



Designated Quality Body
in England

Quality and Standards Review for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students

Doreen Bird College of Performing Arts Ltd



Review Report

December 2022

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Summary of outcomes and confidence levels

Core practice	Outcome	Confidence
S1 The provider ensures that the threshold standards for its qualifications are consistent with the relevant national qualifications' frameworks.	Met	High
S2 The provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers.	Met	High
S3 Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them.	Met	High
S4 The provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent.	Met	High
Q1 The provider has a reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system.	Met	High
Q2 The provider designs and/or delivers high-quality courses.	Met	High
Q3 The provider has sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience.	Met	High
Q4 The provider has sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience.	Met	High
Q5 The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience.	Met	High
Q6 The provider has fair and transparent procedures for handling complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students.	Met	Moderate
Q8 Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the academic experience is high-quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered and who delivers them.	Met	High
Q9 The provider supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes.	Met	High

About this report

This is a report detailing the outcomes of the Quality and Standards Review for providers applying to register with the Office for Students (OfS), conducted by QAA in December 2022, for Doreen Bird College of Performing Arts Ltd.

A Quality and Standards Review (QSR) is a method of assessment QAA uses to provide the OfS with evidence about whether new providers applying to be on the OfS Register meet the Core practices of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code), based on evidence reviewed by expert assessors. This report is structured to outline the assessment team's decisions about the provider's ability to meet the Core practices through detailing the key pieces of evidence scrutinised and linking that evidence to the judgements made.

The team for this assessment was:

Name: Mr Mark Langley
Institution: Bath Spa University
Role in assessment team: Subject assessor

Name: Professor Alan Howard
Institution: University of Reading
Role in assessment team: Institutional assessor

Name: Mr Aaron Lowman
Institution: Global Baking School Ltd
Role in assessment team: Student assessor

The QAA officer for the assessment was: Jo Miller

The size and composition of this assessment team is in line with published guidance and, as such, is comprised of experts with significant experience and expertise across the higher education sector. The team included members with experience of a similar provider to the institution, knowledge of the academic awards offered and included academics with expertise in subject areas relevant to the provider's provision. Collectively the team had experience of the management and delivery of higher education programmes from academic and professional services perspectives, included members with regulatory and investigative experience, and had at least one member able to represent the interests of students. The team included at least one senior academic leader qualified to doctoral level. Details of team members were shared with the provider prior to the assessment to identify and resolve any possible conflicts of interest.

About Doreen Bird College of Performing Arts Ltd

Doreen Bird College of Performing Arts Ltd (the College) is an established provider in the UK in the field of performing arts related further and higher education, located in Sidcup. The College was founded in 1946 as Bird College - Dance, Music and Theatre Performance. The College has offered a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Professional Dance and Musical Theatre since 1996 in a franchised arrangement with the University of Greenwich, the awarding body.

The College's Academic and Programmes Board monitors and approves all artistic and academic work and monitors and approves matters relating to quality assurance including admissions and assessment, monitoring progressions, and referring matters to the College Executive or Board of Directors, as appropriate. The College adheres to the awarding body's

Academic Regulations and Assessment Policy in the delivery of its programme. These awarding body's policies also direct and underpin the College's approach to course and assessment design, marking and moderation and requirements for awards and classifications. The awarding body is responsible for academic standards of the programme. In 2018, the College underwent a partnership review, which was renewed for five years to 2023.

The table below shows the current student numbers on the BA (Hons) in Professional Dance and Musical Theatre programme:

Cohort	Number of Students
Year 1 (Level 4)	176
Year 2 (Level 5)	153
Year 3 (Level 6)	127
TOTAL (as of 6 October 2022)	456

The College's strategy is to grow the international student numbers and has commenced the application process to be registered with the Office for Students in 2019 to maintain its Tier 4 Licence to continue recruiting international students. Approximately 10% of enrolments each year are international students.

How the assessment was conducted

The assessment was conducted according to the process set out in [Quality and Standards Review for Providers Applying to Register with the Office for Students: Guidance for Providers](#) (July 2022).

When undertaking a QSR all 13 of the Core practices are considered by the assessment team. However, for this assessment it was clear that the provider does not offer a research degree programme. Therefore, the assessment team did not consider Q7 (where the provider offers research degrees, it delivers these in appropriate and supportive research environments).

To form its judgements about the provider's ability to meet the Core practices, the assessment team considered a range of evidence that was submitted prior to the assessment visit and evidence gathered at the assessment visit itself. [Annex 1] To ensure that the assessment team focused on the principles embedded in the Core practices, and that the evidence considered was assessed in a way that is clear and consistent with all other assessments, the team utilised Annex 4 of the Guidance for Providers to construct this report and detail the key pieces of evidence seen. Annex 4 expects that assessment teams will sample certain types of key evidence using randomised sampling. In this assessment, using the random sampling calculator, the assessment team sampled the following areas for evidence for the reasons given below:

- The team reviewed a random sample of 27 accepted applications and 27 rejected applications from a total sample of 1,280 admissions applications for the 2021-22 academic year.

- The team reviewed a random sample of 127 individual pieces of student work derived from a total of 426 comprising 166 items for Year 1, 134 items for Year 2 and 126 items for Year 3 for the 2021-22 academic year.
- The team considered a representative sample of 21 job descriptions and accompanying academic qualifications and professional accreditations, covering senior leadership, professional staff and programme leads working at the College.

The assessment was conducted onsite and included eight meetings with the College's staff and students: one meeting with Executive Group (Chief Executive Officer, Principal and Artistic Director, Assistant Principal (Quality Assurance), Assistant Principal (Student Wellbeing)); one meeting with Heads of Department (Singing and Voice, Acting, Musical Theatre, Dance, Academic Studies); one meeting with Academic Faculty; one meeting with tutors in each performance discipline; one meeting with students (student representatives from each year level); one meeting with administration and support staff (selected staff across functions) and one meeting with the Link Tutor from the University of Greenwich. The assessment team was also able to observe teaching, performance assessment and facilities and resources.

Further details of all the evidence the assessment team considered are provided in Annex 1 of this report.

Explanation of findings

S1 The provider ensures that the threshold standards for its qualifications are consistent with the relevant national qualifications' frameworks

Summary of findings

The team concluded that the Core practice is met for the following reasons:

1 The College through a franchised arrangement with the awarding body (University of Greenwich) has clear and comprehensive academic regulations and frameworks to support the setting and maintenance of academic standards at the relevant threshold level. The University validates the College's BA (Hons) in Professional Dance and Musical Theatre as outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement and responsibilities checklist.¹ The College observes the University's academic regulations² which detail every aspect of the University's undergraduate provision. The College has adopted the University's assessment and feedback policy³ which is a comprehensive policy because it details all aspects involving assessment and feedback processes such as designing, writing and reviewing assessments, the purpose of assessment and feedback, and marking and moderation. Observance by the College of these regulations, and the University's oversight, provides assurance that the College adheres to the higher education sector-recognised standards that apply in England, as set out in the Office for Students' Regulatory Framework.⁴

2 Plans for maintaining threshold standards are robust and credible and fully understood by staff because of the College's extensive experience in delivering the programme in partnership with the University. The College's staff have significant experience in performing arts in higher education and understand and apply the University's approach to setting and maintaining standards. The College has a 25-year partnership with the University as awarding body, demonstrating the College's commitment to ensure that threshold standards are maintained at the appropriate level.

3 The University's oversight of the programme documentation ensures that threshold standards described in definitive course documentation are consistent with relevant national qualifications' frameworks. The College's BA (Hons) Professional Dance and Musical Theatre Programme Handbook 22-235 includes links to the University's regulations and the definitive programme document.⁶ The multiple outcomes for each 30-credit module reflect the programme's focus on threshold standards consistent with the relevant national qualifications' frameworks and the range of techniques and genres appropriate to the subject. The intended learning outcomes for each level of study and each module are therefore clear because the University's validation process ensures they are presented in a clear and accessible manner.

4 External examiner and third-party endorsement by the PSRB, the Council for Dance, Drama and Musical Theatre (CDMT)⁷ reports confirms that threshold standards are

¹ 005 Memorandum of Agreement

² 007 University of Greenwich Academic Regulations AY 22-23 007

³ 008 University of Greenwich Assessment and Feedback Policy

⁴ 000 Bird College QSR Submission (07.10.22)

⁵ 002 Programme Handbook

⁶ M4 meeting University of Greenwich Link Tutor

⁷ Council for Dance Drama and Musical Theatre (CDMT) Accreditation Report 023; CDMT Annual Report of a Performance AY 21-22 024

consistent with the relevant national qualifications' framework, and that credit and qualifications are awarded only where those threshold standards have been met. External examiner reports⁸ for the years covering the COVID-19 pandemic note the considerable challenges for such intensively practical courses, but that even within those constraints threshold standards were consistent with the relevant national qualifications' framework. Third party endorsements from the CMDT⁹ also highlight the University's oversight of the programme and commend the balance between academic and practical elements.

5 Assessed student work demonstrates that credit and qualifications are awarded only where the relevant threshold standards have been met. Assessment criteria¹⁰ documents for each assignment brief clarify what is required of students appropriate to their level of study, because each set out the assessment expectations for each technical area of study. Feedback text is appropriate because the text aligns with the relevant grading boundaries and levels of expectation and provide both summative commentary as well as formative feedback.

6 Staff understand and apply the College's approach to setting and maintaining standards through assessment design, moderation and award classification, and assessed student work demonstrates that credit and qualifications are awarded only where the relevant threshold standards have been met.

7 The assessment team considers that the standards set for the College's courses are in line with the sector-recognised standards defined in paragraph 342 of the OfS's regulatory framework. The assessment team also considers that standards described in the approved programme documentation are set at levels that are consistent with these sector-recognised standards and the College's academic regulations and policies should ensure that standards are maintained appropriately. The assessment team concludes, therefore, that the Core practice is met.

The team had a high degree of confidence in this judgement for the following reasons:

8 The assessment team was able to review all of the available evidence recommended in Annex 4. This was triangulated in meetings with the University Link Tutor, Heads of Department and faculty. Therefore, the assessment team has a high degree of confidence in this judgement.

⁸ External Examiner Report for AY 21-22 016; 045 External Examiner Report for AY 20-21; 046 External Examiner Report for AY 19-20

⁹ Council for Dance Drama and Musical Theatre (CDMT) Accreditation Report 023; CDMT Annual Report of a Performance AY21-22 024

¹⁰ Assessed student work sample ASW

S2 The provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers

Summary of findings

The team concluded that the Core practice is met for the following reasons:

9 The College, through the franchise arrangement with the University, has clear and comprehensive academic regulations and frameworks to support the setting and maintenance of academic standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers. The Memorandum of Agreement between the University and the College¹¹ determines that the University has oversight of the College's provision.

10 Plans for setting and maintaining comparable standards are robust and credible because the College aligns with the University's well established and evidence-based regulations and academic partnership processes. The College applies the academic regulations of the University and there are no exemptions from these regulations or the partnership agreement.¹² The University periodically reviews the College as well as the annual scrutiny undertaken by both the College and the University.

11 The standards described in definitive course documentation beyond the threshold level are reasonably comparable with those in other UK providers. As noted in S1, highly detailed learning outcomes in the definitive programme documentation set clear expectations for each aspect of the programme. The College identifies minor or major programme changes through the Annual Institutional Report¹³ which is approved by the College's Board of Directors prior to submission to the University.¹⁴

12 External examiners and third-party endorsement by the Council for Dance, Drama and Musical Theatre (CDMT)¹⁵ confirm that standards beyond the threshold level are reasonably comparable with those in other UK providers, and credit and qualifications are awarded only where those standards have been met. External examiners¹⁶ commend the professional nature of the training provided, because they confirm that the standards beyond the threshold level that students achieve are reasonably comparable with those in other UK providers and note the good honours rates graduates achieve. CDMT's¹⁷ analysis of the College cites the professional preparation at the heart of the programme because this is a key requirement of accreditation.

13 Assessed student work¹⁸ demonstrates that credit and qualifications are awarded only where the relevant standards have been met. The feedback sheets very clearly indicate

¹¹ 005 MoA between the University of Greenwich and Bird College 2022-25

¹² 005 MoA between the University of Greenwich and Bird College 2022-25

¹³ 048 Bird College AIR 2020-21; 077 Bird College AIR 2019-20

¹⁴ 089 Board of Directors Minutes 17.11.2020; 090 Board of Directors Minutes 06.04.2021; 092 Board of Directors Minutes 16.11.2021; 093 Board of Directors Minutes 29.03.2022

¹⁵ Council for Dance Drama and Musical Theatre (CDMT) Accreditation Report 023; CDMT Annual Report of a Performance AY21-22 024

¹⁶ 016 External Examiner Report for AY 21-22; 045 External Examiner Report for AY 20-21; 046 External Examiner Report for AY 19-20

¹⁷ Council for Dance Drama and Musical Theatre (CDMT) Accreditation Report 023; CDMT Annual Report of a Performance AY21-22 024

¹⁸ ASW assessed student work sample

the level of student attainment beyond the threshold, because they provide grading bands for each criterion assessed, and feedback appropriate to those grading bands. These bands are set out in the grading descriptors for each assignment brief, along with separate criteria for assessment documents for each task. The interconnection between the assignment briefs, assessment criteria, grading descriptors and assessment feedback demonstrates a carefully planned approach to assessment that enable students to recognise what they must do to achieve beyond the threshold.

14 Staff understand and apply the provider's approach to setting and maintaining standards above the threshold; however, there was some confusion between some staff¹⁹ and Heads of Department in the responsibilities for the oversight of the grading and marking rubrics and processes within their departmental area. These rubrics observe the template in the University's Assessment and Feedback Policy,²⁰ and those included in the sample of assessed student work²¹ confirm that the College adapts the rubric for each assessment task.

15 Students understand what is required to reach standards beyond the threshold. Students^{22, 23} collectively describe assessment criteria is given in advance of assessments and how staff talk through the requirement of each assessment task and the use of what the College terms 'mock assessments' to prepare students for summative assessments.²⁴ Students²⁵ were exceptionally clear that because of the rubrics they know what they are expected to do to attain a pass mark or beyond. Students regard the approach to assessment as very fair and clear.

16 The team concludes that the College, through the franchise arrangement with the University, ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers. The team considered that the standards described in the approved programme documentation and in the College's academic regulations and policies should ensure that such standards are maintained appropriately. The assessment team concludes, therefore, that the Core practice is met.

The team had a high degree of confidence in this judgement for the following reasons:

17 The assessment team was able to review all of the available evidence recommended in Annex 4. This was triangulated in meetings with the Executive Group, Heads of Department, faculty and students. Therefore, the assessment team has a high degree of confidence in this judgement.

¹⁹ M6 meeting Faculty; M7 meeting with Academic Faculty

²⁰ 008 University of Greenwich Assessment and Feedback Policy

²¹ ASW sample of assessed student work

²² M2 Meeting with students

²³ 058 Year 1 (Level 4) Student Reps QSR Student Submission; 059 Year 2 (Level 5) Student Reps QSR Student Submission; 060 Year 3 (Level 6) Student Reps QSR Student Submission

²⁴ 058 Year 1 (Level 4) Student Reps QSR Student Submission; 059 Year 2 (Level 5) Student Reps QSR Student Submission

²⁵ 060 Year 3 (Level 6) Student Reps QSR Student Submission

S3 Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them

Summary of findings

The team concluded that the Core practice is met for the following reasons:

18 The College's partnership with the University is formalised through a signed memorandum of agreement²⁶ which refers to the clear and comprehensive regulations or policies for the management of the partnership, to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure. The agreement²⁷ establishes extensive arrangements for the management of academic standards because they detail the roles of each partner in programme management, assessment, marking and classification processes, and in the nomination of external examiners.²⁸ The College does not have partnerships with any other third parties in relation to the delivery of the programme.²⁹

19 Partnership agreement and associated academic regulations are clear and comprehensive, up-to-date and clearly define the College and University's responsibilities in respect of setting and maintaining academic standards. Academic regulations and assessment policies of the University govern in further detail how they work with the College to set and maintain academic standards.^{30,31} The College relies on the University assessment and feedback policy as a key reference point alongside support from the University Link Tutor who acts as a first point of contact and who attends the College's Academic and Programme board meetings.^{32,33,34} The College's role is to implement these policies and carry out the responsibilities assigned to it, for example in utilising the University's classification marking scales, undertaking internal moderation of marked assessments and in ensuring attendance by College staff at the University's progression and award boards.

20 External examiner and third-party endorsement CDMT³⁵ reports confirm that the standards of awards delivered in partnership are credible and secure. External examiner reports for 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22³⁶ confirm that processes relating to assessment and determination of awards are appropriately undertaken and indicate that the arrangements underpinning the partnership regarding maintenance of academic standards are credible and secure. External examiner reports consistently express the view that marking, and moderation arrangements are appropriate and that assessment outcomes align with grade descriptors and appropriately demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes.³⁷

²⁶ 005 Memorandum of Agreement between Bird College and University of Greenwich

²⁷ 005 Memorandum of Agreement between Bird College and University of Greenwich

²⁸ 005 Memorandum of Agreement between Bird College and University of Greenwich

²⁹ 027 Response to additional evidence request - 4/11/22

³⁰ 007 University of Greenwich Academic Regulations AY 22-23.pdf

³¹ 008 University of Greenwich Assessment and Feedback Policy.pdf

³² M1 with Executive Group

³³ 005 Memorandum of Agreement between Bird College and University of Greenwich section 12.2

³⁴ 032 Bird College Academic Programmes Board RESTRICTED minutes (June202022).pdf

³⁵ Council for Dance, Drama and Musical Theatre (CDMT) Accreditation Report 023; CDMT Annual Report of a Performance AY21-22 024

³⁶ 016, 046, 045, External Examiner Reports

³⁷ 016 External Examiner Report for AY 21-22.pdf; 045 External Examiner Report for AY 20-21.pdf; 045 External Examiner Report for AY 19-20.pdf

21 Staff from the College, including Heads of Department³⁸ and teaching staff,^{39,40} and the University's Link Tutor⁴¹ understand their respective responsibilities for academic standards because College staff articulated an understanding of their responsibilities in respect of securing academic standards. For example, staff could explain the requirement to undertake double marking of un-anonymised student work and live performance assessments^{42,43} as stipulated in the University's Assessment and Feedback Policy.⁴⁴

22 Assessed student work⁴⁵ confirms that the standards of awards delivered in partnership are credible and secure because the evidence presented, observation of a Level 6 dance assessment⁴⁶ and assessment records⁴⁷ confirm that double-marking is routinely undertaken in line with the University's Assessment and Feedback Policy.⁴⁸ Assessment feedback sheets clearly indicate the level of student attainment because they provide grading bands for each criterion assessed and feedback appropriate to those grading bands.⁴⁹

23 The team concludes that the College has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure as verified by the partnership agreement, the academic regulations and policies of the University. The College's responsibilities are set out in the memorandum of agreement and in respect of standards relate to assessment processes including the setting, marking and moderation of assessments. College staff articulated their understanding of these responsibilities and consideration of assessed student work confirmed that requirements in respect of, for example, double marking were fully adhered to. External examiner reports confirm that the College successfully upholds its responsibilities for maintaining credible and secure standards. The assessment team concludes, therefore, that the Core practice is met.

The team had a high degree of confidence in this judgement for the following reasons:

24 The assessment team was able to review all of the available evidence recommended in Annex 4. This was triangulated in meetings with the Executive Group, Heads of Departments, Professional Staff and Link Tutor. Therefore, the assessment team has a high degree of confidence in this judgement.

³⁸ M3 meeting with Heads of Department

³⁹ M6 meeting with Faculty (discipline performance teachers)

⁴⁰ M7 meeting with Academic Faculty

⁴¹ M4 with University link tutor

⁴² M3 meeting with Heads of Department, M6 with Faculty, M7 with Academic Faculty

⁴³ 061 Response to evidence request 30/11/22

⁴⁴ 008 University of Greenwich Assessment and Feedback Policy.pdf

⁴⁵ ASW Assessed student work sample

⁴⁶ 105 Observation of assessment

⁴⁷ 066 Double marking and moderation of L6 independent project

⁴⁸ 008 University of Greenwich Assessment and Feedback Policy.pdf

⁴⁹ ASW Assessed student work sample

S4 The provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent

Summary of findings

The team concluded that the Core practice is met for the following reasons:

25 The College through a franchised arrangement with the University has clear and comprehensive regulations and policies describing its requirements for using external expertise in setting and maintaining academic standards.⁵⁰ The academic regulations set out the general principles of assessment, credit requirements for progression, classification rules and confirmation that the University's Progression and Award Boards have delegated authority from the University Academic Council for the conferment of awards and decisions relating to the progression of students.⁵¹

26 The College has clear and comprehensive regulations and policies for assessment and classification, and these processes are reliable, fair and transparent. Records of course approval and review confirm that external expertise is used according to the franchised arrangement with the University. The University's programme specification lists programme-level learning outcomes, knowledge and understanding, intellectual skills, subject practical skills, transferable/key skills and graduate attributes⁵² and maps assessments to modules at each level of study. The College, subject to University approval, designs assessments and adopts and utilises the marking and grading conventions set out in the University Assessment and Feedback Policy.⁵³ Assessment and classification processes are transparent because the programme specification and module descriptions are available to students in their programme handbook⁵⁴ and these include comprehensive information about the requirements for progression and other aspects of the assessment process. Each module description includes a list of learning outcomes and a breakdown of summative assessments including weighting, learning outcome assessed and outlines details of the assessment type.⁵⁵

27 Assessed student work confirms assessment and classification are carried out in line with the College's and course's requirements. This is because work seen by the team had appropriate developmental feedback and clear justification for the mark awarded and because the live dance assessment⁵⁶ demonstrated how double marking is undertaken in practice. Assessment student work sampled⁵⁷ confirmed double-marking of other assignment types including written work and where multiple different markers are involved in a particular assessment further moderation of samples of student work is undertaken by a subject leader or head of department to ensure consistent application of academic standards.⁵⁸

28 External examiner or verifier reports confirm that the College's assessment and

⁵⁰ 007 University of Greenwich Academic Regulations AY 22-23.pdf; 008 University of Greenwich Assessment and Feedback Policy.pdf

⁵¹ 007 University of Greenwich Academic Regulations AY 22-23.pdf

⁵² 056 Programme Specification 2022-23.pdf

⁵³ 008 University of Greenwich Assessment and Feedback Policy.pdf

⁵⁴ 002 BA (Hons) Professional Dance and Musical Theatre Programme Handbook AY 22-23.pdf

⁵⁵ 002 BA (Hons) Professional Dance and Musical Theatre Programme Handbook AY 22-23.pdf - module descriptions

⁵⁶ 105 Observation of assessment

⁵⁷ 066 Double marking and moderation of L6 independent project

⁵⁸ M3 meeting with Heads of Department, 061 Response to evidence request 30/11/22

classification processes are reliable, fair and transparent. External examiner reports confirm that the processes of assessment and determination of awards (such as assessment level and consistency of marking) are appropriate and that the decisions of the Progression and Award Board are fair, equitable and consistent.⁵⁹

29 External examiner reports and the College's responses to them confirm the use of external expertise and that the provider gives that expertise due consideration. The College makes use of external expertise in ensuring the maintenance of academic standards and receiving feedback on teaching, learning and assessment processes. External examiner feedback is circulated and discussed as a standing item at the College's Academic and Programme Board⁶⁰ and reflections on external examiner feedback are included in annual programme monitoring⁶¹ and annual institutional review reports⁶² submitted to the University.

30 Staff understand the requirements for the use of external expertise, and the provider's assessment and classification processes. Heads of Department⁶³ and teaching staff⁶⁴ understand the requirements for the use of external expertise, and the College's assessment and classification processes. Staff^{65,66} articulated their understanding of these responsibilities including arrangements for double-marking and moderation.

31 Students confirm that the provider's assessment and classification processes are reliable, fair and transparent because views expressed in the student submission⁶⁷ and by students⁶⁸ indicate satisfaction with their experience of assessment processes. For example, students note that assessment criteria are transparent because they are provided when an assignment is set and because tutors take time in class to explain these criteria and the requirements of the assessment.⁶⁹ Students generally considered feedback to be fair, constructive and timely and Level 6 students expressed complete confidence in the fairness of assessments.⁷⁰

32 The team concludes that the College is using external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent. In delivering a franchised programme of the University, the College is bound by the academic regulations and assessment policies of the University. Assessment briefs and assessed student work demonstrate adherence to these processes and external examiner reports confirm assessment and classification processes are reliable and fair. External examiner reports are considered by the College at Academic and Programme Board and further reflected on in the annual institutional report submitted to the University. The College is therefore giving due consideration to external expertise. The assessment team concludes, therefore, that the Core practice is met.

⁵⁹ 016 External Examiner Report for AY 21-22.pdf; 045 External Examiner Report for AY 20-21.pdf; 045 External Examiner Report for AY 19-20.pdf

⁶⁰ 017 Academic and Programme Board terms of reference; 018 Bird College Academic & Programme Board minutes (November 2021).pdf

⁶¹ 057 Bird College Programme Monitoring Report 2020-21.pdf

⁶² 048 Bird College AIR 2020-21.pdf

⁶³ M3 meeting with Heads of Department

⁶⁴ M6 meeting with faculty

⁶⁵ M3 meeting with Heads of Department

⁶⁶ M6 meeting with faculty

⁶⁷ 058-060 Student submission

⁶⁸ M2 meeting with students

⁶⁹ M2 meeting with students; 059 Year 2 student submission

⁷⁰ 060 Year 3 Student submission

The team had a high degree of confidence in this judgement for the following reasons:

33 The assessment team was able to review all of the available evidence recommended in Annex 4. This was triangulated in meetings with students and a random sample of assessed student work. Therefore, the assessment team has a high degree of confidence in this judgement.

Q1 The provider has a reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system

Summary of findings

The team concluded that the Core practice is met for the following reasons:

34 The College reflecting the franchised arrangement for the delivery of the BA (Hons) Professional Dance and Musical Theatre programme has clear policy for the recruitment and admission of students which is reliable, fair and inclusive. The University's Admission Policy and Procedure⁷¹ is the definitive policy on recruitment and admission of students. It clearly sets out arrangements and responsibilities for the selection and admission of students and the respective responsibilities of the College and University are listed in the memorandum of agreement.⁷² The University monitors and retains overall control of the admissions process. Reflecting the College's specialist provision, the College has developed its own internal policy and procedure for auditioning applicants⁷³ which provides a credible basis for operating a fair admissions system because it clearly outlines arrangements for auditions and the assessment criteria to be used in appraising audition performance and making admissions decisions. Monitoring and oversight of the admissions system is undertaken as a standing item at the College's Academic and Programme Board⁷⁴ and commentary and reflection on recruitment and admissions is provided in the annual institutional report submitted to the University.⁷⁵

35 The College's plans for ensuring that admissions systems are reliable, fair and inclusive are robust and credible because they are underpinned by policy and encapsulate a commitment to offering all applicants an audition. The College is bound by the University's Equality and Diversity Policy which requires that a decision to reject an application must not discriminate on grounds of any protected characteristic.⁷⁶ Heads of department⁷⁷ and teaching staff⁷⁸ involved in admissions expressed a commitment to providing an inclusive admissions system and could cite examples of supporting specific student needs at audition including recently facilitating sign language for a hard of hearing applicant. No appeals or complaints regarding the admissions system had been received, meaning the fairness and effectiveness of the procedures could not be tested.

36 Information for applicants is transparent, accessible and fit for purpose as information for prospective students is primarily available through the College website⁷⁹ which provides comprehensive and transparent information about studying at the College, such as curriculum content, course fees, accommodation, student support services and the application process. Access to the College website and social media channels is unrestricted and therefore accessible to all prospective students.

37 Admissions records demonstrate that the College's admission and audition policies are implemented in practice and support a fair and reliable admissions system. Scrutiny of the sample 2021-22 admissions records, including application form, reference, decision letter, panel notes, and registration record confirms careful record keeping and clear and fair

⁷¹ 010 University of Greenwich Admission Policy and Procedure

⁷² 005 MoA between Bird College and University of Greenwich

⁷³ 012 Bird College Audition Policy & Procedure

⁷⁴ 018 Bird College Academic & Programmes Board minutes (November 2021).pdf

⁷⁵ 048 Bird College AIR 2020-21.pdf

⁷⁶ 011 University of Greenwich Equality and Diversity Policy

⁷⁷ M3 Meeting with Heads of Department

⁷⁸ M6 meeting with Faculty (discipline performance teachers), M7 meeting with Academic faculty

⁷⁹ <https://birdcollege.co.uk/> - accessed 25/10/22

appraisal of individual candidates, including an allocated score and comments on each element (acting, singing, dancing) of the audition.⁸⁰

38 The College confirmed that it does not work with recruitment agents.⁸¹

39 The admissions requirements set out in approved course documentation are consistent with the College's policy or policies. Formal and official offer or rejection letters are subsequently sent to students by the University.⁸² All offers are conditional on the candidate meeting the 64 UCAS points required by both the College and the University⁸³ and as stipulated in the programme specification.⁸⁴

40 Staff involved in admissions understand their role and are appropriately skilled and trained. It is evident that College staff involved in admissions understand their roles and responsibilities, work closely with admissions and registry staff at the University⁸⁵ and attend professional development events held by the University on admissions⁸⁶ and other quality assurance processes.⁸⁷ Operational and strategic matters relating to admissions are also discussed at the University Principals' Strategic meetings.⁸⁸

41 Students tend to agree that the admissions system is reliable, fair and inclusive. This is because students who met the team expressed the view that the process of audition was supportive and implemented fairly.⁸⁹ The University's registration report for each candidate subsequently enrolled as a student confirms that a check on qualifications and identity is completed.⁹⁰

42 The team concludes that the College has a reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system. This is because there is a credible and robust approach to recruitment and admissions of students underpinned by the University's admissions policy and the College's audition policy and procedure which demonstrate reliability, fairness and inclusivity. Entry requirements are aligned with the overall regulations and policies of the College and the University, and admissions decisions reflect the entry requirements agreed with the University and published in the programme specification. Admissions records demonstrate that admission policies are implemented in practice and that admissions decisions are reliable, fair and inclusive. The assessment team concludes, therefore, that the Core practice is met.

The team had a high degree of confidence in this judgement for the following reasons:

43 The assessment team was able to review all of the available evidence recommended in Annex 4. This was triangulated in meetings with the professional staff, students and the sample of admissions records. Therefore, the assessment team has a high

⁸⁰ ADD – Admissions records sample

⁸¹ 027 Response to additional evidence requests – 4/11/22

⁸² 061 response to additional evidence request 30/11/22

⁸³ 010 University of Greenwich Admission Policy and Procedure

⁸⁴ 056 Programme Specification 2022-23.pdf

⁸⁵ M5 meeting with Professional services staff; M4 meeting with University link tutor

⁸⁶ 040 University of Greenwich Partner College Away Day (18.05.2022) Admissions Slides.pdf

⁸⁷ 042 University of Greenwich Partner College Away Day (18.05.2022) Registration Slides.pdf

⁸⁸ 036 University of Greenwich Principals' Strategic Planning Meeting minutes (June 2020).pdf; 037 University of Greenwich Principals' Strategic Planning Meeting minutes (November 2021).pdf; 038 University of Greenwich Principals' Strategic Planning Meeting minutes (February 2022).pdf; 039 University of Greenwich Principals' Strategic Planning Meeting minutes (June 2022).pdf

⁸⁹ M2 meeting with students; 058 Year 1 (level 4) student submission

⁹⁰ ADD – Admissions records sample

degree of confidence in this judgement.

Q2 The provider designs and/or delivers high-quality courses

Summary of findings

The team concluded that the Core practice is met for the following reasons:

44 The College has a robust and credible approach for designing and delivering high-quality courses. Plans for designing and delivering high-quality courses rest with the University's oversight. The University's evidence-based oversight ensures high quality of the strongly evidence-based programme. The College's Board of Directors' meetings⁹¹ consider programme changes informed by the College's Annual Institutional Report (AIR).⁹² This monitoring process offers the College the opportunity to identify any major or minor programme modifications which, on receipt, the University approves and instructs the College to re-write the programme handbook.⁹³ Therefore, the College regards the process of programme development as ongoing and responsive.⁹⁴

45 Approved course documentation indicates that the teaching, learning, and assessment design enables students to meet and demonstrate the intended learning outcomes. The programme handbook⁹⁵ demonstrates a comprehensive and well-considered context for student learning because it contains the definitive programme document and links to the University's regulations, key policies and assessment guidance. The College also produces a Student Handbook⁹⁶ that provides support beyond the programme details and further contextualises programme delivery, because it introduces students to key College policies that support student learning, such as learning support and plagiarism guidance.

46 External examiner reports⁹⁷ confirm that the course is of a high quality because they note the exceptional opportunities students have to work with many highly skilled industry professionals who ensure that high student outcomes prepare students for transition into the industry and underpin assessment outcomes. Information from third parties confirm that the programme is high quality because the College's report from the Council for Dance, Drama and Musical Theatre (CDMT)⁹⁸ demonstrates that courses deliver a good balance between academic, reflective, and critical work, since all programme outlines and associated teaching evidence an awareness of recent thinking within the industry and the ever-changing nature of performance demands.

47 Students regard their courses as being of high quality because they consider that versatility within the industry is evident in the diversity of the training the College offers and the breadth of topics the course covers.⁹⁹ Students consider the design, content, organisation and quality of teaching excellent and value the breakdowns that outline student achievement for all pieces of academic work, and the accompanying guidance and support. In this way, students believe the training replicates the demands of the professional

⁹¹ 089 Board of Directors' Minutes 17.11.2020; 090 Board of Directors' Minutes 06.04.2021; 091 Board of Directors' Minutes 28.06.2021; 092 Board of Directors' Minutes 16.11.2021; 093 Board of Directors' Minutes 29.03.2022; 094 Board of Directors' Minutes 28.06.2022

⁹² 048 Bird College AIR 2020-21.

⁹³ 002 BA (Hons) Professional Dance and Musical Theatre Programme Handbook 2022-23; M4 meeting University of Greenwich Link Tutor

⁹⁴ 027 QSR QAAO request to provider for additional evidence RESPONSE Document

⁹⁵ 002 BA (Hons) Professional Dance and Musical Theatre Programme Handbook 2022-23

⁹⁶ 003 Bird College Student Handbook AY 22-23

⁹⁷ 016 External Examiner Report for AY 21-22; 045 External Examiner Report for AY 20-21; 046 External Examiner Report for AY 19-20

⁹⁸ 023 for Dance Drama and Musical Theatre (CDMT) Accreditation Report 023; 024 CDMT Annual Report of a Performance AY 21-22 024

⁹⁹ 058 Year 1 (Level 4) Student Reps_QSR Student Submission

environment, for which the College prepares them.¹⁰⁰ Academic and Programme Board meetings address any issues raised either through student feedback surveys¹⁰¹ or raised by staff or student representatives.¹⁰² The feedback¹⁰³ is predominantly positive, which the CDMT¹⁰⁴ reflects, noting that students were overwhelmingly positive in their belief that their course prepared them admirably for their intended profession. The students¹⁰⁵ reaffirmed this assessment.

48 Staff are able to articulate what 'high quality' means in the context of the College and show how the provision meets that definition. There is a single-minded focus within the College on the professional nature of the training offered, evident in the focus on student preparedness for industry highlighted by Heads of Department.¹⁰⁶ Heads of Department aligned this to the College's mission;¹⁰⁷ its aspiration for excellence; its determination to nurture and develop artistic talent; and its desire to develop student resilience and employability.

49 Observation of teaching and learning¹⁰⁸ demonstrates clarity of objectives, good planning and organisation, a sound method or approach, good delivery, appropriate content, effective use of resources and student engagement. This is because the College considers its teaching methods to ensure that every student at the College continuously develops their technical and artistic skills to allow them to reach their full potential to progress into the performing arts industry.¹⁰⁹ The observation of teaching and learning demonstrated that learning objectives met this aim because lessons were carefully planned and wholly relevant to the student learning journeys. Sessions observed were planned and organised well because teaching approaches were sound and delivered with energy and clarity.

50 The team concludes that the College designs and delivers a high-quality course. This is because the University has clear oversight of the programme design process yet responds to requests for programme changes from the College. Therefore, the College's regulations or policies for course design and delivery facilitate the design and delivery of high-quality courses. This demonstrates that the College has robust and credible plans for designing and delivering high-quality courses, and approved course documentation indicates that the teaching, learning, and assessment design enable students to meet and demonstrate the intended learning outcomes. Therefore, the assessment team concludes that the Core practice is met.

The team had a high degree of confidence in this judgement for the following reasons:

51 The assessment team was able to review all of the available evidence recommended in Annex 4. This was triangulated in meetings with faculty, external examiner and PSRB reports. Therefore, the assessment team has a high degree of confidence in this judgement.

¹⁰⁰ 060 Year 3 (Level 6) Student Reps QSR Student Submission

¹⁰¹ 021 Bird College Student Feedback (All Assessments) AY 21-22

¹⁰² M7 meeting with Academic Faculty

¹⁰³ 021 Bird College Student Feedback (All Assessments) AY 21-22

¹⁰⁴ Council for Dance Drama and Musical Theatre (CDMT) Accreditation Report 023; CDMT Annual Report of a Performance AY21-22 024

¹⁰⁵ M2 meeting with students

¹⁰⁶ M3 meeting with Heads of School

¹⁰⁷ 003 Bird College Student Handbook AY 22-23

¹⁰⁸ 104 Observation of teaching and learning

¹⁰⁹ 000 Bird College QSR Submission (07.10.22)

Q3 The provider has sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience

Summary of findings

The team concluded that the Core practice is met for the following reasons:

52 The College's regulations or policies for the recruitment, appointment and induction provide for a sufficient number of appropriately qualified and skilled staff. The College publishes relevant institutional staff policies in its Employee Handbook¹¹⁰ which is the main repository for staff information.¹¹¹ The recruitment process defined in the Employee Handbook¹¹² and the College's Recruitment Guide for Staff¹¹³ describe an appropriate recruitment and induction process because it contains the approval to the joint principles, enabling the swift advertisement and appointment of staff and explanations of the right to work status and of the probationary period for new staff. The job descriptions¹¹⁴ demonstrate that for each role appointed there is a clear understanding of the responsibilities for each role as they are detailed in their definition of the role. The induction process is tailored to the needs of such a specialist provider, since alongside the Onboarding Checklist for all new Employees¹¹⁵ it provides accessible and clear guidance for new staff.

53 The College has sufficient appropriately skilled and qualified staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience. Under the current Memorandum of Agreement,¹¹⁶ the University should approve all staff CVs on an annual basis but has now moved towards approving staff as a part of its periodic review process. The University has yet to update the Memorandum accordingly.¹¹⁷ The job descriptions, person specifications and CVs evidenced¹¹⁸ demonstrated that selection processes have been followed, because the CVs of the current postholders align closely with the person specifications. The College creates an inclusive community because the Employee Handbook¹¹⁹ includes the College's personal tutoring and Safeguarding Policy and its diversity and dignity policies.¹²⁰

54 The College has robust and credible plans for the support of sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff. However, the Employee Handbook¹²¹ does not include an explicit staff development policy, other than a training agreement form. The Executive Group¹²² and Heads of Department¹²³ stated the College's willingness to support staff to undertake higher degrees or other relevant training. Staff were equally clear that the College provided development support if they requested it. Although the College's approach to staff development, including the financial investment, is not captured in a formal written policy, it is evident that the College supports staff training needs.

¹¹⁰ 004 Bird College Employee Handbook

¹¹¹ 027 QSR QAAO request to provider for additional evidence RESPONSE Document

¹¹² 004 Bird College Employee Handbook

¹¹³ 102 Bird College Recruitment Guide for Staff

¹¹⁴ 028 JDs for Facilities Staff (02.11.22); 029 JDs and CVs for specific Staff (30.11.22)

¹¹⁵ 074 Onboarding Checklist for all new employees

¹¹⁶ 005 MoA between the University of Greenwich and Bird College 2020-25

¹¹⁷ 101 Request to provider for additional evidence visit (Day 1)

¹¹⁸ 028 JDs for Facilities Staff (02.11.22); 029 JDs and CVs for specific Staff (30.11.22)

¹¹⁹ 004 Bird College Employee Handbook

¹²⁰ 013 Bird College Personal Tutoring Policy, 014 Bird College Safeguarding Policy AY 22-23

¹²¹ 004 Bird College Employee Handbook

¹²² M1 meeting with Executive Group

¹²³ M3 meeting with Heads of Department

55 The College's regulations or policies for the support for staff provide for a sufficient number of appropriately qualified and skilled staff; this is because the College's Observation of Teaching and Learning Handbook¹²⁴ outlines a process that supports the College's annual Performance and Development Review process. This is not detailed in the Employee Handbook,¹²⁵ but there are Performance & Development Review (PDR) Guidance Notes¹²⁶ that explain how staff can optimise the process. The process is effective because it is designed to encourage positive dialogue between manager and employee. It also requires staff to consider themselves within the context of the College and its mission and vision.

56 Observations of teaching and learning indicate that teaching staff are appropriately qualified and skilled (see also paragraph 49 Q2). The lesson observations included a Level 5 somatic practice and theory session¹²⁷ and a Level 6 audition assessment session.¹²⁸ In both sessions, tutors focused the delivery at the appropriate level for the students. For instance, the Level 5 class was underpinned by very current research, some dating to 2022, while the professional focus of the audition assessment was well suited to Level 6 students. Sessions were well paced, and the content of classes was stimulating.

57 Students tend to agree that there are sufficient appropriately skilled and qualified staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience. This is evidenced in student submissions from all three-year levels of students,¹²⁹ which are clear in their praise for the quality of the teaching, because of the care that staff show the students and their industry focus. Students agree with staff that the course's high-quality focus is the way it prepares graduates for the profession. Student survey feedback¹³⁰ echoes this, demonstrating that all students admire the quality of the staff with whom they work, because while the student submission was written by student representatives, the survey feedback draws on a broader range of students. Students positively commented on the use of permanent academic staff and external professionals as being well balanced and contributing to their academic experience.¹³¹

58 The team concludes that the College has sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience. This is because the College's regulations or policies for the recruitment, appointment, induction, and support for staff provide for a sufficient number of appropriately qualified and skilled staff. The College has robust and credible plans for the recruitment, appointment, induction, and support of sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff. The assessment team concludes, therefore, that the Core practice is met.

The team had a high degree of confidence in this judgement for the following reasons:

59 The assessment team was able to review all of the available evidence recommended in Annex 4. This was triangulated in meetings with recently appointed staff and students, observations of teaching and learning and the sample of job descriptions and records of recruitment. Therefore, the assessment team has a high degree of confidence in

¹²⁴ 022 Bird College Observation of Teaching and Learning (OTL) Handbook AY 22-23

¹²⁵ 004 Bird College Employee Handbook

¹²⁶ 073 Performance & Development Review (PDR) Guidance Notes

¹²⁷ 104 Observation of Teaching and Learning

¹²⁸ 106 Observation of Facilities and Services

¹²⁹ 058 Year 1 (Level 4) Student Reps QSR Student Submission; 059 Year 2 (Level 5) Student Reps QSR Student Submission; 060 Year 3 (Level 6) Student Reps QSR Student Submission

¹³⁰ Bird College Student Feedback (All Assessments) AY 21-22 021

¹³¹ M2 Meeting with students

this judgement.

Q4 The provider has sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience

Summary of findings

The team concluded that the Core practice is met for the following reasons:

60 In line with its Memorandum of Agreement with the University, the College strategies for the teaching and support services, including learning resources, are credible, realistic and demonstrably linked to the delivery of successful academic and professional outcomes for students. Plans for the development of facilities in the form of an application for planning permission¹³² was overseen by the CEO and Principal & Artistic Director, with the support of the Trustees and Directors. The Student Handbook¹³³ and Programme Handbook¹³⁴ detail the resources and facilities students can access at the University and College, including performance and practice-related facilities, classrooms, the library, physiotherapy and a gymnasium.

61 Students tend to regard facilities, learning resources and student support services as sufficient and appropriate, and facilitating a high-quality academic experience. Students consistently report positively on the facilities.¹³⁵ Students who met the team stated¹³⁶ that the College is very responsive to student feedback that relates to facilities, which can include being clear on why some requests are not able to be completed.

62 Relevant staff understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff¹³⁷ were able to articulate their responsibilities which matched the responsibilities described in the relevant job descriptions. Staff roles are consistent with the delivery of a high-quality learning experience and work effectively because key teaching and professional services staff communicate informally to ensure that the facilities, learning resources and student support services provide effective support.

63 Evidence from third parties indicates that facilities, learning resources and student support services are sufficient and appropriate as highlighted by reviews by the PSRB, the Council for Drama and Musical Theatre¹³⁸ (CDMT) and the College's programme approval event with the University.¹³⁹

64 The observation of the facilities confirmed that the College had exemplary and well-equipped teaching and learning space, which provide sufficient space for the number of students at the College, meeting needs for timetabled activity and allowing for students to book rooms or studios for independent work or rehearsal. The physical spaces are able to support a high-quality academic experience. Administrative and support staff and academic faculty confirmed that the development of the facilities is informed by industry needs and practices.

65 The team concludes that the College has sufficient and appropriate facilities,

¹³² 025 Bird College Application for Planning Permission (February 2021)

¹³³ 003 Bird College Student Handbook AY 22-23

¹³⁴ 002 BA (Hons) Professional Dance and Musical Theatre Programme Handbook AY22-23

¹³⁵ M2 Meeting with students; 021 Bird College Student Feedback; 058-060 Student Submissions,

¹³⁶ M2 Meeting with students

¹³⁷ M5 Administrative and support staff

¹³⁸ 023 CMDT Accreditation report

¹³⁹ 006 Bird College Approval and Review Report (Jan 2018)

learning resources and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience. Whilst students have access to the University's support services and learning resources, the College provides sufficient and well-regarded learning resources and student support services on site. Student support is comprehensive and includes physical, mental and learning support to ensure students are able to effectively engage in their studies. The assessment team concludes, therefore, that the Core practice is met.

The team had a high degree of confidence in this judgement for the following reasons:

66 The assessment team was able to review all of the available evidence recommended in Annex 4. The assessment team, in considering the College's structures, plans and responses to feedback to improve, finds that all sources of information available were entirely congruent and robust. Therefore, the assessment team has a high degree of confidence in this judgement.

Q5 The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience

Summary of findings

The team concluded that the Core practice is met for the following reasons:

67 The College has an effective approach to engaging students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience as the College has a number of mechanisms to engage in dialogue with its students through formal and informal channels. The College's approach for engaging students in the quality of their educational experience is effective because there are multiple examples of the College changing and improving the students' learning experience as a result of the individual and collective student engagement processes described. Students also have individual means to provide feedback via a module survey completed at the end of each module, which is combined into a report for the respective module.¹⁴⁰ Though there is no overarching report on the module surveys considered within the College's formal governance structures; student feedback is commented on annually via the College Programme monitoring report¹⁴¹ submitted to the University as part of the annual monitoring process. Both students¹⁴² and staff¹⁴³ highlighted that feedback is often also exchanged directly between students and College staff via informal channels. Students expressed confidence that all of their individual feedback is reviewed and acted upon as appropriate.

68 Notwithstanding the absence of an overarching policy or strategy to describe the College's approach to engaging students in the quality of their educational experience, the processes and opportunities that are described through the College's programme handbook,¹⁴⁴ the minutes of meetings where student representatives are invited to attend¹⁴⁵ and feedback from the student meeting¹⁴⁶ demonstrate a credible approach to collective student engagement.

69 The College has a student representative system to actively engage students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience, which is credible and accessible, and so enables the College's plans to be evidence-based and robust. Core to the College's approach for engaging students collectively is the student representative system, whereby each year group has two elected student representatives who are in post for the duration of their studies. All student representatives also attend a student council meeting with the Principal and Artistic Director. Minutes from the Board of Directors¹⁴⁷ and Programmes and Academic Board Committee¹⁴⁸ confirm student participation. This was confirmed by students¹⁴⁹ who commented that these meetings were genuine opportunities for engagement in the quality of their academic experience. The College demonstrated a series of actions taken in response to student feedback across both academic and broader student experience¹⁵⁰ as clear and consistent evidence of the College deliberately seeking

¹⁴⁰ 021 Bird College Student Feedback (All Assessment AY 21-22)

¹⁴¹ 057 Bird College Programme Monitoring Report AY 20-12

¹⁴² M2 Meeting with students

¹⁴³ M5 Administrative and Support Staff; M6 meeting with Faculty (discipline performance teachers); M7 meeting with Academic Faculty

¹⁴⁴ 003 Bird College Student Handbook AY 22-23

¹⁴⁵ 018-020 Academic and Programmes Board minutes; 089-194 Board of Directors minutes

¹⁴⁶ M2 Meeting with students

¹⁴⁷ 089-094 Board of Directors minutes

¹⁴⁸ 018-020 Academic and Programmes Board minutes

¹⁴⁹ M2 Meeting with students

¹⁵⁰ 054 Bird College response to student engagement and feedback (Summer 2021)

out, engaging with and responding to collective student feedback.

70 Students confirmed that they have appropriate opportunities individually and collectively to engage in the quality of their educational experience and made reference to the strong personal approach taken by the College as a whole which facilitates an open and transparent dialogue between students and staff.¹⁵¹ The students agreed that it is easy for them to provide feedback on their course and other aspects of the student experience to the College and that student representatives feel able to fulfil their roles. The student submission¹⁵² affirmed this position.

71 The team concludes that the College actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience. The College has a variety of ways in which students are actively engaged in feeding back either collectively, as student representatives sitting on committees such as the Board of Directors or on the Academic and Programmes Board, or individually through module surveys feedback and via other informal mechanisms which students utilise to feed back. The assessment team concludes, therefore, that the Core practice is met.

The team had a high degree of confidence in this judgement for the following reasons:

72 The assessment team was able to review all of the available evidence recommended in Annex 4. This was triangulated in meetings with staff and students, student submissions, committees' terms of reference and module survey reports. Therefore, the assessment team has a high degree of confidence in this judgement.

¹⁵¹ M2 Meeting with students

¹⁵² 058-060 Student submissions

Q6 The provider has fair and transparent procedures for handling complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students

Summary of findings

The team concluded that the Core practice is met for the following reasons:

73 The College's plans to develop fair, transparent and accessible complaints and appeals procedures are robust and credible because these are outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement between the College and the University.¹⁵³ Appeals are a shared responsibility between the College and the University which is underpinned by the University's Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure.¹⁵⁴ The Memorandum of Agreement between the University and the College¹⁵⁵ states that the University's procedure shall apply in respect to academic appeals and the College's guidance to students for submitting academic appeals in the Programme Handbook¹⁵⁶ links to the University's process.

74 The College's procedures for handling complaints and appeals are definitive and fair and likely to deliver fair and timely outcomes for students. The procedures are reflective of the size and provision of the College. However, staff were unclear in their understanding about the separation between complaints and appeals as two separate procedures.¹⁵⁷ The team was able to examine the management of academic appeals considered by the College.¹⁵⁸ From the documentation it was clear the College handled these appeals in accordance with the documented procedures in a fair and timely manner. The College Student Handbook describes a separate process by which the College handles complaints that relate to harassment or bullying. This process is for use by both students and staff and includes detail on what constitutes bullying and harassment, how complaints are considered and what expected timelines are. Clarification was sought as to why there are two separate processes, which appeared to be partly in conflict. Neither the Executive group¹⁵⁹ nor the request for additional evidence could provide a definitive answer. However, the College did confirm that the information provided to students should be made clearer, in particular with regards to appealing a decision reached under a complaints process. This lack of clarity results in a lack of transparency for both students and staff, and in turn affects the robustness of the College's complaints process.

75 Examples of appeals reviewed have been dealt with according to the College's procedures. There have been no complaints submitted since 2019. One complaint was submitted to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) regarding a withdrawal under the student attendance policy, this matter is discussed further in Q9.

76 Any deviations from the procedures relate to minor omissions or oversights, which do not harm the integrity of the procedure or the interests of students; this is because the team found in meetings that staff were unclear about the separation of complaints and appeals as two separate procedures.¹⁶⁰ However, staff were aware that there were procedures for these processes, and that they could consult the relevant policy or speak to a

¹⁵³ 005 MoA between the University of Greenwich and Bird College 2020-25

¹⁵⁴ 009 University of Greenwich Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures AY 22-23

¹⁵⁵ 005 MoA between the University of Greenwich and Bird College 2020-25

¹⁵⁶ 002 Programme Handbook AY22-23

¹⁵⁷ M1 Meeting with the Executive team; M6 Faculty (discipline performance teachers); M7 Academic Faculty

¹⁵⁸ 095-097 Paperwork academic appeal

¹⁵⁹ M1 Meeting with the Executive team}

¹⁶⁰ M1 Meeting with the Executive team; M6 Faculty (discipline performance teachers); M7 Academic Faculty

member of the College's Executive as needed.¹⁶¹ Similarly, students who met the team were not aware of the particulars of the process having never needed to use them, but they expressed confidence in the fairness, transparency or accessibility of the complaints and appeals procedures, which was also reflected in the student submission.

77 The College's procedures for handling complaints are accessible to students, that is, students can find and understand those procedures quickly and easily because these are outlined in the Student Handbook¹⁶² which includes a section titled Discipline and Complaints – Regulations and Procedures. This section of the handbook articulates where students may submit a formal complaint and gives a brief overview of the process; however, it does not include information on what ground students may make complaints or what the expected timeframes for handling the complaint would be. The procedure for handling appeals is also outlined in the Student Handbook.¹⁶³ The handbook also provides information and directs students to the appropriate pages of the OIA website where students can obtain further information about this recourse. Students expressed their confidence that they knew where they could readily access the particulars of the appeals process as well as their confidence in being able to ask College staff for support in navigating it.

78 Students did not raise any serious concerns about the fairness, transparency or accessibility of the procedures, or their application. Students who want to submit a complaint to the College have access to the University Students Union for support, though the students noted¹⁶⁴ that they were confident that should they ask any staff at the College for support they would be provided with it as well as being confident they would be treated fairly should they complain.

79 The team concludes that the College has fair and transparent procedures for handling complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students and that the College has processes for managing complaints and appeals that should deliver timely outcomes for students. The College's procedures for the handling of complaints and appeals are accessible to students and written in a way that is fair and generally transparent. The policies and evidence regarding academic appeals demonstrated that the College's approach to handling student casework is fair, accessible and transparent. The assessment team concludes, therefore, that the Core practice is met.

The team had a moderate degree of confidence in this judgement for the following reasons:

80 The assessment team was able to review all of the available evidence recommended in Annex 4. This was triangulated in meetings with the University Link Tutor, staff and students. However there are doubts in relation to the reliability of the evidence because staff were generally unable to clearly describe the College's procedures for complaints, staff generally being unclear on the distinction between complaints and appeals, and there being a lack of consistency within the student handbook on how complaints are handled. Therefore, the assessment team has a moderate degree of confidence in this judgement.

¹⁶¹ M6 Faculty (discipline performance teachers); M7 Academic Faculty

¹⁶² 003 Bird College Student Handbook AY 22-23

¹⁶³ 003 Bird College Student Handbook AY 22-23

¹⁶⁴ M2 Meeting with students

Q8 Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the academic experience is high-quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered and who delivers them

Summary of findings

The team concluded that the Core practice is met for the following reasons:

81 The College has clear and comprehensive regulations or policies for the management of partnerships with other organisations to ensure that the academic experience is high quality, as formalised through a Memorandum of Agreement¹⁶⁵ with the University that clearly and comprehensively articulates the respective responsibilities of the College and the University for the delivery of the BA (Hons) Professional Dance and Musical Theatre programme. The agreement establishes clear arrangements for the delivery of a high-quality student experience because it sets out expectations in terms of, for example, programme management, staffing, facilities and resources, and student welfare and support.¹⁶⁶ The College does not have partnerships with any other third parties in relation to the delivery of the programme.¹⁶⁷

82 The College has robust and credible plans to ensure a high-quality academic experience for provision delivered in partnership. The College's contribution to ensuring the partnership delivers a high-quality programme and student experience is to implement the University's policies and regulations as per its Memorandum of Agreement and deliver the services and the programme as agreed. For example, the University requires the College to participate in the annual monitoring of its programme and the annual monitoring report produced by the College shows that it does so in a thorough and structured way as it provides detailed consideration of a range of indicators including student achievement, student feedback, external examiner feedback, comments on teaching observation, graduate data, staff development and an action plan for the following year.¹⁶⁸ An annual institutional report is also produced and submitted to the University providing more general reflection on the partnership, including any challenges or opportunities identified.¹⁶⁹

83 External examiner and PSRB reports¹⁷⁰ confirm that the academic experience is high quality and that the programme is effectively delivered in partnership with the University. Students¹⁷¹ praised the accessibility of the University library, learning resources and student support services noting this to be a positive consequence of the partnership that adds value to their experience at the College.

84 Staff from both the College and the University understand their respective responsibilities for quality. The College is supported by a University Link Tutor who attends the College's Academic and Programme Board meetings, and acts as the first point of contact between the University and the College.¹⁷² The College's Assistant Principal also

¹⁶⁵ 005 MoA between Bird College and University of Greenwich

¹⁶⁶ 005 MoA between Bird College and University of Greenwich

¹⁶⁷ 027 Response to additional evidence request – 4/11/22

¹⁶⁸ 057 Bird College Programme Monitoring Report 2020-21.pdf

¹⁶⁹ 048 Bird College AIR 2020-21.pdf

¹⁷⁰ 016 External Examiner Report for AY 21-22.pdf; 045 External Examiner Report for AY 20-21.pdf; 045 External Examiner Report for AY 19-20.pdf; 023 Council for Dance Drama and Musical Theatre (CDMT) Accreditation Report.pdf

¹⁷¹ M2 meeting with students

¹⁷² 005 MoA between the University of Greenwich and Bird College 2020-25.pdf section 12.2

attends Faculty board meetings at the University¹⁷³ and the multiple opportunities for dialogue and engagement with the University mean that the College is well supported to deliver a high-quality academic experience. Staff, including Executive,¹⁷⁴ Heads of Department,¹⁷⁵ professional services staff,¹⁷⁶ and teaching staff¹⁷⁷ expressed a commitment to high-quality teaching, assessment and student support.

85 The team concludes that the partnership that the College has in place with the University provides effective arrangements to ensure that the academic experience is high quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered and who delivers them. The College only works in partnership with its awarding body in delivering the franchised BA (Hons) Professional Dance and Musical Theatre programme. The College implements these arrangements effectively to ensure that the academic experience is high quality, including complying with responsibilities allocated to it in the memorandum of agreement, maintaining oversight of provision through Academic and Programme Board, engaging in varied support provided by the University including attendance at meetings and staff development events. The assessment team concludes, therefore, that the Core practice is met.

The team had a high degree of confidence in this judgement for the following reasons:

86 The assessment team was able to review all of the available evidence recommended in Annex 4. This was triangulated in meetings with the University Link Tutor, Executive Group and faculty. External examiner and PSRB reports confirm that the partnership is delivering a high-quality experience. Therefore, the assessment team has a high degree of confidence in this judgement.

¹⁷³ 027 Response to additional evidence request4/11/22; 047 University of Greenwich Faculty Board Agenda (May 2022).pdf

¹⁷⁴ M1 meeting with Executive group

¹⁷⁵ M3 meeting with Heads of Department

¹⁷⁶ M5 meeting with Administrative and Support Staff

¹⁷⁷ M6 Faculty (discipline performance teachers); M7 Academic Faculty

Q9 The provider supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes

Summary of findings

The team concluded that the Core practice is met for the following reasons:

87 The College's takes a holistic approach to student support facilitates academic and professional outcomes. The professional and academic expectations of students are outlined within the Student Charter, and attendance policy. The student handbook¹⁷⁸ has guidance on specific topics such as learning support, counselling, physiotherapy and personal tutoring. Personal tutors are able to identify and monitor the needs of students. The personal tutor may refer the student, or the student may self-refer, to any specific support services as needed. Students with learning needs are supported by the Learning Support team. Any physical needs are supported by vocal care co-ordinator, the resident physiotherapist, or the fitness team.

88 The College's plans to support students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes are comprehensive, robust and credible because these are outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement between the University and the College.¹⁷⁹ The College is responsible for all support services, including learning resources, assessment and feedback. The College does not have an overarching policy on student support or successful academic outcomes; however, there is clear evidence that the mechanisms that are in place as demonstrated by the personal tutoring policy¹⁸⁰ and elements of the student handbook¹⁸¹ and programme handbook,¹⁸² the understanding of administrative and support staff¹⁸³ and the College's evidence on how they support positive academic outcomes¹⁸⁴ are effective.

89 Assessed student work demonstrates that students are given comprehensive, helpful and timely feedback. The College operates under the University's Assessment and Feedback Policy,¹⁸⁵ which governs their approach to ensuring all students receive timely and constructive feedback on their assessed work. As the external examiner¹⁸⁶ notes, feedback given to students on their assessed work is on the whole clear but can in places be clearer for students who have lower levels of achievement. Students were clear that the formal and informal mechanisms for feedback is timely, developmental and clearly aligned to the assessment criteria and programme aims.¹⁸⁷

90 Staff understand their role in supporting student achievement. Staff with responsibility for teaching¹⁸⁸ noted that many still held professional or industry roles in addition to their teaching. This allows them to bring currency and relevance of their experience into the classroom to support student professional outcomes. Administrative and support staff¹⁸⁹ noted that students' needs are recorded and updated via a secure and confidential system and, where appropriate and consent is given, relevant staff are informed

¹⁷⁸ 003 Bird College Student Handbook AY 22-23

¹⁷⁹ 005 MoA between the University of Greenwich and Bird College 2020-25

¹⁸⁰ 013 Bird College Personal Tutoring Policy

¹⁸¹ 003 Bird College Student Handbook AY 22-23

¹⁸² 002 BA (Hons) programme handbook AY 22-23

¹⁸³ M5 meeting with Administration and Support Staff

¹⁸⁴ 035 Evidence of supporting students to achieve positive academic outcomes

¹⁸⁵ 008 University of Greenwich Assessment and Feedback Policy

¹⁸⁶ 016 External Examiner Report for AY 21-22

¹⁸⁷ M2 Meeting with students

¹⁸⁸ M6 Faculty (discipline performance teachers); M7 Academic Faculty

¹⁸⁹ M5 meeting with Administration and Support Staff

via a regular student bulletin. This approach allows students with a diverse range of needs to be supported to achieve successful academic outcomes.

91 Students tend to agree that they are adequately supported to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes. Students¹⁹⁰ stated that they value how well the College supports their future careers and how their programme content and teachers reflect the currency of the industry expectations. Students are further supported in their professional progression through the College's in-house agency, which continues to provide support to graduates after they have completed their studies.

92 The College supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes. It has robust and credible plans and policies which support students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes. Staff clearly understand their roles and responsibility for providing support to students and students were very positive about the support offered. Assessed student work demonstrates that students are given comprehensive, developmental, and timely feedback. The assessment team concludes, therefore, that this Core practice is met.

The team had a high degree of confidence in this judgement for the following reasons:

93 The assessment team was able to review all of the available evidence recommended in Annex 4 - policies and student-facing handbooks, external examiner reports, student feedback and samples of assessed student work. This was triangulated in meetings with staff and students. Therefore, the assessment team has a high degree of confidence in this judgement.

¹⁹⁰ M2 Meeting with students

Annex 1 - Evidence listing

ADD – Admissions sample
ASW – Assessed student work sample
000 Bird College QSR Submission (07.10.22).pdf
001 Bird College Organisational Chart.pdf
002 BA (Hons) Professional Dance and Musical Theatre Programme Handbook AY 22-23.pdf
003 Bird College Student Handbook AY 22-23.pdf
004 Bird College Employee Handbook.pdf
005 MoA between the University of Greenwich and Bird College 2020-25.pdf
006 Bird College Approval and Review Report (Jan 2018).pdf
007 University of Greenwich Academic Regulations AY 22-23.pdf
008 University of Greenwich Assessment and Feedback Policy.pdf
009 University of Greenwich Academic Appeals Policy & Procedure AY 22-23.pdf
010 University of Greenwich Admissions Policy and Procedure 2022-25.pdf
011 University of Greenwich Equality and Diversity Policy Statement.pdf
012 Bird College Audition Policy & Procedure.pdf
013 Bird College Personal Tutoring Policy.pdf
014 Bird College Safeguarding Policy AY 22-23.pdf
015 University of Greenwich Progressions and Awards Board (PAB) minutes AY 21-22.pdf
016 External Examiner Report for AY 21-22.pdf
017 Bird College Academic & Programmes Board Terms of Reference.pdf
018 Bird College Academic & Programmes Board minutes (November 2021).pdf
019 Bird College Academic & Programmes Board minutes (March 2022).pdf
020 Bird College Academic & Programmes Board minutes (June 2022).pdf
021 Bird College Student Feedback (All Assessments) AY 21-22.pdf
022 Bird College Observation of Teaching and Learning (OTL) Handbook AY 22-23.pdf
023 Council for Dance Drama and Musical Theatre (CDMT) Accreditation Report.pdf
024 CDMT Annual Report of a Performance AY 21-22.pdf
025 Bird College Application for Planning Permission (February 2021).pdf
026 QSR Responsibilities Checklist for Providers without Degree Awarding Powers.pdf
027 QSR QAAO request to provider for additional evidence RESPONSE Document.pdf
028 JDs for Facilities Staff (02.11.22).pdf
029 JDs and CVs for specific Staff (30.11.22).pdf
030 Data on graduate outcomes.pdf
031 Bird College Academic & Programmes Board RESTRICTED minutes (March 2022).pdf
032 Bird College Academic & Programmes Board RESTRICTED minutes (June 2022).pdf
033 University of Greenwich Progressions and Awards Board (PAB) minutes AY 19-20.pdf
034 University of Greenwich Progressions and Awards Board (PAB) minutes AY 20-21.pdf
035 Evidence of supporting students to achieve positive academic outcomes.pdf

036 University of Greenwich Principals' Strategic Planning Meeting minutes (June 2020).pdf
037 University of Greenwich Principals' Strategic Planning Meeting minutes (November 2021).pdf
038 University of Greenwich Principals' Strategic Planning Meeting minutes (February 2022).pdf
039 University of Greenwich Principals' Strategic Planning Meeting minutes (June 2022).pdf
040 University of Greenwich Partner College Away Day (18.05.2022) Admissions Slides.pdf
041 University of Greenwich Partner College Away Day (18.05.2022) Quality Assurance Slides.pdf
042 University of Greenwich Partner College Away Day (18.05.2022) Registration Slides.pdf
043 University of Greenwich Partner College Away Day (18.05.2022) Student Records Slides.pdf
044 Assistant Principal (QA) report to Board of Directors (Summer 2022).pdf
045 External Examiner Report for AY 20-21.pdf
046 External Examiner Report for AY 19-20.pdf
047 University of Greenwich Faculty Board Agenda (May 2022).pdf
048 Bird College AIR 2020-21.pdf
049 Email templates sent to potential students.pdf
050 Bird College Enrolment Pack sent to potential students.pdf
051 Bird College Accommodation Info (Halls) sent to potential students.pdf
052 Bird College Accommodation Info (Host Families) sent to potential students.pdf
053 Applications not meeting the standard entry requirements .pdf
054 Bird College response to student engagement and feedback (Summer 2021).pdf
055 Supporting students with disclosed disabilities or additional needs through audition.pdf
056 BA Programme Specification 2022-23.pdf
057 Bird College Programme Monitoring Report AY 2020-21.pdf
058 Year 1 (Level 4) Student Reps_QSR Student Submission.pdf
059 Year 2 (Level 5) Student Reps_QSR Student Submission.pdf
060 Year 3 (Level 6) Student Reps_QSR Student Submission.pdf
061 DBC QSR Request to provider for additional evidence TPM 20221123 RESPONSE.pdf
062 Formal rejection letter issued by the University of Greenwich Template.pdf
063 Formal rejection letter issued by the University of Greenwich Example.pdf
064 Confirmation written consent not required to students on Tier 4 Student Visas.pdf
065 Confirmation Training details.pdf
066 Double marking and moderation of L6 Independent Project Practical submissions.pdf
067 Board of Trustees Minutes 22.10.2020.pdf
068 Board of Trustees Minutes 06.04.2021.pdf
069 Board of Trustees Minutes 28.06.2021.pdf
070 Board of Trustees Minutes 29.09.2021.pdf
071 Board of Trustees Minutes 15.03.2022.pdf
072 Board of Trustees Minutes 21.06.2022.pdf
073 Performance & Development Review (PDR) Guidance Notes.pdf

074 Onboarding Checklist for all new Employees.pdf
075 Academic Tutor Job Description.pdf
076 Faculty List (Academic Qualifications).xlsx
077 Bird College AIR 2019-20.pdf
078 Board of Directors Terms of Reference.pdf
079 Board of Trustees Terms of Reference.pdf
080 Completion of Procedures (07.07.2021).pdf
081 Completion of Procedures (22.06.2022).pdf
082 Completion of Procedures (21.07.2022).pdf
083 Completion of Procedures (21.07.2022).pdf
084 Completion of Procedures (22.06.2022).pdf
085 OIA Confirmation of complaint withdrawal (09.09.2022)_ Student Letter.pdf
086 OIA Confirmation of complaint withdrawal (09.09.2022)_ College Letter.pdf
087 DBC QSR Request to provider for additional evidence Meetings 05.12.2022 RESPONSE.pdf
088 Confirmation there were no derogations at the PAB 2022.pdf
089 Board of Directors Minutes 17.11.2020.pdf
090 Board of Directors Minutes 06.04.2021.pdf
091 Board of Directors Minutes 28.06.2021.pdf
092 Board of Directors Minutes 16.11.2021.pdf
093 Board of Directors Minutes 29.03.2022.pdf
094 Board of Directors Minutes 28.06.2022.pdf
095 Complete paperwork for Appeal (Item 080).pdf
096 Complete paperwork for Appeal (Item 081).pdf
097 Complete paperwork for Appeal (Item 082).pdf
098 Complete paperwork for Appeal (Item 083).pdf
099 Complete paperwork for Appeal (Items 084 - 086).pdf
100 Paperwork of Complaint submitted to OIA (Supporting Item 099).pdf
101 QSR QAAO Request to provider for additional evidence visit (Day 1).pdf
102 Bird College Recruitment Guide for Staff.pdf
103 QSR QAAO Request to provider for additional evidence visit (Day 2).pdf
104 QSR Observation of teaching and learning
105 QSR Observation of Assessment DBC

QAA2769 - R13377 - Jun 23

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