



## **BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT**

### **INTERIM INSPECTION (College)**

**INSTITUTION:** Heatherley School of Fine Art

**ADDRESS:** 75 Lots Road  
London  
SW10 0RN

**HEAD OF INSTITUTION:** Ms Veronica Ricks

**ACCREDITATION STATUS:** Accredited

**DATE OF INSPECTION:** 5 September 2019

**ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE:** 28 November 2019

## **PART A – INTRODUCTION**

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### **1. Background to the institution**

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Heatherley School of Fine Art (HSFA/the Institution) is owned by the Thomas Heatherley Educational Trust Limited, which is a charitable trust. It offers diplomas, classes, summer schools and community outreach programmes in the arts.

The Institution was established in 1845 in order to help students prepare applications for admission to the Royal Academy Schools. Thomas Heatherley, who was a former student, became its second Principal in 1860.

The Institution moved to its current premises in 2009. These are situated near the King's Road in Chelsea, London. It occupies accommodation, which was built specifically for the HSFA in 2009. The premises include eight studios, one of which accommodates the library, as well as a students' recreation area with access to a roof terrace and an artists' materials shop.

The Institution aims to be at the forefront of contemporary arts education.

Overall policy responsibility for the Institution rests with the Council. The Council is made up of ten members elected from the Thomas Heatherley Educational Trust. The day-to-day running of the school rests with the Principal, who is supported by the Director of Studies and the Course Director.

A project is currently under consideration to increase the number of studios by developing the second-floor roof terrace and the Institution is looking into acquiring external premises adjacent to the current building.

### **2. Brief description of the current provision**

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The Institution offers two full-time, two-year diploma courses. These are the Diploma in Portraiture and the Diploma in Figurative Sculpture. Courses are aimed at artists and those who are looking to follow professional practice as an artist. The courses lead to internal awards.

Entry is open to those with no previous formal experience in the arts, as well those with formal arts qualifications. Graduation follows successful completion of a series of units. External assessors are employed, and standards are ratified by three professional societies with whom the Institution has had close ties for a considerable time. These are the Royal Society of Portrait Painters, the Royal Society of Sculptors and the Society of Portrait Sculptors.

The Institution also runs a programme of 40 part-time, day and evening classes in sculpture, portraiture and ceramics. Part-time classes include weekly open studios, to which participants return year after year. A significant proportion of students, who attend the part-time courses, subsequently apply for the diploma courses. Some students stay at the Institution after their diploma and enrol on continuing studies programmes.

In addition, the Institution runs a programme of one-week summer courses. These attract students wishing to sample a sustained approach to a particular medium. All courses are face-to-face.

The Institution regularly hosts exhibitions on its premises, which the public are invited to. These exhibitions show both the work of outside arts organisations and the students' work.

The majority of the diploma students are female. Many students are qualified to post-graduate level. The majority have previous professional qualifications and are seeking a change of career. All students are aged 18 or over, and the majority are from the UK.

Recruitment to the full-time diploma courses is in the autumn of each year whilst recruitment for the part-time courses is on a termly basis.

### 3. Inspection process

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The inspection visit was undertaken by one inspector over one day. Meetings were held with the Principal and the Director of Studies. A range of documents were reviewed. No courses were being delivered on the day of the inspection visit. The Institution engaged and cooperated fully with the inspection process.

### 4. Inspection History

<b>Inspection Type</b>	<b>Date</b>
Full Accreditation	2-3 July 2013
Interim	7 August 2014
Spot Check	11 February 2016
Re-accreditation	28-29 June 2017

## **PART B – JUDGMENTS AND EVIDENCE**

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*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**

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No major changes have taken place since the last inspection, although plans for creating additional space both outside and inside the premises have been developed. A feasibility study on cost has taken place, and the Institution is in the process of applying for planning permission for a roof extension with additional studios above the current library. In addition, the Institution is in conversation with developers to lease land on a new development adjacent to the premises. The expansion will be partially self-funded and partially funded by donations and sponsors. Fundraising is ongoing.

The Institution's Council has introduced a new system for electing trustees whereby potential candidates are reviewed by a nomination committee.

### **2. Response to actions points in last report**

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There were no action points in the last report.

### **3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report**

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*Consideration should be given to the development of a policy for documenting the terms of the management committees and their relationship to the academic quality cycle.*

Effective systems have been put in place to ensure that the academic committees effectively oversee the academic programme and ensure quality control. Student feedback is collated and summarised by the Director of Studies. Feedback is then reviewed at academic board meetings and by the staff-student committee, which meets twice a year. In addition, staff feedback is reviewed by the academic board. Detailed minutes of meetings are done, and action taken is recorded.

*The Institution is recommended to consider developing greater consistency in the method and presentation of lesson plans as a means of continually enhancing quality.*

From the beginning of this academic year, starting September 2019, the Institution is implementing a policy which makes written course outlines, with a summary of learning outcomes, mandatory for all courses. A lesson plan format has been developed, and tutors will be expected to complete plans for their lessons. It would be beneficial to pilot these initiatives and to review their impact on the quality of courses.

*The Institution is recommended to refine and extend the current system for recording end of year diploma work, in order to provide a visual record of annual standards of achievement and to contribute to the capturing of graduate data.*

Student work is recorded and archived systematically. Photographs of student work are taken and all work is then archived on a database and published on the HSFA's website. Internal and external assessors have access to previous students' work in order to provide an overview of standards of achievement and to contribute to a moderation meeting, which takes place on the day of assessment.

*The Institution should consider bringing forward current plans to develop annual staff appraisal processes further and formalise classroom observation in order to document good teaching practice for dissemination across the teaching body as a means of quality enhancement.*

There is an effective annual staff appraisal process in place for the leadership and administrative staff. Appraisals are carried out by the Principal and the Director of Studies. In addition, for the upcoming academic year, plans are in place for all teaching staff to be observed by the Director of Studies.

#### 4. **Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements**

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##### 4.1 **Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)**

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

##### **Comments**

Clear and effective governance and reporting structures are detailed through the organisation chart and job descriptions, which effectively support the management of the Institution.

The administration of the Institution is effective. Policies and procedures are documented and communicated clearly. There are good data collection and collation procedures.

The Institution's website is comprehensive, accurate and up to date.

Admissions policies and procedures are clear and effective. Students are well-briefed on the nature and requirements of the courses.

Student and staff feedback are collected formally and informally. Feedback is collated and analysed by the Director of Studies and reviewed and acted upon by the academic committee. Feedback forms part of an annual report which reviews the Institution's performance and incorporates an action plan.

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##### 4.2 **Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)**

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

##### **Comments**

The academic management team is well qualified and experienced and provides effective academic management.

Courses are delivered by part-time teaching staff. Teachers have qualifications and experience suitable for the courses on offer and are allocated courses accordingly to deliver courses effectively.

The Institution provides access to a wide range of materials and resources to teachers and students. The HSFA has a reference library with an extensive range of relevant titles.

Students receive detailed oral and written feedback ensuring that their progress and achievement are effectively monitored.

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##### 4.3 **Student Welfare (spot check)**

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

##### **Comments**

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Students receive effective pastoral support through a well-structured welfare team, led by a student support officer.

There are policies and procedures in place to ensure that students receive appropriate information prior to arrival and at induction upon arrival.

Fair treatment of students is ensured through clear terms and conditions and a complaints procedure which includes information about BAC's complaints procedure.

There are effective safeguarding measures in place, including a safeguarding policy and designated lead person for safeguarding.

There is a policy in place to protect students from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. Staff are trained, and a risk assessment has been carried out.

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#### 4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

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**The standards are judged to be:**

Met     Partially Met     Not Met

#### **Comments**

The Institution has a secure possession of and access to the premises.

The premises offer a safe comfortable learning environment. They are of good repair, decoration and cleanliness. The building is appropriately restricted and secured. There are safety measures in place for areas where there are hazardous materials or equipment.

Studios provide an excellent learning environment, with high ceilings and large windows. They are equipped with resources and materials which allow for the effective delivery of courses.

Students have access to a private study area in the form of the spacious library. Teachers use studios for their lesson preparation. Students and staff have comfortable well-equipped spaces for relaxation and the consumption of food and drink.

Overall, the premises are well resourced and maintained and entirely appropriate for the courses being run.

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#### 4.5 Compliance Declaration

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**Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.**

Yes     No

**PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS**

**STRENGTHS**

The experienced managers and trustees are active in managing and supporting the ongoing review and expansion of provision to ensure the sustainability of the Institution through the development of new projects and courses.

The Institution has a clearly documented internal quality assurance process which robustly supports the management of quality and standards, including assessment decisions.

The open-door ethos of management promotes an informal and highly supportive teaching culture.

The high quality of the Institution’s premises and facilities provides a secure environment and excellent resources for learning.

**ACTIONS REQUIRED**

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

The Institution is recommended to pilot its new course initiatives and to review their impact on the quality of courses.

It is recommended that the Director of Studies observes all teachers.

**COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS - FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE**

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