



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

END OF PROBATION REVIEW (Independent Higher Education)

INSTITUTION: Kogan Academy of Dramatic Arts

ADDRESS: Dwell House
First Floor
637 Holloway Road
Archway
London
N19 5SS

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Mr Nick Cawdron

ACCREDITATION STATUS: Probation

DATE OF INSPECTION: 9 July 2019

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Awarded full accreditation 26 September 2019

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

Kogan Academy of Dramatic Arts (the Institution) offers a practical and vocational conservatoire mode of actor and director training based on the Stanislavski method of character portrayal. The Institution is headed by the Principal, who reports to a Board of Trustees and is supported by the Head of Recruitment, the Heads of Acting and Directing and the Head of the Evening Course. The Principal also fulfils the role of Head of School.

The Institution delivers non-credit bearing courses in Acting and Directing and is based in Archway, North London, having moved there in 2018. The premises are currently undergoing refurbishment. The Institution has charitable status and is a company limited by guarantee.

The aim of Institution is to clarify the actor's process and to offer an objective perspective on the Science of Acting and other key techniques as practiced in the acting profession.

The history of the Institution dates from 1991 when the Institution was founded by Sam Kogan, a graduate of the Russian Academy of Theatre Arts. Sam Kogan took Stanislavski's method and developed the Science of Acting upon which teaching at the Institution is based. In 2010, the textbook, called The Science of Acting, was published making the Institution one of the few drama schools to have a textbook published on the acting technique it has founded.

2. Brief description of the current provision

Kogan Academy of Dramatic Arts offers three full-time programmes. These are the Directing Course, the Acting Course and an International Intensive Acting Course introduced from January 2019. Acceptance onto each course is by audition, there are no formal academic qualifications required. The Acting Course is also available for evening study. All delivery is face-to-face at the Institution's London premises.

At the time of the inspection there were 24 full time students enrolled. Of these, 19 students are enrolled on the non-credit bearing Acting Course with five students in the final year of a legacy Bachelor of Arts Honours (BA) programme. Of these 24 students, 15 are also following the Directing Course. All students are over the age of 18, with approximately equal numbers of male and female students. The majority of students are from the United Kingdom (UK), with a significant minority from Scandinavia. Other countries represented are Poland, Russia, Israel, Spain and Portugal. All students are resident in the UK. All courses recruit for September and January start dates.

In addition to the three-year day and evening programmes and the six-month International Intensive Acting Course, the institution offers a range of short courses such as children's drama classes and a summer school for students over the age of 18. These courses were not running at the time of the inspection. The children's drama classes are not part of the provision accredited by BAC.

3. Inspection process

The end of probation review was carried out by one inspector over one half day at the Institution's London premises. The inspector met and held discussions with the Principal and with a group of students. The inspector scrutinised documentation both electronic and in hard copy and additional documentation was made available on request. The Institution fully cooperated with the inspection throughout and the inspector was made to feel very welcome.

4. Inspection history

Inspection Type	Date
Full Accreditation	13-15 June 2001
Supplementary	16 August 2001
Interim	20 October 2005
Re-accreditation	31 March–1 April 2009
Interim	27 February 2012
Re-accreditation	14-15 August 2014
Interim	7 March 2016
Re-accreditation	26-27 March 2018
Mid-way Probation Review	28 November 2018

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgments and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector during the inspection and from documentation provided by the institution.

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

The Institution will be changing its name from Kogan Academy of Dramatic Arts to the School of the Science of Acting in order to clarify the educational focus of the institution for prospective students. The School of the Science of Acting was the original name of the Institution when it was founded in 1991.

2. Response to actions points in last report

1.3 A revised structure of management and trustees must be put in place so that reporting lines are transparent and formal records kept. This will ensure that proposed developments are subject to appropriate scrutiny.

A revised organisation chart clearly shows the hierarchy of the Institution and the lines of communication. Minutes and transcripts of meetings are recorded to ensure decisions, actions and responsibilities can be tracked and audited.

1.4 1.5 A risk register must be developed so that trustees and management are appraised of internal and external threats to the Institution and the potential for mitigation.

The Institution is in the process of undertaking a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis in order to identify risks. At the time of the inspection the SWOT analysis was at an early stage of development.

2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 A formal process for defining the Institution's strategy must be put in place. This will ensure that trustees, management, teaching staff and students are aware of, and have input to, the Institution's long- and medium-term developments. These developments will therefore meet the needs of all stakeholders.

The Institution's long-term strategy has now been defined and is in the process of being agreed by stakeholders including the trustees. This long-term strategy will secure the future of the Institution in expanding regionally, nationally and internationally

4.10 4.11 25.2 25.4 25.5 27.4 The Institution must introduce an annual action planning process so that performance can be reviewed and improvements for the next year put in place.

An appropriate annual action planning process is now integral to the Institution's long-term strategic plan. This ensures that the operational aspects of the strategy are planned, implemented and evaluated.

4.12 5.5 7.3 27.2 27.5 A formal staff appraisal system for teaching staff must be developed so as to review staff performance against job specifications and to identify staff development needs to ensure continued developments in teaching and learning.

The Institution has introduced a suitable staff appraisal system. An initial meeting with each member of staff has resulted in detailed job descriptions being agreed against which performance can be effectively measured and development needs identified.

7.3 7.4 The Institution must develop job descriptions for its teaching roles so that staff are clear as to the Institution's expectations regarding their performance.

Detailed job descriptions for teaching staff have been negotiated as part of the new appraisal process.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

The Institution should undertake an accessibility audit of its premises to identify adjustments that could be made in order to accommodate students with disabilities.

The Institution has costed some adjustments such as wheelchair accessibility, however, these costs have proved prohibitive. The Institution needs to identify the affordable adjustments it can reasonably make.

The Institution should consider using an online learning environment to support the newly developed international intensive acting course.

The Institution intends to completely revise its online presence both in the provision of facilities to students and external access. However, it has been beset by the unreliability of information technology (IT) suppliers and designers and, as a result, a new supplier is being sought.

4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

4.1 Governance, Strategy and Financial Management (spot check)

The standards are judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The overall management structure has been revised and job descriptions negotiated to ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of their role, responsibilities and reporting lines.

1.5 Risk management is not yet fully developed which could limit the success of the Institution's strategic developments such as the expansion into new regions within the UK.

Financial management is secure.

2.1 2.2 2.3 The Institution's long-term strategy is in the process of being agreed by stakeholders, including the trustees.

4.2 Academic Management and Administration (spot check)

The standards are judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The small, well qualified, alumni rich teaching force are well managed by the Head of School with expectations clearly laid out in job descriptions. Staff retention is excellent.

Meetings are held regularly with formal meetings being minuted.

4.11 25.4 25.5 27.4 An annual action planning process includes the development of additional courses. However, this aspect of the action planning process at the time of the inspection requires further development in order to fully articulate the aims and success criteria relating to these additional courses.

4.12 5.5 7.3 27.2 27.5 An initial staff appraisal meeting with each member of staff has taken place, the new appraisal system has not yet been fully implemented.

Effective administrative support is available from a small team ensuring that, for example, staff and student records are accurate and stored safely and securely. Appropriate electronic systems for tracking student attendance are being introduced.

Programmes of study are accurately described in publicity material and are based on the student centred Science of Acting and attract a high calibre of applicant. Resources available are mainly physical and reflect the nature of the programmes, for example, the theatre space and rehearsal rooms which are in constant use.

4.3 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

The standards are judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Teaching is outstanding in all areas. As alumni and practitioners of the Science of Acting, teachers are exceptionally well qualified both in the specialist areas and the subject specialist pedagogy. Students speak highly of the sessions' student-centred approach and the support offered by all teachers in ensuring each student realises their full potential.

The Institution is well equipped with students having access to the theatre, rehearsal rooms, green room and a video suite where current and archive lessons, rehearsals and productions can be viewed. Students are aware of the subject specific assessment methodologies which ensure that all are able to achieve.

4.4 Student Recruitment, Support, Guidance and Progression (spot check)

The standards are judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Students confirm that all staff are available to them at all times and they feel exceptionally well supported both academically and personally.

The Institution has suitable policies in relation to discrimination and abusive behaviour. However, incidents of this nature have yet to occur.

Students are made aware of their progress and of what they need to do in order to improve. One-to-one tutorial support is readily available from any member of staff. In addition, students support each other both academically and personally.

International students feel very welcome and quickly integrate into the Institution. In the rare event of an unexplained absence, students are contacted immediately.

4.5 Premises, Facilities and Learning Resources (spot check)

The standards are judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution's premises are of good quality with continuing refurbishments. Teaching rooms, the theatre and rehearsal rooms are in a good state of repair. Ongoing renovations will include a new front entrance with external signage.

General guidance is available to staff, students and visitors.

Well-appointed rehearsal rooms are available for students to work on individual and group projects with the green room used as relaxation space.

Staff are accommodated in offices however they often mix with the students.

A small library for staff and student use is situated in the foyer. IT facilities are currently under review.

4.6 Quality Management, Assurance and Enhancement (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

Comments

The student view is formally represented through the Staff and Student Consultative Committee and the rotating position of Student Vice Principal. Informal contact on a daily basis ensures that any significant issues can be dealt with without waiting for the next timetabled committee.

An external examiner moderates the Acting and Directing course outcomes and the BA course is subject to the validating University's quality procedures. However, the final BA cohort graduates in September 2019.

The Heads of Recruitment, Acting and Directing and Evening Course report to the Head of School concerning the quality of the student experience, student satisfaction, completion and achievement allowing for year-on-year comparisons.

4.7 Compliance Declaration

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.

Yes

No

PART C – SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

FURTHER WORK TO MEET OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

1.4 1.5 The Institution must complete a Risk Register in order to identify and mitigate potential risks to the development of its business.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 The Institution’s long-term strategy must be agreed by stakeholders including the trustees so that it can be fully implemented.	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
4.11 25.4 25.5 27.4 Action plans for the development of new courses must be clear regarding the aims and success criteria for each course to ensure that results against targets can be reviewed on an annual basis.	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
4.12 5.5 7.3 27.2 27.5 The Institution must ensure that the new staff appraisal system is fully implemented so that teaching staff performance is measured against job descriptions and opportunities for relevant staff development are identified.	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

FURTHER WORK TO MEET OUTSTANDING RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The Institution should employ an outside agency to perform a premises accessibility audit so that affordable reasonable adjustments can be identified.

The Institution should employ reliable IT consultants to work on a new outward facing website and online student learning environment.

ADDITIONAL ACTIONS REQUIRED

None	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
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ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT (to be reviewed at the next inspection)

None