



Recognition Scheme for Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of NYU in London, March 2024

Outcome of the monitoring visit

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit, the review team concludes that NYU in London (NYUL) is making commendable progress since the [March 2023 monitoring report](#).

Changes since the last QAA monitoring visit

2 The total number of students, as reported in the Annual Monitoring Return and the data return forms, have continued to make a full recovery to what they were before the COVID-19 pandemic, with a total of 874 students enrolled in 2023-24 compared to 831 in 2022-23 and 835 in 2019-20. 450 students studied at NYUL in the autumn 2023 semester, 514 students in spring 2024, with an expectation of 31 students for summer 2024. As seen in the data return for undergraduate students of those students registered for fall 2023, 89 students were first-year students with a split of 33 in the Stern FYLO (First-Year London) programme and 56 students on the Liberal Studies First Year programme. A similar number of students were expected to return in spring 2024 to complete their respective first-year study programme. A further nine students were recruited for a full year in courses as the upper division (Level 5 and Level 6). The rest of the cohort is made up of seven students on the MA Historical and Sustainable Architecture.

3 The review team was informed by senior staff that NYUL is currently recruiting to the role of Deputy Director - a post that is to replace the Associate Director of Administration and designed to support the Executive Director. The Annual Monitoring Return informs that there are two full-time and 83 part-time staff teaching on the programmes; and 26 full-time, four part-time and one temporary administrative staff with three vacancies. An additional role of lecturer and programme manager for business and creative industries has also been created.

4 NYUL is planning to change premises from the current Bedford Square location in summer 2024 after having acquired a new building on the Strand in Westminster for which planning permission has been granted to convert the use for higher educational purposes.

Findings from the monitoring visit

5 NYUL has made commendable progress in monitoring, evaluating and enhancing its higher education provision. The review team considered the Annual Monitoring Form which contains actions developed since QAA's March 2023 annual monitoring report and NYUL's Action Plan which were originally developed in response to QAA's Higher Education Review Foreign Providers (HER(FP)) in March 2021. The review team also considered supporting evidence, supplementary evidence sent prior to the monitoring visit, and discussions held with students, senior management and academic staff at the visit. From evidence provided,

the conclusions are that NYUL has comprehensively addressed actions set at QAA's HER(FP) in March 2021.

6 The advisable recommendations as set out in the HER(FP) March 2021 were firstly that 'London partnership contracts are renegotiated and resumed as a matter of urgency' and that 'the formal agreements should set out the rights and obligations of all parties and should be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis'. The second advisable recommendation was that 'assessment feedback for all students is comprehensive, helpful and timely'. The 2023 review team reported on progress with regards to the two advisable recommendations and found that NYUL continues to engage with the recommendations. The previous report (2023) states that NYUL anticipates a full evaluation of its action plan for this annual review (2023-24) which is documented in the minutes of the senior management meeting held on 29 November 2023. The 2024 review team agrees with NYUL's evaluation of its actions plan which concluded that the goal of improving external agreement planning has been met and that student feedback follows US higher education sector norms.

7 External partnership agreements cover a range of services such as a library, internship, and laboratory provision. NYUL has an active agreement with Senate House Library which hosts the NYUL book collection and provides student study space. This agreement was extended until August 2024 and NYUL continues to consider other partnership options due to the forthcoming campus move. NYUL collaborates with the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) as a study experience for NYU Tisch School of the Arts and visiting students. This agreement is currently valid until the end of August 2024 with a plan to renew this agreement. The review team was informed by senior staff that this agreement offers lots of opportunities to students and that quality oversight is coordinated jointly between RADA and NYU Tisch. Similarly, an agreement with the National Film and Television School was renewed in December 2023. Laboratory spaces for Physics and Biology courses are provided by Birkbeck University with NYUL providing technical support for the physics courses and two demonstrators for the biology courses. Recently, NYUL agreed the use of chemistry laboratory space with the University of Hertfordshire. The external provision was considered as enriching by students as this offered a varied experience.

8 With regard to the second advisable recommendation relating to assessment feedback, the review team found that detailed feedback is provided on assessment alongside the grading system. The Policies and Practices Manual for Academic Staff informs that there is a requirement for faculty to return at least one piece of assessment per course by week 7 of the semester in the form of indicative mid-term feedback. The indicative mid-term feedback differs from the usual summative letter grade and is provided in descriptive form. According to senior staff, this action is intended to reduce students' worry about grades and is designed to allow students to decide whether they will continue with the course, withdraw or change their status to pass/fail.

9 The review team was informed that NYUL is expecting to grow student numbers over the next three to five years by 25-30% and 600 students in the next year. This expansion is part of the internationalisation strategy of NYU with the aim to offer the study abroad experience to all its students. According to the Annual Return Form, NYU has participated in the CASSIE (Consortium for Analysis of Student Success through International Education) research partnership since 2018. The research finding demonstrates the comparative advantage in completion and attainment for students who engaged in study abroad opportunities. Further research found that first-generation students experienced a positive impact of studying abroad. NYU data further supported these findings by showing that NYU students who studied abroad were 5% more likely to graduate within four years than those who did not. The review team was informed by senior staff that the campus move was partly motivated by the anticipated growth of student numbers and partly to offer better facilities to

students. The Report of the Executive Director presented to the NYUL Board Meeting in fall 2023, further indicates a strategic growth plan for NUYL.

10 NYUL has introduced a new course feedback system for which training was provided by the Office for Global Programmes. This is intended to ease access to student feedback for the faculty and to monitor faculty performance. NYUL use an end-of-term course evaluations system with a questionnaire that students complete within their class time. In addition to these, new faculty surveys are used which allow students to anonymously provide feedback which is shared with the Office for Global Programmes. Students informed the team that they have access to their academic advisers at their home department and to the Associate Director for Academic Affairs if they wish to raise any issues or make a formal academic appeal.

11 The review team found that NYUL provides a high-quality student experience with engaging courses and varied and innovative assessments. Students informed the team that many of the teaching staff have professional backgrounds and are specialists in their field. Students also found that the comparatively small classroom settings provide group work and peer learning activities and interactions with instructors that can include careers advice. Students report positively on the guidance they receive from their experience in London. NYUL makes use of pre-departure and student experience surveys which are reviewed by the senior management team.

12 NYUL shares the Policies and Procedures Manual with new faculty at the point of appointment and provides the Faculty Resource Guide to all faculty at the start of each semester in addition to induction of new faculty. The faculty resource guide is a web-based resource for faculty for information provided by the Academic Office. The NY Office of the Provost updates faculty on the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) with the guidance to clearly state expectations about its use by students with a requirement for students to indicate when generative AI has been used. The review team was informed by students and staff that clear guidance is provided by instructors, and students state that they are clear about what they are allowed to use.

13 Students are informed of university policies and regulations via the NYU website and via the course syllabi. The information includes guidance for academic integrity, complaints and appeals, and includes the NYU bias reporting opportunity. The review team was informed by students that provisions for extra learning and wellbeing support are available to them. Senior staff informed the review team that a centralised system (Moses Centre) confidentially processes additional learning or housing needs and assessment adjustments for students.

14 NYUL created an Action Plan to address good practice and advisable recommendations that arose from the HER(FP) March 2021. This Action Plan lists the good practice of blended internship provision during the COVID-19 pandemic and the actions taken and success indicators in relation to the two advisable recommendations pertaining to partnership contracts and comprehensive, helpful and timely feedback to students on their assessments. The Action Plan was considered at the Senior Management Team meeting on 29 November 2023. The minutes of the meeting confirm that the Senior Management Team concluded that the advisable recommendations were met. The Senior Management Team was confident that the partnership agreements are in a robust state and that faculty provide more prompt feedback to students and that feedback patterns follow the NYUL campus guidelines - with initial feedback before/by mid-terms. The innovative provision of internships undertaken by blended delivery enabling students to engage with employers with support from internship mentors was considered good practice. NYUL concluded the practice of fully remote internship opportunities at the end of spring 2021 when NYUL resumed in-person internships which continue to be monitored via course evaluations and European Study

Abroad (EUSA) programme evaluations. The review team conclude that the Action Plan was successfully implemented, and that commendable progress was made (see further specifics in paragraphs 5-7).

15 There is no data on undergraduate student retention, progression and achievement for study abroad students at NYUL. Students earn credits towards their four-year degree programme at their home campuses (New York, Shanghai and Abu Dhabi) or their home institution as stated in the Policies and Regulation. Students who wish to study at NYUL apply to the Office of Global Programmes. The eligibility criteria are set out for the NYU First Year Study Away programme; the Upper-Class Study Away Programme is also available to students visiting from another institution. The academic eligibility criterion for the latter is a suggested GPA of 3.0 or higher and no student is admitted who is on academic or disciplinary probation. NYUL have indicated that the study abroad programme is a vital educational opportunity and have found that students who have studies away from home have higher degree completion rates. The CASSIE (Consortium for Analysis of Student Success through International Education) research of 2022 found that students who study abroad were substantially more likely to complete their studies within four to six years and are more likely to have a higher cumulative GPA upon graduation than those students who did not study away. NYU found that, of their student cohort, those who studied abroad were 5% more likely to complete their studies in the normal time of four years than those students who did not. The NYU data research also found a positive impact of study abroad uptake for first generation students as proposed by the Impact of Education Abroad publication. The review team was informed by senior staff that NYU was planning to expand the study abroad scheme to all students in the medium term due to the positive impact this opportunity has toward employability.

16 For the MA in Historical and Sustainable Architecture, the admission process is administered by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS) in New York as stated in the Eligibility Criteria. Students who complete an undergraduate degree at an institution of recognised standing and IELTS scores of 5.5 for each of the four categories (unless exempted) are eligible for this programme. The current cohort of seven students (2023-24) has been reported as being highly engaged and successful.

Progress in working with the external reference points to meet UK expectations for higher education

17 The documentation provided by NYUL does not reference the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code) although the HER(FP) in March 2021 highlighted that policies, procedures and practices do align with the Quality Code. Senior staff confirm that the main external reference point for NYUL continues to be New York University which is accredited in the USA by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. NYUL is required to meet the standards set by NYU and comply to the policies and procedures of the Office of Global Programmes.

18 NYU's sponsoring departments provide direct oversight of the employment and support of new faculty staff, the introduction of new courses and the approval of course syllabi at the beginning of each term. Sponsoring departments approve marking and grading criteria which are set out in the individual syllabi and have an opportunity to review grades to ensure congruity. The review team notes that double-marking is not required as a general practice but is a method used in some grade disputes. Rather, grading standards are discussed at faculty meetings, and reviewed by the Academic Office.

Background to the monitoring visit

19 The monitoring visit serves as a short check on the provider's continuing management of academic standards and quality of provision. It focuses on progress since the previous review. In addition, it provides an opportunity for QAA to advise the provider of any matters that have the potential to be of particular interest in the next monitoring visit or review.

20 The monitoring visit was carried out by Professor Sabine Spangenberg, Reviewer, and Kevin Kendall, QAA Officer, on 27 March 2024.

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