



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM AND SUPPLEMENTARY INSPECTION CHANGE OF MANAGEMENT (Independent Higher Education)

INSTITUTION: AKTO Art and Design School

ADDRESS: 11A Evelpidon Street
Pedion Areos
Athens
Greece
11362

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Mrs Maria Velliou

ACCREDITATION STATUS: Accredited

DATE OF INSPECTION: 30 November 2020

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued accreditation, February 2021

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

AKTO Art and Design School (AKTO/the Institution) was established in 1971 as a private provider of arts education in Greece. The Institution operates as part of the Athenian Artistic and Technological Group, S.A. Education and Training.

AKTO offers undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in art and design validated by Middlesex University. The Institution also awards its own certificates for vocational training courses, short courses and blended learning programmes.

The Institution has two campuses, one in Athens and one in Thessaloniki. Both are housed in modern education building complexes.

The Institution aims to be the leading private Greek art and design college, with an international presence, and to foster an innovative and transformative student experience.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is supported by the Academic Management Committee, a Quality Assurance Officer and a senior leadership team, all of whom report to the Board of Directors. Academic staff are managed by Programme Leaders, who report to the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Co-ordinators.

The ownership of the Institution changed in March 2020 from the National Bank of Greece Investment Branch (NBGI). It is now owned by the Vellios family, who were the original founders of the Institution. Mrs Maria Velliou is now the CEO, having held various posts including that of Academic Director of the Institution.

During 2019, the Institution was validated by Middlesex University to offer one new postgraduate programme of study in Art and Education, as well as a new undergraduate programme in Game Design.

2. Brief description of the current provision

AKTO currently offers nine undergraduate and five postgraduate programmes validated by Middlesex University. These are in the disciplines of Graphic Design, Product Design, Architecture, Media, Animation and Gaming. Additionally, there are also vocational training courses, short courses and blended learning programmes in similar disciplines.

All programmes are delivered and assessed in the Greek language, with the exclusion of the MA in Art and Education, where the final project is submitted in English. All undergraduate and postgraduate programmes are offered in Athens. The majority of these programmes are also offered on the Thessaloniki campus, and are subject to the same administrative and quality assurance procedures.

At the time of the inspection, 354 full-time, and 63 part-time, undergraduate and postgraduate students were enrolled across the two campuses. The current capacity for the Athens campus is just over 1,000, and for the Thessaloniki campus, just over 500 students. All students are over the age of 18, with the majority being over 21. There is a mix of male and female students across undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, with the majority being female. The majority of students are from Greece and studying full time.

The Institution operates on an annual academic year enrolment basis. The academic year runs from September to August, with most students enrolling in September. Enrolment is on the basis of previous learning and subject experience. For validated programmes, the Institution follows Middlesex University's entry requirements.

AKTO is the only institution in Greece to become a member of the Cumulus International Association of Universities and Colleges of Art, Design and Media (Cumulus). This is the only global association comprising recognised universities to serve art and design education and research. Cumulus has over 280 members from 56 countries. It represents Higher Education in art, design and media, promotes originality and assists in the exchange of ideas and current trends in design.

3. **Inspection process**

The inspection was carried out remotely by one inspector over one day. Online meetings took place with the senior staff, academic staff, students and administrative staff. Additionally, a virtual tour of the premises was undertaken and various documentation was scrutinised. The Institution provided excellent co-operation, was efficient and well organised, and provided an effective Information Technology (IT) infrastructure to support the inspection.

4. **Background to the supplementary inspection**

The ownership of the Institution changed in March 2020 and it is now owned by the Vellios family, who were the original founders of the Institution. The change of ownership has led to new strategies being developed, in addition to several minor organisational structure changes.

5. **Inspection history**

Inspection type	Date
Full Accreditation	18-19 January 2005
Interim	17 May 2006
Re-accreditation	1-2 November 2010
Re-accreditation	28-29 April 2014
Interim	26 February 2016
Re-accreditation	31 October and 1 November 2018

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements 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

A recent change in ownership has led to the development of a new Strategic Plan for the Institution for 2020–25. This builds on the strengths of the Institution, but appropriately recognises and tackles issues arising from the current academic and financial environment in which the Institution operates.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact on the Institution, which has had to adapt quickly to online provision. It has done this in a responsive, flexible and effective manner, and continues to provide high-quality education. A robust and comprehensive IT infrastructure has been integral to the success of the online provision.

2. Response to action points in last report

There were no action points identified in the last inspection report.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

It is recommended that the Institution reviews how a VLE may fully benefit staff and students.

The Institution has not undertaken a review covering the provision of a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). It is able to provide most of the facilities of a VLE through the effective use of an integrated set of computer applications covering document-sharing, messaging and video conferencing. Both staff and students praised how well this has been implemented and its effectiveness. The Institution would benefit from a formal review of its provision, particularly in the light of the pandemic and whether a VLE would provide additional useful benefits.

The Institution should consider how the role of the Careers Advisor can be better utilised for the benefit of students and staff.

Careers advice has been enhanced by the addition of an annual careers day, when employers are invited to attend, meet students and discuss employment opportunities. In addition, the Careers Office is formally liaising with the Public Relations (PR) Office to identify opportunities for employment, internships and projects. The Institution is proactive in seeking opportunities to develop links with the industry and non-governmental organisations, through assigned projects, competitions, seminars, lectures, workshops and presentations. The Careers Office is providing an effective and comprehensive service to both staff and students.

It is recommended that the Institution clearly advises students about the BAC complaints procedure.

The British Accreditation Council (BAC) complaints procedure is now detailed in all the programme handbooks provided for students. The information includes a link to the BAC's website.

It is recommended that a formal risk assessment is carried out with regard to protecting participants from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism and that the staff training arrangements are included in the Staff Handbook.

The Institution has adopted a Prevent Statement and has undertaken a formal risk assessment. The Staff Handbook includes radicalisation prevention and has clear and appropriate guidance for staff on radicalisation indicators and procedures to be followed.

The Institution should consider reviewing the process of providing visitors with appropriate guidance regarding health and safety procedures whilst in the building.

All visitors are met by the help-desk staff, who ensure that the visitors are provided with any assistance required. There are emergency procedures notices for visitors on all floors and in lifts, floorplans indicating exit routes, hand-sanitising stations at multiple points within the building, and specific health and safety notices within workshops and studios. There is a clear emphasis on health and safety, as evidenced by the use of an external health and safety consultant to advise on suitable provision. The provision of guidance to visitors is appropriate and fit for purpose.

4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

4.1 Governance, Strategy and Financial Management (supplementary inspection)

The numbers below refer to the standards as presented in the Independent Higher Education scheme document and main full inspection report.

1. The institution is effectively and responsibly governed

1.1	The overall organisational structure, including the role and extent of authority of any owners, directors or governing body, is clearly defined, documented and effectively communicated to stakeholders, including governors, management, staff and students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
1.2	There is an identified senior committee, with decision-making authority on academic matters, in order to protect the integrity of academic freedom.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
1.3	The link between governance and management is clearly articulated and documented.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
1.4	Internal stakeholders develop and implement policy through appropriate structures and processes while involving external stakeholders.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
1.5	An explicit procedure for risk assessment is implemented, producing a risk assessment statement, which is regularly reviewed and updated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
1.6	Effective action is taken, by the governing body and senior managers, in response to the outcomes of regular risk assessments.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
1.7	All relationships with other educational organisations are defined formally and are fully transparent with those organisations' requirements.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
1.8	There are clear channels of communication between the governing body, the executive, academic management, staff, including those working remotely, students and other stakeholders.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

There is a clear organisational structure, which is effectively communicated to all stakeholders via meetings, newsletters and other forums. The structure has been revised with the recent change in ownership.

There is a clear committee structure and each committee has clear terms of reference. The Academic Committee is the senior academic decision-making body. Issues reach the Academic Committee via a well-defined academic structure. There is a parallel Management Committee structure, through which management issues are identified and considered. These systems work well, allowing effective and timely management within the Institution, as confirmed by stakeholders.

The Staff Handbook is comprehensive, allowing all staff easy access to information about management processes, procedures and structures.

Responsibility for risk identification and management is appropriately split. Academic risks are analysed, considered and managed through the academic structures and are escalated to the Board of Directors, via the Academic Committee, as appropriate. Institutional-level financial and reputational risks are managed directly via the Board of Directors. A risk register is used for health and safety risk management. This separation of risk management works well, allowing risks to be regularly considered and appropriate mitigation actions taken.

The Institution is formally recognised by the Greek Government, which renewed its approval in 2017. The Institution has a formal partnership agreement with Middlesex University to offer its awards. This was agreed for six years from 2015. The agreement is current and comprehensive, and covers all appropriate elements to support effective and legal delivery of Middlesex University’s awards at the Institution.

All academic partnerships are defined by a formal contract and are subject to regular review.

Communications with stakeholders are via newsletters, staff meetings and informal discussions. Management, staff and students commented on the effectiveness of these mechanisms. Inspection findings confirm this view.

2. The institution has a clear and achievable strategy

2.1	The institution has a clear strategy for the development of its higher education provision, which is supported by appropriate implementation plans and financial management and takes into account the quality of the student experience.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2.2	There is provision for stakeholder input, including governors, management, staff and students, to inform the strategic direction of the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2.3	The strategy is well communicated to all stakeholders within and outside the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2.4	The governing body and senior management conduct a regular and systematic review of their own performance and the institution’s overall performance and each is measured against strategic targets.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The recent change of ownership has led to a review of the Institution’s strategy and the creation of new strategic goals. This development draws on the previous strategy and focuses on meeting the pressures of competition within an environment that is changing in response to government policy and wider pressures.

The development of the strategy involved input from both internal and external stakeholders. The strategy, which is yet to be formally published, is appropriate and will allow the Institution to develop its provision to meet local and international demand. The strong partnership with Middlesex University continues to be a core part of the Institution’s strategic developments.

Suitable strategic goals and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been developed to ensure that the implementation of the strategy can be effectively monitored and actions taken as appropriate. The Board of Directors is responsible for oversight of the strategy.

The newly developed strategy will be disseminated to staff once it has been formally agreed and adopted by the Board of Directors.

3. Financial management is open, honest and effective

3.1	The institution conducts its financial matters professionally, transparently and with appropriate probity.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3.2	The institution’s finances are subject to regular independent external audit.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution's financial management is effective and fit for purpose. There is a Chief Finance Officer (CFO) supported by a Chief Accountant and financial administrative staff.

Regular formal meetings take place where financial issues are discussed, and decisions taken. Minutes of the meetings are considered by the CEO and the Board of Directors, and actions taken as appropriate. The Finance Department is responsive and is seen as providing a timely and effective service, both by staff and students.

An annual financial audit of the Institution is undertaken by an external auditor, providing transparency and an independent review of the Institution's financial position.

4.2 General and Academic Management and Administration (supplementary inspection)

The numbers below refer to the standards as presented in the Independent Higher Education scheme document and main full inspection report.

4. The institution is effectively managed

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|-----|---|---|-----------------------------|
| 4.1 | The management structure is clearly defined, documented and understood by all stakeholder groups including governors, management, staff and students. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.2 | There are clearly delineated responsibilities and reporting arrangements at institutional, faculty, departmental, programme and course levels. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.3 | There is an appropriate and effective committee structure, with appropriate reporting lines to inform management decision-making. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.4 | Committees have clear and appropriate terms of reference and meet regularly. The meetings are accurately recorded, with clear action planning. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.5 | The institution has formal mechanisms to monitor the information it provides internally and externally and to make any enhancements deemed necessary to ensure that it is accurate and fit-for-purpose. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution has a well-defined academic and institutional management structure, which is clearly documented, effectively disseminated and well understood by all stakeholders.

The post of Operations and Human Resources (HR) Manager has been created to improve internal co-ordination between administrative departments. The post of Academic Manager has been replaced by a three-person Academic Management Committee.

The committee structure clearly and appropriately separates academic decision-making from the Institution's management structures. The Board of Directors, as the highest body within the Institution, considers both academic and management committee structures and hence has effective oversight of the Institution. The Board of Directors is composed of well-qualified and experienced members to ensure effective and appropriate resourcing of existing programmes and the development of new programmes.

The Institution has a well-defined and appropriate committee structure. Committees have suitable terms of reference that are understood by the members. All meetings are appropriately minuted, providing clarity on discussions held, actions to be taken and the responsibility for specific actions.

The Institution's PR Office has responsibility for ensuring that all communications are accurate and effective, and meet stakeholders' needs. This is effective and stakeholders indicated that they felt well informed on a timely basis.

Staff and students confirmed the effectiveness of the management and administrative system at the Institution. Inspection findings support this view.

5. The institution is administered effectively

5.1	The size of the administrative team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.2	The administrative support available to the management is clearly defined, documented and understood and appropriately focused to support its activities.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.3	Administrative policies, procedures and systems are well documented and disseminated effectively across the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.4	Classes are timetabled and rooms allocated appropriately for the courses offered.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.5	Data collection and collation systems are well documented, accurate and effectively disseminated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.6	Comprehensive administrative records are organised and stored efficiently, easily accessed and used effectively.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.7	Students' records are sufficient, accurately maintained and up-to-date.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.8	Staff records are sufficient, accurately maintained and up-to-date.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.9	The institution has a robust security system and policies in place for protecting the data of its students and staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.10	The institution has processes through which the institution verifies that the student who registers on the programme is the same student who participates on and completes and receives the credit.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.11	There are secure and efficient procedures for the administration of examinations and other means of assessment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.12	There are effective procedures for internal and external moderation at pre- and post-assessment stages.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.13	The institution makes student records and transcripts available to its students in a timely manner.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.14	There is a policy on the collection of and refund of students' fees which implemented effectively.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

A team of seven administrators effectively supports the administration of the Institution. The team is led by the Administration Manager and the administrative structure is clearly identified on the Institution's organogram. The administrative team is appropriate for the size of the Institution, and feedback from both staff and students confirms appropriate and efficient support for all stakeholders.

Staff feel that they are well informed about the administrative policies and procedures, which are documented in the Staff Handbook and accessible via the Institution's intranet. The Staff Handbook effectively collates all administrative processes and provides a convenient and comprehensive reference resource for all staff. Staff induction includes an overview of the administrative systems in use at the Institution.

Timetabling is seen as effective by both staff and students. The timetable ensures that there is adequate access to facilities such as specialist rooms, studio spaces, classrooms and other teaching rooms. Annual

Monitoring Reviews (AMRs) are used as an effective vehicle to consider timetabling and other resource issues and to develop action plans for their resolution.

Data is recorded consistently and thoroughly by administrative staff and held on a specialised database with appropriate, secure access that meets General Data Protection Requirements (GDPR). Appropriate data, including that on attendance, marks and progression, is held and used effectively to monitor and support students. The data recorded is appropriately used to monitor student attendance and progression. If there is a concern about a student's performance, they are proactively contacted to provide support as necessary. This approach is effective in ensuring that students are appropriately supported.

Student identity is formally verified as part of the enrolment process. The small size of the Institution and the close working relationship in art and design between staff and students is effective in ensuring that the student receiving credit is the enrolled student.

All assessment is by assignments, and the pre-moderation and post-moderation of this are done in accordance with Middlesex University's regulations. These require formally scheduled Examination Boards during the year to consider summative assessments, resubmissions and referrals. These work well and provide students with their results within a reasonable timescale.

The Institution has a clear policy on fee refunds that is effectively implemented by the administrative team. Students were clear on the process to be followed.

6. The institution employs and continues to support appropriately qualified and experienced staff

6.1	There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment and continuing employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff, which is designed to ensure the safety of the learners.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.2	All staff are suitably qualified and experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.3	There are clear and appropriate job specifications for all staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.4	There are effective procedures for the induction of all staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.5	All staff are treated fairly and according to a published equality and diversity policy.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.6	Staff have access to an appropriate complaints and appeals procedure.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.7	Management monitors and reviews the performance of all staff, through a clearly documented and transparent appraisal system which includes regular classroom observations of teaching staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.8	The professional development needs of staff are identified through appraisal and other means, and measures taken to support staff to address these and gain additional qualifications, where relevant.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

There is an effective procedure for the recruitment of academic staff, which is clearly defined in the Staff Handbook. Recruitment is managed by the HR department, using a person-specification approach to ensure consistency and equity in appointments. All appointments are subject to the Institution's equality and diversity policy. Recruitment procedures work well and ensure that suitably qualified and experienced academic staff are recruited to meet the Institution's requirements. Students are enthusiastic about their teaching staff, and their skills and real-world knowledge.

All staff receive a formal induction as described in the Staff Handbook, with longer term support being provided by the Programme Leader. All staff have clear job descriptions and the institutional academic structures are accurately described in the Staff Handbook. This works well and provides effective support to newly appointed staff.

A suitably detailed complaints and appeals procedure is documented in the Staff Handbook that is disseminated to all staff. Staff indicated that the informal complaint resolution mechanisms worked well in practice.

All academic and administrative staff have an annual appraisal, including classroom observation. This is well implemented and recorded. Staff understood the process well and confirmed it to be effective and supportive.

The Institution provides appropriate support to staff who wish to attend external conferences or undertake additional qualifications or other agreed developmental activities, including those identified through appraisals. Although financial resources are limited, staff confirmed the effectiveness of this support.

Additionally, the Institution has a comprehensive programme of internal staff development activities that are directed at effectively supporting the Institution's learning, teaching and assessment activities.

7. Academic management is effective

7.1	There are appropriate procedures for the proposal, design and validation of programmes of study, which take account of the mission of the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.2	Intended learning outcomes for all programmes are clearly articulated, understood by students and are publicly available.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.3	There are regularly scheduled and recorded meetings of academic staff where academic programmes are reviewed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.4	There is an appropriate policy and effective procedures for the acquisition of academic resources to support programmes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.5	Commissioning of course materials is managed effectively and materials and the budget are checked to ensure standardisation and consistency across the provision.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.6	Students are encouraged to take an active role in the development of the academic provision to ensure student-centred learning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

All awards are made by Middlesex University and the development and validation of new programmes are seen as a joint activity with the Institution.

Programme documentation is made available to all staff and students via the Institution's intranet. This provides clarity on the learning outcomes for each programme.

The validation and revalidation process and agenda are set by Middlesex University, in collaboration with the Institution, to comply with the regulations of Middlesex University. Feedback on proposals is taken from a range of stakeholders, including staff, students and employers. These are reviewed and used to ensure that the proposal meets the needs of stakeholders. Middlesex University's AMR for each course provides an effective opportunity for all staff to review the course and amend it as necessary.

Within the Institution, validations are led by the Head of Quality, supported by programme leaders, as appropriate. Additionally, support and input to the development of a programme are provided by a suitably experienced and qualified course team. All programme updates require the final approval of the Academic Committee.

Resources required to support academic provision are identified during the development of programmes of study. If significant investment is required, this will be raised with the Board of Directors for its approval.

Students provide feedback both informally in the classroom and formally via meetings of student representative. This provides effective student engagement in the development of new provision.

8. The institution takes reasonable care to recruit and enrol suitable students for its courses

8.1	Entry requirements for each programme are set at an appropriate level and are clearly stated in the programme descriptions seen by prospective students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.2	Students are informed as to the necessary language requirements for entry onto programmes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.3	A formal application process ensures that students meet the entry requirements and any claimed qualifications are verified.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.4	All students' application enquiries are responded to promptly and appropriately.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.5	Prospective students are properly briefed on the nature and requirements of the programme(s) in which they are interested and provided with advice on choosing their programme.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.6	Students receive a proper initial assessment, which includes language ability, to confirm their capability to complete the programmes on which they are enrolling.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.7	The institution makes it clear to applicants that they are responsible for checking that they have the skills and knowledge required to study on the chosen course.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.8	The institution has a clear policy on the accreditation of prior learning and prior experiential learning, which is brought to the attention of prospective students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
8.9	Any recruitment agents are properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Entry requirements for all programmes are set by Middlesex University and are available on the Institution's website.

Applications are via a standard application process, overseen by a member of the administrative team. Applications from students with standard Greek qualifications are processed based on the agreed academic requirements. Students with non-standard qualifications, or who are non-native Greek speakers, are invited for an interview with an appropriate course leader. They are assessed for their suitability for their chosen programme and provided with advice, including language requirements if necessary.

The Institution has an effective and well-organised administrative team providing support for enquirers and applicants. All enquiries are responded to promptly. Prospective students are invited to attend an interview, where they are fully briefed on the programme and its entry requirements, and their questions are answered. An initial assessment is undertaken and the responsibilities of the Institution and the student are fully explained during the interview. Staff and students said that the process works well, ensuring that well-informed and counselled students were enrolled.

Accreditation of prior learning and prior experiential learning applications are effectively managed by the administrative team, supported by course leaders. Applicants may be required to provide a portfolio of work or other demonstration of academic capability.

The application process is effective and efficient and meets the standards and requirements of Middlesex University.

9. The institution encourages and supports its staff to undertake research and other forms of scholarship and to engage in other professional activities

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|-----|--|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 9.1 | The institution encourages academic staff to undertake research in relevant fields and to publish their findings. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 9.2 | Academic staff are encouraged to engage in research and/or scholarship which informs their teaching. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 9.3 | There is a fair and transparent procedure for staff to seek financial support for their research and other professional development activities. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 9.4 | The institution provides time for staff to meet regularly to share and discuss current research activities and, if appropriate, invites external speakers. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

The majority of staff are part-time, industry-based practitioners. Therefore, research, scholarly activity and the development of their discipline are inherent. The Institution encourages staff to engage in research and to use the outcomes of their research to inform their teaching. A number of student projects have resulted from staff's external activities.

Limited financial resources are available to support staff's research interests directly and the Institution endeavours to provide a time allowance. Personal development processes and procedures are clearly stated in the Staff Handbook, which is available to all staff via the Institution's intranet.

Middlesex University proactively encourages the development of teaching practice via its Postgraduate Certificate in Education, which is available to the Institution's staff. This is supported by a strong peer review and support ethos amongst the teaching staff.

Research and practice-based developments are informally discussed within the Institution. The majority of the staff are part time and their research is practice-based and conducted outside the Institution. This approach is appropriate.

10. Publicity material, both printed and electronic, gives a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the institution and its curriculum

- | | | | |
|------|---|---|-----------------------------|
| 10.1 | Text and images provide an accurate depiction of the institution's location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10.2 | Information on the programmes available, their assessment and progression is comprehensive, accurate, readily accessible and up-to-date. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10.3 | There are effective procedures to update information on a regular basis to ensure its relevance and accuracy. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10.4 | The information provided ensures students are well informed of the status of the qualifications offered, including the awarding body and level of award. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 10.5 | Students are informed of the full cost of all programmes, including costs of assessments, activities and any required materials. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be: Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution has a comprehensive website that provides high-quality and accurate information for potential applicants. The website is maintained by the Marketing department and is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes in provision.

The Institution's PR Office undertakes an annual review of all publicity material in liaison with Programme Leaders. This takes place in advance of each academic year, ensuring that all material is reviewed and revised as appropriate.

Programme and award information is clear within publicity material, with links to Middlesex University's website for full award and course details.

During induction, students are provided with information on the full cost of all programmes, including costs of assessments and any required materials. The Student Handbook, which is issued to all students, provides full details of the award, its assessment and the individual module descriptors.

4.3 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

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

Comments

Both staff and students are enthusiastic about the quality of the teaching, the facilities, and the environment at the Institution. Staff are well qualified. The majority are part time and bring considerable practical expertise and knowledge to their teaching.

Students confirmed that they are well supported by staff, who encourage them to develop their skills with a strong focus on employability and sector relevance.

Both staff and students reported that the online teaching being delivered, via online collaborative tools, was working well, despite the Institution not having its own VLE. Assessment and feedback have been managed well within the current restrictions placed upon the Institution.

The Institution's current experience in offering online and distance learning courses provides it with a firm foundation to introduce online teaching for all programmes. Although the subjects offered by the Institution do not readily lend themselves to online delivery, the online provision that has been developed has allowed effective teaching to take place.

4.4 Student Support, Guidance and Progression (spot check)

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

Comments

The pastoral support services available to students are well described in the Student Handbook. The information provides clarity on whom to contact for non-academic issues or other pastoral support. Students confirmed that the services available were effective and accessible.

The arrangements to prevent radicalization include a clear statement on its prevention, allied to a documented risk assessment. These are appropriate for both staff and students. The policies and procedures are well documented in the Staff Handbook and disseminated through student induction and staff meetings. The Institution has actively participated in BAC's webinar, which teaches its attendees about a proactive approach to managing radicalisation issues.

Student programme handbooks are used to provide both academic and pastoral support information. The handbooks are thorough and effective in providing the major source of academic and support information for students. The handbooks are supported by documents from Middlesex University, which ensure that students have clarity on their entitlements from the university, in addition to linking the information to the academic regulations of the university.

The Student Handbook includes information on the BAC complaints procedure.

The Institution enrolls few international students. Those who are enrolled normally have Greek family or other connections and hence require no specialist support. The administrative team will provide specific support for those international students who request it. This approach is appropriate and suitable to manage the very small minority of students who require specific support.

During the pandemic, it has not been possible to organise any social activities. However, the Institution has a social programme that is largely led by the students, with appropriate support provided by the Institution.

4.5 Premises, Facilities and Learning Resources (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

Comments

The Institution has appropriate tenure agreements for its premises and has the accompanying licence from the Greek Government to allow it to operate as an educational provider.

The premises are clean and modern, and suitable for the programmes taught and numbers of students enrolled.

The Institution has robust health and safety policies and procedures. Students are given appropriate advice and training, particularly in those areas where specific hazards are present. Visitors are provided with health and safety advice upon their arrival. External consultants are appointed to review safety within the Institution's buildings and to provide specific health and safety training as appropriate. An accident register is used to log incidents and to enable their review.

The teaching facilities meet the needs of individual programmes. Teaching rooms of various sizes, workshops, studios, galleries and IT facilities are allocated as appropriate. The main building has seven floors. Each floor is dedicated to a particular subject area, or cognate subject areas. Appropriate staff offices are adjacent to their teaching areas. Students confirmed that the facilities are good and appropriate.

The first two floors contain a gallery, an auditorium, student recreational facilities, the library, and the administrative and student support offices. These provide a welcoming environment and are appropriately placed to support students. Suitable toilet and hand-washing facilities are provided and all areas have good ventilation.

A small, reference-only library is available to students, who confirmed that it provides them with the necessary support and access and is suitably stocked with journals and books.

IT facilities are up to date and have proved robust and adaptable, as evidenced by the recent rapid and successful move to online delivery.

4.6 Quality Management, Assurance and Enhancement (spot check)

The standards are judged to be:

Met

Partially Met

Not Met

Comments

Student feedback is obtained, at module, programme and institutional levels, by means of online surveys. The analysis of the feedback is included as part of the AMR, which is a core element of Middlesex University's quality procedures. The AMRs are considered by the programme's Board of Studies, and along with the oversight by Middlesex University, provide an effective confirmation of quality standards.

Students reported that they were concerned that some issues they raised via the student representatives were not being addressed, or that they were not made aware of actions taken.

The Institution has effective quality systems and procedures that are well developed, documented and embedded. Quality assurance policies have been designed to meet the requirements of Middlesex University, with appropriate adaptation to meet local needs and regulations. Previous actions, achievement data, teaching and learning, and learning resources are all considered by the Board of Studies and the Academic Management Committee. The high-quality data and thorough analyses included in AMRs enable the Institution's senior management to monitor performance effectively and to support effective decision-making.

Student data is recorded consistently and thoroughly by administrative staff and held on a bespoke database. Appropriate data, including that for attendance, marks and progression, is well maintained and used effectively to monitor and support students.

The data, along with detailed External Examiner Reports, are used to inform the AMRs. The AMRs are thorough and comprehensive and provide an effective mechanism to draw together all aspects of a course, its delivery, assessments, stakeholder feedback and year-on-year comparisons of achievement. The outcomes are formally considered by Programme Leaders, and action plans developed to provide an effective response mechanism. AMRs are also reviewed by Middlesex University as part of its quality assurance procedures.

Middlesex University holds a Review and Validation event every six years for each programme for its validated provision. This is effective in providing an opportunity for the programme to be reviewed, modified and revalidated. The process is robust and effective in ensuring that the Institution's provision remains current and fit for purpose.

Data systems and reporting processes ensure that the Institution's senior management and partner university have robust data to allow effective management and decision-making.

An annual staff conference takes place each November and is used effectively as a vehicle to disseminate, review and discuss best practice and ensure provision enhancement.

4.7 Online, Distance and Blended Learning (spot check)

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

Comments

The Institution has a small number of stand-alone distance learning courses. These provide students with a certificate of attendance. Students' feedback to the Institution shows that these are effective and meet their intended outcomes.

4.8 Compliance Declaration

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated. Yes No

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS

The long-term and successful relationship with Middlesex University effectively supports the development of a successful range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

The Institution has a strong and positive reputation amongst stakeholders for providing relevant and high-quality education that meets employer and sector needs.

The strong and supportive ethos amongst the teaching staff supports effective and coherent teaching.

The small size of the Institution allows it to adapt and change rapidly in response to external forces. This is evidenced by its response to the Covid-19 restrictions.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

None

High Medium Low

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT *(to be reviewed at the next inspection)*

It is recommended that the Institution reviews how a VLE can be developed to fully benefit staff and students.

The Institution should consider the provision of meetings for student representatives to meet Programme Leaders to identify, discuss and resolve operational issues in a timely manner.

It is recommended that there is a review of how students are provided with feedback on issues raised at the Board of Studies.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS – FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE

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