



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM INSPECTION (College)

ORGANISATION: Kogan Academy of Dramatic Arts

ADDRESS: 9-15 Elthorne Road, London, N19 4AJ

HEAD OF ORGANISATION: Mr Neil Sheffield

Accreditation status: Accredited

Date of inspection: 7 March 2016

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: 14 April 2016

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the organisation

The Kogan Academy of Dramatic Arts (the Academy), known first as the School of the Science of Acting and later as the Academy of the Science of Acting and Directing, was originally founded in 1991. The founding Principal, the late Sam Kogan, was strongly influenced by the tradition of Konstantin Stanislavski. As a result, the mission of the Academy is to promulgate a systematic basis for the acting profession, with clear reference points for judgements and decisions relating to professional performance. It is a private charitable foundation and a company limited by guarantee and offers a range of education in acting and directing. Its main educational programmes are the BA (Hons) in Acting and the associated Diploma in Directing.

In 2006, the actor and director Neil Sheffield, who was a student of Sam Kogan, became Principal of the Academy. In 2009, following the death of the Academy's influential founder in 2004, the trustees made staff changes, reviewed the curriculum and acquired new accommodation. The Academy now occupies a leased and renovated building in Archway, North London. In 2012, the Academy was awarded a grant from Islington Council to develop a disused Victorian warehouse, adjacent to the premises of the Academy, into a 350-seat theatre space. Planning permission to build the theatre has been achieved and a fund raising campaign is underway to raise money to build a commercial theatre, café and bar.

In May 2012 Kingston University London's Faculty of Art and Social Sciences approved validation of the BA (Hons) Acting for intakes from September 2013. Approval was also granted for retrospective awards for two cohorts (2011-12 and 2012-13). In April 2014, the Academy undertook an educational oversight inspection by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). This resulted in the Academy being awarded a full-confidence judgement across all of the reviewed assessment criteria.

In addition to the Principal, the Academy employs a full-time academic administrator and a part time accreditation officer, who liaises with Kingston University London as well as acting as a teacher and module leader. This member of staff was previously employed as a quality assurance consultant. Two external examiners have been appointed, with backgrounds in acting and directing, to assess and moderate the students' work and provide benchmark evaluations against standards in the theatre industry. In addition, the Academy has one full-time teacher and about 20 part-time teaching staff, who are employed on renewable sessional contracts. The part-time teachers are drawn from professionals in the acting and theatre world.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The Academy offers a three-year full-time BA (Hons) Acting course, which is validated by Kingston University London. Following successful completion of the first year of the acting course, students can also join a three-year course in directing, which leads to an internally awarded Diploma in Directing. The first two years of the directing course run parallel to the acting course and students must study both courses. Students also studying the directing course follow additional modules on directing and the final fourth year consists of a practical directing experience, when students direct and organise a full-scale production. The courses cover the full theory and practice of acting, as well as dance, singing, acrobatics, history of theatre, acting for camera, stage combat, yoga and other relevant exercise methods.

The Academy also offers a part-time evening course in acting called the Science of Acting. The duration of this course is a year and it leads to an internally awarded diploma. There is also a two-week full-time summer school covering acting technique, stage combat, dance, singing and the history of the theatre.

The Academy currently has a total of 41 students enrolled. Thirty-eight students are enrolled on the full-time BA (Hons) Acting programme, of whom 15 are also following the Diploma in Directing. Three students are enrolled on the part-time evening acting course.

3. Inspection process

One inspector conducted the inspection over half a day, starting in the morning. The inspector met with the Principal and the Acting Tutor & Director/Accreditation Coordinator and a group of students. A tour of the premises was carried out and relevant documentary evidence was scrutinised.

4. Inspection history

Full accreditation inspection:	13 to 15 June 2001
Supplementary inspection:	16 August 2001
Interim inspection:	20 October 2005
Reaccreditation inspection:	31 March and 1 April 2009
Interim inspection:	27 February 2012
Reaccreditation inspection:	14 and 15 August 2014

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector(s) during the inspection and from documentation provided by the provider

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

In October 2014, the Academy was approved by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) for student loans so that all United Kingdom and European Union students are eligible for funding towards the BA (Hons) Acting programme. In June 2015, the Academy became a member of UCAS. As a result, the number of annual student applications for the acting qualification has increased, which means that the total number of students over a three-year period will increase from 38 to 75. If additional space is required, it is expected that this can be acquired within the existing building or in studio space nearby. It is expected that the calibre of students applying will also increase.

The website has been re-designed to make it clearer, more informative and easier to see on a mobile telephone. It also links with various social media. It went live in May 2015. As a result, there has been greater traffic and more engagement from the students.

Discussions are on-going with Kingston University London with a view to the establishment of an MA in Directing.

2. Response to actions points in last report

3.3 The Academy must implement a simple staff appraisal and development system.

Initial steps have been taken to implement an appropriate staff appraisal and development system. The process of developing the system has to be overseen by the academy's trustees. All job descriptions have been sent to the trustees for review to ensure they are relevant and up-to-date. Staff are completing time logs to evaluate the scope of their roles and how they are spending their time. Various possible appraisal templates have been identified to establish best practice. However, the system has not yet been fully implemented and no appraisals have taken place. It is intended that it will have been implemented by April 2016.

15.3 The Directing course team must appoint an external moderator.

The existing arrangements for moderating the BA (Hons) Acting qualification, which are accepted by Kingston University London, also appropriately cover the Directing Diploma so there is no need to appoint an additional external moderator at this stage.

20.3 The Academy must include information on the right of access to BAC's complaints procedure in its induction briefing.

BAC's complaints procedure is included in the staff and student manuals and on the noticeboard. Students sign to say that they have seen it. The Academy's detailed complaints procedure also includes reference to the BAC's complaints procedure.

Response to recommendations in last report

The Academy should endeavour to maintain and develop its own annual review and, importantly, find an appropriate means of sharing outcomes with Academy staff.

Appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure the regular review of the provision to ensure its on-going quality. These include annual course summary reports for all modules, which include performance against key indicators such as students' retention and progress, elements of good practice and improvement actions to take. Development plans are also done together with relevant staff. Issues are discussed at meetings including students and staff. Annual external examiners' reports include recommendations for improvement and the Academy's response to these. All staff will see the final reports so that they are aware of the outcomes.

3. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements – spot check

3.1 Management, Staffing and Administration

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be		✓		
Comments 3.3 - A suitable staff appraisal and development system has not yet been fully implemented.				

3.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments 11.3 - There is an appropriate lesson observation system in place, which includes a focus on students' learning as well as the teaching.				

3.3 Participant Welfare

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments None				

3.4 Premises and Facilities

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments None				

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

Institution’s strengths
 The content of the curriculum is very well suited to the students’ objectives to obtain work in the acting and directing fields and includes very well-regarded acting techniques.
 Teachers provide very good individual support and regular feedback so that students know what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve.
 There are very good opportunities provided to help students and graduates to find work in the sector.

Actions required:	Priority H/M/L
3.3 The Academy must fully implement a suitable staff appraisal and development system.	H
Recommendations:	
Ensure that future goals, set for teachers in lesson observations, are sufficiently specific and measurable to ensure effective monitoring e.g. what impact the goals had on the learning experience of the students.	
Establish an appropriate forum, with effective student representation, so that students can easily make general suggestions for improvement and development.	

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.	YES
Further comments, if applicable Not applicable	