The University of Kent  
Office for Quality Assurance & Validation  

Validation Forum  

The meeting of the Validation Forum was held on Wednesday 25 January 2006 at 2.00pm in the Senate Chamber at the University of Kent.

Present:  Dr Louise Naylor – Chair (QA&V), Cat Fergusson (QA&V) Sarah Rowe (LAMDA) Jane Carr (CSB), Henrietta Bannerman (LCDS), Kirsty Alexander (LCDS), Rosemary Godfrey (RARE), Jim Coleman (Chaucer College), Gurmit Hukam (NSCD), Colin Bourne (NSCD), Prof Jill Davies (SDFVA), Ron Strang (SDFVA), Ursula Fuller (Dean of STMS) Faye Beesley (Secretary)

1. Apologies for Absence:  Richard Griffiths, Tim Roberts, Paul Butler, Dr Keith Wren, Ameenah Ahad, Sarah Hyde, Peter M Boenisch, Thomas Saalfeld, Sarah Cardwell, Ollie Double, Chris Clark, Dr Seymour Roworth-Stokes, Ross McKim, Richard Ralph, Ian Bride.

2. Welcome

The Chair welcomed Gurmit Hukam and Colin Bourne from the Northern School of Contemporary Dance. Students will be registering with University of Kent next September.

The Chair thanked the School of Drama, Film & Visual Arts for their help with the validation of Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance and Northern School of Contemporary Dance. In particular, the Chair thanked Ron Strang for his help with the programme specifications and quality assurance for each of these schools.

The Chair thanked Cat Fergusson and Faye Beesley for their ongoing support of validation activities.

3. Performances at the Gulbenkian Theatre

The Chair introduced Dee Ashworth, Director of the Gulbenkian Theatre. Dee Ashworth informed the Committee that he would like to explore the opportunity of linking with the validated institutions to produce performances at the Gulbenkian Theatre. LCDS (EDge) are already performing at the Gulbenkian on 8 March and CSB (Ballet Central) on 11 May 2006.

Dee Ashworth promoted the idea of a two week ‘best of’ seasonal festival to present the broad breadth of the activities of the University and affiliates and to bridge the gap between academia and vocational courses.

LCDS thought that such a festival could help emerging choreographers to develop their work after graduation. Residencies are instrumental in helping students to develop skills based around performance production and education.

For the 40th celebrations at the University of Kent there was an Artsfest, which was a one day programme, which was mostly music-based. It was felt that this could be continued and extended out to include performances from students at validated institutions.
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Dee Ashworth informed the Committee that the Gulbenkian offer work placement opportunities in technical marketing and administration relating to theatre, but not to performance.

SDFVA plan to organise more activities with validated institutions and suggested paying for and hosting a meeting in London to see what could be achieved.

**Action:** SDFVA

Kirsty Alexander commented that LCDS students would welcome more opportunities to develop a relationship with the University as the awarding institution.

4. QA Developments

There have been changes to the Research Code of Practice in the last year.

- The Quality Assurance & Validation Office (QA&V) have mapped the Code of Practice in a similar way to the taught Code of Practice with the outcome of reviewing research at programme level, including an explicit requirement for annual monitoring (Annex E).

- In terms of supervision, the University strongly supportive of the establishment of a supervisory team, with an approved supervisory Chair for monitoring student progress throughout the programme (Annex H).

- The Code now specifies four progression/examination points (i.e. induction, probation, upgrade, submission) at which the progress of the student can be monitored and reviewed (Annex K).

The Research Code of Practice is available on the website\(^1\), along with sample forms available for adaptation.

Henrietta Bannerman asked about the University’s policy on examining live performance, particularly for ‘Practice as Research’ qualifications Professor Jill Davis informed the Committee that this is an issue that Professor Paul Allain\(^2\) has been dealing with in SDFVA and it might be helpful to liaise with him for advice.

Cat Fergusson informed the Committee that QA&V will be setting up a Research Degrees Sub Committee for LCDS to oversee research student activity at LCDS.

Henrietta Bannerman asked about the University’s policy for research training programme. The Chair explained that the University have just put a research training programme into place and LCDS could have access to it. The University model is based on Faculties running training programmes with input from UELT, Library, Computing and central providers (as appropriate). The University have developed a website to provide an overview of the training that is available\(^3\).

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\(^1\) [http://www.kent.ac.uk/registry/quality/rescode2005/index.html](http://www.kent.ac.uk/registry/quality/rescode2005/index.html)  
\(^2\) P.A.Allain@kent.ac.uk  
\(^3\) [http://www.kent.ac.uk/research-training/](http://www.kent.ac.uk/research-training/)
Ursula Fuller added that STMS are providing generic research training for 2 reasons: (1) to make training equally available to postdocs and research students (2) and ensure that any training undertaken to develop students’ skills and their portfolio is fully supported by the respective supervisor.

Each year, SDFVA develop training for students for ‘Practice as Research’ programmes, which begins in January. Training may be exported for the validated institutions or students could attend training events at Kent.

**QAA Institutional Audit (2005)**

A team of auditors from the QAA visited CDD from 13-15 June 2005 and concluded that CDD is moving in an appropriate manner to fulfil its responsibilities for the current and likely future management of the quality of academic programmes and the academic standards of the awards of its affiliate schools. The full report is available at [http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/reports/instReports.asp?instID=Q-0189](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/reports/instReports.asp?instID=Q-0189). It is a credit to the staff and students of CDD and its affiliates that the report was so positive in tone, especially given the challenges of establishing a new HEI. Since the audit visit, CDD have developed a quality assurance action plan and strategy and are implementing changes for full consultation with the University to ensure streamlining of procedures to avoid any duplication of effort. CDD is responsible for maintaining TQI reports on the website (see - [http://www.tqi.ac.uk](http://www.tqi.ac.uk)).

5. **Student Information**

Cat Fergusson is looking into the development of the student record system to produce transcripts for validated institutions.

**Action:** CF

The validated institutions were reminded that they are responsible for providing the full legal name at the outset with proof of ID at registration. In the final year full legal names should be confirmed **at least 6 months** before the exam board, to ensure that the spelling on the certificates was correct. It was agreed that this could be formally ‘signed off’ at the examiners meeting before certificates were printed.

6. **One Year On**

Institutions, who had recently become validated partners, were asked to report on progress to date:

**LAMDA** noted that their experience had been very good and that staff at Kent had been supportive in responding to ongoing queries.

**CSB** noted that three cohorts of students had been taken on at one time. They appreciated the smooth transfer and conduct of the Board of Examiners.

**NCDS** had been made to feel welcome and were looking forward to validation. It was their third year as an affiliate of CDD.
7. Any Other Business

Rosemary Godfrey from RARE asked the committee if there was anyone who would be able to help RARE students with puppet shows activities school. In particular, she wished to recruit an individual to provide a 1 or 2 day workshop to improve the skills of the students and to help them design their own drama activities.

**Action:** Rosemary Godfrey to contact Head of SDFVA

The Chair informed the Committee that the Wellcome Trust are advertising the SciArt Award, a substantial production award of up to £120,000 and could be something to consider for the Festival funding. The deadline is **28 April 2006**, details can be found at the Wellcome Trust website[^4].

The CDD Staff Conference was scheduled for **Monday 24 April**. There would be a reception in the evening for affiliates to meet.

8. Date of Next Meeting

To be confirmed

FTB/LHN

[^4]: [http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/](http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/)