

CHAPTER A - INTRODUCTION

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A.1 – PURPOSE OF THE ACADEMIC QUALITY HANDBOOK

The Trinity Laban Academic Quality Handbook is an integrated guide to the Institutional regulations, policies, systems and procedures that assure and enhance the quality of the academic provision. The handbook should be read alongside the Strategic Plan 2018-2028 and the sub-strategies.

The Handbook is relevant to those with particular responsibility for delivering the academic programmes, including;

- directors, deans and assistant directors of the faculties;
- heads of department;
- programme leaders and coordinators;
- module and component leaders;
- project supervisors;
- teachers;
- external examiners

The handbook is also relevant to other staff involved in student support, the Registry and Academic Services, the libraries, human resources management and widening participation. The handbook is available to students and their representatives, as a source of information about the processes that underlie the management of standards and quality, although the primary source of information for students is the programme handbooks.

The Institution has a valuable asset in the quality of the teaching staff - many of whom combine their teaching with distinguished and diverse careers as performers, choreographers, composers, researchers and writers. The contribution of the teachers to the richness of our students' educational experience is inestimable. Many of our teaching staff are part-time and the Institutional academic management has particular responsibilities for ensuring that those who are involved in programme delivery are informed about Institutional policy on learning and teaching and external reference point, such as the UK Quality Code, legal requirements etc.

This handbook, together with the following documents published at the beginning of each academic year, provides the essential information and guidance for those responsible for learning and teaching at Trinity Laban:

- Programme Handbook for each programme, including the Programme Specification (which in turn includes any programme-specific regulations) for each programme;
- The City University Validation and Institutional Partnerships Handbook, which describes the operational framework for research degree provision validated by the University.

The Academic Quality Handbook is subject to annual review, under the oversight of the Academic Standards and Quality Board (ASQB), reporting to the Academic Board.

The Academic Standards and Quality Board monitors the health of the academic provision on behalf of the Academic Board. The Academic Board is the chief Institutional academic body, with responsibility for academic standards and quality, subject to the overarching responsibilities of the Board of Governors.

A.2 - THE INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

2.1 Background

Formed in 2005, through the merger of Trinity College of Music and Laban, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance is a specialist Higher Education Institution, which prepares skilled, collaborative and resourceful graduates for coteremporary artistic careers. Trinity Laban provides a personalised, supportive and intensive learning experience with a clear emphasis on innovation, creativity and collaboration and a focus on preparing our students to shape the future social and cultural landscape. The learning and teaching ethos is supported by a vibrant research culture focused on creative practice, performance science and music and dance pedagogy. Both faculties play major roles in the commissioning and performance of new works as an integrated part of their curricula.

Trinity Laban's learning and teaching activities are grounded in practice-based, vocational training, informed by links and relationships with the performing arts sector, which develops students' technical, creative and intellectual capabilities through the promotion of their personal and artistic development according to their individual needs. The Institution's distinctive approach to performance education marries the traditional, focused technical training of the specialist Institution with the development of a broader set of skills, emphasising individual creativity and entrepreneurial abilities, open-mindedness and leadership capacity in order to prepare students for multi-dimensional careers. The learning environment is constructed through the utilisation of traditional learning spaces in our specialist facilities, digital platforms, and professional learning contexts. Students are supported by a range of expert practitioners and technicians, enabling them to experience professional contexts within a safe and nurturing setting where they are encouraged to push the boundaries of their aspirations, both artistically and academically.

2.2 Vision, Mission, Purpose and Values

Vision

Trinity Laban will be an inclusive home of innovation and creation in our art forms, first choice for those who are passionate about advancing the place of the arts in society and realising their artistic ambitions.

Mission

Trinity Laban is London's Creative Conservatoire. We identify, support and develop a diverse intake of talented and innovative performers and creators, wherever they may be found and throughout their creative lives. We instil creativity and technical excellence through our supportive atmosphere, world-class buildings and innovative curriculum. We transform those with potential into resourceful, enterprising and adaptable artistic leaders who are able to succeed in the profession and make a positive change to society.

Purpose

Trinity Laban exists to transform individuals and enrich society through world-class music and dance by;

- delivering an outstanding training and education that cultivates individual and original artistic voices;
- reaching and empowering young people from as diverse backgrounds as possible, and equipping them to succeed and contribute by taking their own creative ideas forward;
- constantly innovating and challenging the artistic status quo;
- drawing the widest possible audiences for, and participants in, its activities and stimulating them to think differently

Values

Our values describe the culture of Trinity Laban and the principles that underpin our decision-making. We aim to be:

- Artistically ambitious and experimental
- Progressive
- Collaborative
- Ethical and inclusive
- Socially engaged
- International

2.3 Quality Enhancement at Trinity Laban

2.3.1 Definitions

Quality Enhancement

Trinity Laban defines quality enhancement as:

The process of taking deliberate steps at Institutional level to achieve (steady, reliable and demonstrable) improvements in the quality of learning opportunities.

Trinity Laban's enhancement activity is informed by sector good practice, as outlined in the advice and guidance section of the UK Quality Code, and research-based pedagogic interventions. The latter is predominantly steered through the Centre for Educational Futures, which seeks to promote the relationship between Learning & Teaching and Quality Enhancement. In this way Quality Enhancement is seen as a component of successful Learning Enhancement in Learning & Teaching Practices rather than an independently conceived driver in and of itself.

The Centre for Educational Futures is a central resource to help support curriculum development conducted within the faculties and the professional development of teaching staff through an integrated programme of activities grounded in pedagogic research. The developments organised by the CEF complement the Quality Assurance and Quality Management processes. The CEF has several areas of intersecting activity:

- Leadership and Management of Learning Enhancement
- Activities and Events
- Learning & Teaching Research
- Quality Enhancement
- Academic CPD and Staff Development
- Digitally enhanced learning
- Learning advisory services

Quality Assurance and Academic Standards

The term 'quality assurance' refers to the systems and processes that the Institution uses to safeguard the standards of academic awards and to ensure high quality learning opportunities. The term 'learning opportunities' refers to the support that the Institution offers in order to enable students to meet the standards set for academic awards. Learning opportunities include teaching, academic and personal support, learning resources, admissions structures, the operation of assessment, staff development, and the contribution that students make to their own learning and development. The UK Quality Code sets out the following expectations for quality:

Courses are well-designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.

From admission through to completion, all students are provided with the support that they need to succeed in and benefit from higher education.

The term 'academic standards' refers to the level of achievement that a student has to reach to gain an award. The academic standards of taught programmes relate to the appropriateness of the intended learning outcomes of programmes, modules and components (in relation to credit aims, content and qualification level); the appropriateness of the syllabus (in relation to learning outcomes); and the effectiveness of assessment (in relation to the measurement of the attainment of learning outcomes). The academic standards of research degree programmes relate to the appropriateness of research degree criteria, student achievement against the criteria, and the effectiveness of assessment (in relation to the measurement of research criteria). The UK Quality Code sets out the following expectations for standards:

The academic standards of courses meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework.

The value of qualifications awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time is in line with sector-recognised standards.

There are 'threshold' standards - the level of achievement that a student has to reach in order to gain an award, rather than any particular class of award. These threshold standards are set out in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ) and subject benchmark statements. UK threshold standards are aligned to the '*Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in the European Higher Education Area*' (ESG).

–The FHEQ includes descriptors for each qualification, setting out the assessed outcomes and wider attributes expected for each named qualification.

Subject benchmark statements are published by the QAA for a range of disciplines. They describe the characteristics and standards of qualifications at honours and Master's level for a particular subject, including the specific subject knowledge and skills and the generic or graduate skills that will be developed, and the forms of learning, teaching and assessment that will be provided. Each statement sets out the learning outcomes that make up the 'threshold standard' at which a qualification in a subject area may be awarded and the 'typical standard', which indicates the level of knowledge and skill expected of the majority of graduates.

The Institution keeps under ongoing review its alignment to the good practice articulated in the Advice and Guidance section of the UK Quality Code with regard to academic quality.

Higher education providers have obligations to prospective and current undergraduate students under consumer law. There are clear expectations for the provision of information to students and the Institution has aligned its practices with the advice issued to higher education providers by the Competition and Markets Authority.

2.3.2 Quality Enhancement and the Strategic Plan

The 2018-2028 Strategic Plan was formulated through a systematic process, conducted through the Institutional and academic governance structure and involving consultation across the Institution, building upon processes and practices that were established in the outgoing Strategic Plan (2014-19). The plan sets out the goals of the Institution, including two core aims:

- Outstanding artist training and development
- Acknowledged leadership in the performing arts ecology

These aims cut across seven developmental priorities identified in the Strategic Plan: To increase the diversity of our student and staff populations; To recruit, retain, develop and support outstanding members of staff; To grow our student numbers; To deliver major developments to our estate and infrastructure; To build our reputation and profile; To ensure conditions are in place for successful fundraising; To transform systems, structures and processes. The developmental priorities are intended to concentrate Institutional attention in relation to quality management and the achievement of defined key performance targets. The Strategic Plan is monitored and developed through a continuous cycle involving:

- Oversight through the governance structures with the academic committees and the Board of Governors responsible for setting the Institutional direction and goals
- Managerial direction, with the allocation of resources and the implementation of strategic goals and policy, headed by the Principal
- Evaluation, review and reporting on outputs and outcomes, through the provision of management information, benchmarking and reviews and other aspects of the quality assurance system

2.3.3 Quality Assurance and Quality Management

The Institutional quality assurance systems, policies and procedures are set out in this handbook. Trinity Laban complies with the requirements of the validating partner City University London in relation to the Research Degree Programme. An experienced provider

of Higher Education, the Institution has received external verification of its own quality assurance and quality management practices through external review.

A.3 - ACADEMIC PORTFOLIO AND VALIDATION ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 Validation Arrangements

Trinity Laban is governed as described in the Memorandum and Articles of Association approved by HM Privy Council and the Charities Commission and filed with Companies House. The Institution is subject to the Financial Memorandum issued by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) in relation to public funding. Trinity Laban is a Recognised Body, having been granted taught degree awarding powers by HM Privy Council on 2 February 2016.

3.2 Table of Validation and Accreditation Status

Trinity Laban has the powers to award its own taught degrees and diplomas. City, University of London is the validating authority for research degrees.

Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates

Faculty	Programme title	Last (re)validation date	Required/Planned revalidation date (academic year)	Notes
Dance	Foundation Programme: Contemporary Dance (BA (Hons) Contemporary Dance Foundation entry)	February 2018	2022/23	
	International Foundation Programme: Contemporary Dance and English (BA (Hons) Contemporary Dance Foundation entry)	February 2018	2022/23	Incorporating TCL Integrated Skills in English examination
	BA (Hons) Dance Contemporary Dance	July 2018	2022/23	
	BSc (Hons) Dance Science	May 2018	2022/23	
	Graduate Diploma in Dance	June 2015	2019/20	
	International Graduate Diploma in Dance and English	March 2018	2022/23	
	Postgraduate Diploma Community Dance	June 2015	2019/20	
	MA Choreography	June 2015	2019/20	
	MFA Choreography	June 2015	2019/20	

	MA Dance Performance	June 2015	2019/20	
	MFA Dance Performance	March 2018	2019/20	Validated to two years to align with the revalidation date for MA Dance Performance
	MA Creative Practice	June 2015	2019/20	
	MFA Creative Practice	June 2015	2019/20	
	MSc Dance Science	June 2015	2019/20	
	MFA Dance Science	June 2015	2019/20	
Music	Foundation Certificate: Music	October 2017	2022/23	
	International Foundation Certificate: Music and English	October 2017	2022/23	Incorporating TCL Integrated Skills in English examination
	Foundation Programme in Musical Theatre	May 2019	2023/24	Incorporating ATCL
	BA (Hons) in Musical Theatre Performance	May 2019	2023/24	
	BMus (Hons) Performance/ Composition/ Jazz	November 2016	2021/22	
	Postgraduate Diploma Composition/ Ensemble/ Jazz/Music Performance	June 2015	2019/20	
	MA Composition/ Ensemble/Jazz/Music Performance/ Performer-Composer	June 2015	2019/20	
	Master of Music (MMus) Composition/ Ensemble/Jazz/Music Performance/ Performer-Composer	June 2015	2019/20	
	MFA Creative Practice (Music)	June 2015	2019/20	Suspended March 2019
	MA Music Education And Performance	May 2016	July 2021	
	Postgraduate Certificate/Postgraduate Diploma/Master of Arts The Teaching Musician	May 2016	July 2021	
	BA (Hons) Music Education	November 2018	July 2022	Due to commence September 2020
Postgraduate Advanced Diploma Composition/ Ensemble /Jazz /Music Performance /Performer-Composer	June 2015	2019/20		

	Certificate: The Practice of Music Making	May 2016	July 2019	Subject to collaborative credit agreement with The Open University
	Independent Study Programme (Advanced)	May 2016	July 2021	Leading to an award of Graduate Certificate (level 6), Graduate Diploma (level 6) or Professional Certificate (level 7)
Joint provision	TL Research Degree Programme (RDP)	July 2018	2022/23	Validated by City, University of London

Other Programmes

Faculty	Programme title	Notes
Music	PGCE Musicians in Education	Delivered for the University of Greenwich, which owns the programme.
Dance	Independent Study in Dance Study Abroad Programme	The Independent Study Programme and Study Abroad Programme are flexible programmes of study comprising modules/components drawn from Trinity Laban's validated programmes.