

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providing a secure basis for the assessment of student achievement. The quality of the student academic experience is conft .9 517.97 Tm0 g0 G[d)23(o)23(o)23(r)-55(p)23(o)23(l)22(i)22(c)-32(

Judgement

53 In order to reach the following judgement, the review team was able to explore a wide range of documentary evidence, including a self-evaluation document, and meet with a wide range of staff and students. The evidence allowed the review team to explore the provision offered to students from the point of admission through to completion. The review team was able to see appropriate arrangements for admissions; evidence demonstrating effective engagement in the design and delivery of high-quality courses; appropriately qualified and skilled staff in the delivery of high-quality teaching; availability of appropriate and specialist facilities, learning resources and student support; active individual and collective engagement with students; and effective arrangements working in partnership with other organisations in the provision of placements. These practices allowed students to succeed in, and benefit from, higher education. The evidence enabled the review team to see that the provision meets the Expectations, and the Core and Common practices for Quality as set out in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

54 The review team concludes that there can be **confidence** that the quality of the student academic experience meets relevant baseline regulatory requirements.

Commentary: Welsh Language Standards

55 LSC does not operate in Wales and is not under statutory obligation to comply with the *Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011*, therefore, this commentary on the effectiveness of the provider's arrangements to apply Welsh Language Standards is not relevant.

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