ual: awarding body

UAL Awarding Body Chief Examiner's Annual Report 2016/17

—

Diploma in Art and Design
Foundation Studies

Qualification Titles
Level 3 Diploma in Art and Design – Foundation Studies
Level 4 Diploma in Art and Design – Foundation Studies

UAL Awarding Body Chief Examiner's Annual Report 2016/17

—

Diploma in Art and Design
Foundation Studies

Qualification Titles
Level 3 Diploma in Art and Design – Foundation Studies
Level 4 Diploma in Art and Design – Foundation Studies

Pylin Manchee, City College Norwich

Contents

—

UAL Awarding Body

—

Qualifications that reward creativity.

University of the Arts London Awarding Body believes in transformative education. We design and award creative qualifications that empower and inspire educators to help students reach their potential.

UAL Awarding Body is regulated by Ofqual, CCEA and Qualifications Wales. Qualifications are offered currently in art and design, fashion, creative media, music and performing and production arts. We are also the UK's leading provider of the Diploma in Art & Design – Foundation Studies. Our qualifications have high retention and achievement rates because they are flexible, responsive and relevant to industry needs, and facilitate student progression.

University of the Arts London (UAL) is Europe's largest specialist art and design university, comprising six renowned Colleges:

Camberwell College of Arts
Central Saint Martins
Chelsea College of Arts
London College of Communication
London College of Fashion
Wimbledon College of Arts.

www.arts.ac.uk/awarding

Becky Mars, Carmel

Chief Examiner Summary

—

The report confirms the continuing success of the Diploma in Art & Design – Foundation Studies (FAD) course in providing a strong route into Higher Education pathways for art and design. An increasingly challenging funding climate has had an adverse impact on the number of registrations at both levels this year. Although an increased number of centres are delivering Level 3, there has been a slight decrease in the number of centres delivering the L4 qualification. (This is explored in more detail in section 2: Centre approvals and registrations). UAL Awarding Body will continue to support centres and lobby policy makers to ensure that this qualification remains at the forefront of discussion around UK arts education.

UAL Awarding Body is therefore not complacent and intends to ensure that FAD remains current, relevant and provides students with the tools they need to progress and achieve within the broad range of creative industries.

To that end, and as part of a review of the FAD qualification, the refresh and review process has been taking place through consultations with a number of interested parties, and centres across FE, HE and Sixth Form colleges.

To refresh the specification the UAL Awarding Body is considering the overlap of knowledge and skills across the qualification, and the importance that Stage 1 should follow the UCAS application deadline, which students need to complete by January.

The UAL Awarding Body reacted positively to issues regarding the digital platform Quartz, the organisation and communication of our external moderation visits and report reviews. Feedback from our centres suggests a marked improvement as we continue our commitment to ensuring that the level of communication valued by UAL Awarding Body centres is maintained. The number of administrative and academic staff also continues to grow to accommodate this increased activity, and this has included the appointment of two new Chief Examiners: Matt Moseley for Art & Design and Justine Head for Fashion, Business and Retail.

This report notes feedback received from centres regarding both external moderation visits and UAL Awarding Body's approach to quality assurance.

Section One

Overview of Qualifications

The Diploma in Art & Design – Foundation Studies (FAD) course continues to be the main progression route for young people accessing Higher Education courses in art and design subjects. Education to degree level, or above, continues to be a prerequisite for employment in the majority of the creative industries, so the FAD course plays a vital role in preparing young people for progression into employment. UAL Awarding Body's FAD course is regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) and is reviewed internally every three years as part of UAL Awarding Body's (UALab) qualification review process. UALab has initiated a formal review of FAD and proactively sought feedback from a number of our centres, before embarking on a series of development meetings involving course leaders, and tutors from HE, FE and Sixth Form colleges, as well as consultation with HEIs and former FAD students.

Following continued cuts in funding, the drop in overall registrations for 2015/16 dipped from 7910 in 2014/15 to 7478, a decrease of 432 from the previous year. This trend has continued into 2016/17, with numbers once again falling to 6937 a decrease of 541. This is considered in more detail below.

Section Two
—

Centre Type, Approval and Registration

Centre type and number of registrations

Student registrations	2016–2017		2015–2016		2014–2015	
Centre type	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
FE	3349	48.3	3420	45.7	3426	43.3
HE	3186	45.9	3580	47.9	3907	49.4
SFC	117	1.7	142	1.9	190	2.4
Adult Ed. centre	52	0.7	5	0.1	52	0.7
School	16	0.2	10	0.1	0	0
Private training provider	201	2.9	306	4.1	320	4.0
Overseas centre	16	0.2	15	0.2	15	0.2
Total	**6937**		**7478**		**7910**	

Over the past three years there has been a gradual shift in registrations with the highest number of students now enrolling through FE colleges.

The number of sixth form college registrations has continued to fall over the past three years, but this in some part may be due to mergers that have taken place during that time period. Similarly, registrations from private training providers have also reduced, most significantly in 2016–17.

UAL Awarding Body has one international centre in Seoul, South Korea, and is currently in discussion with other international centres in China and India.

We continue to receive regular enquiries from centres seeking approval to run UAL Awarding Body's FAD course. Approval is given only to those centres that can demonstrate appropriate quality standards, and to this end UAL Awarding Body approved ten additional centres to deliver the Level 3 and Level 4 Diploma in Art & Design – Foundation Studies to commence delivery from 2017.

See Figure 3 in Benchmark Data and Statistical Analysis.

Section Two

—

Centre Type, Approval and Registration

Number of approved centres and registrations

Centres	2016−17	2015−16	2014−15
Number of approved centres – a small number offer both L3 and L4 FAD	93	80	71
Total registrations	**6937**	**7478**	**7910**

Once again there was an increase in the number of centres delivering the qualification in 2016/17. However, the number of registrations has fallen for the second year. The number of centre's offering FAD has risen in 2016/17 by 13, but the number of centres offering Level 4 fell from 26 to 24. This is still two more than the previous year, however. Although the number of centres continues to rise, Level 3 and Level 4 registrations have both fallen this year. The total decrease in student registrations including new centres was 541. It is likely that this decrease is partly due to the reduced uptake of Art A level and the shift in emphasis to STEM subjects in schools. UAL will continue to monitor this trend and any subsequent impact on progression to HE.

See Figure 4 in Benchmark Data and Statistical Analysis.

UAL Awarding Body will continue to monitor the funding landscape and that for adult learners closely, along with any impact it has on registrations.

National Benchmark Data for Retention, Achievement and Success 2016−2017 Level 3 and Level 4 Foundation Diploma in Art and Design

Qualification	Registrations	Retention	Achievement	Success
Levels 3 & 4 FAD	6937	98.8%	91.6%	90.5%

Section Three

—

Qualification Support

The following events were held
in support of the FAD qualification.

Delivery groups
On 29 June 2017, 25 delegates from 11 FE
and HE centres preparing to deliver the UAL
Awarding Body FAD course met at UAL High
Holborn, London. The Chief Examiner and one
of the UAL Awarding Body senior moderators
led the day, the aim of which was to: inform
the planning process; discuss delivery models;
identify possible alternative designs and best
practice; and to improve the effectiveness and
efficiency of assessment.

Georgia Steele, who is responsible for
Foundation plus for international students
and Foundation 3-Dimensional Design and
Architecture at Central Saint Martins also
gave a presentation outlining the delivery
model used at CSM. This was particularly
well received by delegates and Georgia
was able to provide practical support and
guidance through an additional Q&A session
followed by further contributions during group
activities.

The delivery team shared common problems
found during advisory visits to new centres
and UAL Awarding Body provided access to
digital copies of all the resource materials.
Feedback was extremely positive and
delegates felt that there was a good mix of
information and practical application during
the course of the day. Some of the comments
included:
> Professionally presented throughout. Clear
  and concise delivery. Staff gave excellent
  advice and presented examples to underpin.

> Confirmed initial planning ideas and gave
  some useful examples – networking was
  good.
> Really inspiring – I want to go back to work
  and get planning.
> Informative, well-paced and thorough event.
  Comprehensive day with lots of resources.
  Thank you for a really interesting day!

Advisory visits
Senior external moderators and chief
examiners provided advisory visits for 17
centres delivering FAD for the first time, as
well as for three centres that needed additional
support. Visits were mainly scheduled during
the first term, with four centres requesting a
visit in early January.

It was noted that new centres sometimes
overlooked:
> Signposting units within the Scheme of
  Work.
> Identifying unit learning outcomes and
  assessment criteria within each assignment
  brief.
> Standardising Schemes of Work and
  assignment briefs across Pathways.
> Embedding Maths and English within the
  assignment briefs.
> Embedding contextual referencing within
  stage 1 and 2 of the FAD delivery.

Section Three

—

Qualification support

Assessment

> Assessment feedback is often holistic and, although it sometimes signposts each unit, in many instances it does not map the individual assessment criteria, making the feedback too general.
> The language used in the feedback is not always consistent with the outcome and sometimes acts only to list the evidence, or lack thereof.

Feedback from centres was extremely positive, with many saying that the visits improved their understanding of the qualification specification, its delivery and assessment. This was also confirmed in the external moderation reports for new centres as follows: The defining feedback from new centres, and those delivering for their second year, is the overwhelming freedom and scope for the development of approaches to teaching and delivery that the UAL Awarding Body specification offers staff.

As course tutors' confidence has grown through the delivery of the early units, a rising tide of reward from UAL Awarding Body's focus on visual language and holistic creative practice has resulted in staff feeling their professional skills as creatives, as well as teachers, is valued and they are seeing a return to the dovetailing of practice and learning being at the core of the programme.

Standardisation events

Two FAD standardisation events took place in 2017. The first was hosted by Blackburn College on 17 March. It was part of UAL Awarding Body's consideration of digital practice, and the increasing relevance to all aspects of the creative industries.
Here we were able to look at the way the Centre has developed digital portfolios and blogs as supporting evidence for unit 7

across pathways without compromising the integrity of recording, developing, reflection, critical debate and their contribution to the final outcomes. This event was attended by 20 tutors and course leaders either from new UALab centres and/or centres with a particular interest in developing their digital practice.

Jo Conlon, course leader at Blackburn College explained how the College bridges the gap between Level 3 FE and Level 4 HE, considering triangulation of social media platforms, blogs and studio.

Two current FAD students made presentations to the group about their personal working practices, and how digital portfolios and blogs were being used to support learning and progression.

A third, former FAD student, now studying Fine Art at degree level, gave us food for thought as he considered how blogs had been integrated into his practice, and how this had positively impacted on his transition from FE to HE.

The second event was hosted by Leeds College of Art on 17 May and attracted over 80 attendees, including course leaders and tutors from both existing and new centres.

Suzanne Archer, curriculum manager at Leeds College, provided an overview of the Leeds delivery model before her team led us on a guided tour around the 300 plus strong exhibition. A particular highlight was when two students from the College provided an entertaining insight into the experience of being a student on the UAL Awarding Body FAD course.

Group activities at both events involved splitting into smaller teams to view and grade the FAD exhibitions.

Section Three

—

Qualification support

Digital presentations from Blackburn College gave rise to highly constructive discussion and it was very much in the forefront of thoughts that more time was necessary to be able to fully explore, assess and externally moderate digital portfolios/blogs alongside sketchbook work. There was additional debate at Blackburn around assessment decisions, as paired teams came together to discuss and agree their findings.

The Leeds standardisation focused more on the whole exhibition of work, and there was generally a strong consensus on grading within the groups, allowing for a review of student work and alignment of standards.

Both events provided an opportunity for sharing good practice. All attendees welcomed a robust dialogue within their teams about national standards. UAL Awarding Body is grateful to Jo Conlon and Suzanne Archer for agreeing to host the events and for providing us with a reminder that we must continue to find our own answers.

Conference 2017
UAL Awarding Body Conference at Mary Ward House was held on 10 February. The event was our biggest to date – with over 350 people in attendance. Instead of running separate conferences, this year's event brought all subjects together under one roof. Delegates from Art & Design, Music, Performing Arts and Fashion came together in the morning, before separating for subject-specific breakout sessions in the afternoon. The Foundation (FAD) conference had a separate agenda, but delegates joined those from the other subjects during the breaks and post-conference networking session.

The annual FAD celebration event was well attended by 76 representatives from colleges across England and Scotland. Next year this event will be run as part of the UALab "super conference" with FAD being one of the specialist break-out groups, where there may be the option to discuss issues pertinent to the new specification.

As we progressed through the day, it was apparent that a common thread was emerging. All attendees were there because they are passionate about our qualification and joined together to ensure that it remains current, relevant and provides students with the tools they need to progress and achieve within our impressively broad range of creative industries. To that end, and as part of a review of our FAD qualification, we introduced elements that could be the focus for further consultation and development.

Feedback from delegates acknowledged the usefulness of this event. Of note was this year's focus on exploring methods of delivery that could have a direct impact on how centres tackle certain elements of the specification in this period of reduced funding in the sector. As always, this event offered extensive opportunity for networking with colleagues from other institutions.

The event was introduced by Ross Anderson, Director of UAL Awarding Body, and followed a similar format to that of previous years with contributions focusing on different aspects of FAD delivery.

After a welcome and overview of the policy and procedures was given by Sue Cook, Chief Examiner FAD UAL Awarding Body, Phil Beach, Executive Director Vocational Qualifications, gave us an insight into how the new qualifications framework will be structured.

Section Three

—

Qualification support

Neil Manning, from Edinburgh College, presented a rationale for the College's approach to working with digital portfolios, Natasha Parker-Edwards (former FAD student at Barton Peverill College) described her remarkable transition from the FAD course to Higher Education, Georgia Steele from Central Saint Martins explored writing project proposals fit for Level 4 submission as well as continuing the theme of digital portfolios and looking at their growing emphasis across all pathways. All the speakers focused on the importance of student submissions being an actively engaged with, functional tool that demonstrated a preparedness for Level 4 study and employment.

This year's keynote speaker was the Fine Art Sculptor John Humphreys whose surreal sculptures hint at a fourth dimension and push our perceptions of reality to their limit. It was an insightful and challenging end to a rewarding event where all shared practice and interests.

Origins exhibition
This year's Origins exhibition at the Truman Brewery on London's Brick Lane was a great success.

The showcase included 116 pieces from 48 centres across the country. The work, by students completing UAL Awarding Body qualifications in Art & Design and Creative Media, was chosen by curator Elliott Burns from a total of 450 submissions.

Seven students' works were selected by our chief examiners for outstanding achievement, with each student receiving a prize. The following Foundation students were awarded prizes.

Foundation Studies – Rob O'Leary, CCW Progression Centre (UAL)
Rob's work was selected as prize-winner for a multiple of reasons. At first glance his intriguing group of sculptures appeared playful, on closer inspection, highly skilful and beautifully crafted elements were apparent, before a whole other layer revealed itself through the concept of fragile masculinity. This level of skilful manipulation challenging his chosen material to take on the most delicate forms alongside the maturity of the concept would hold its own in any degree show.
Sue Cook, Chief Examiner
Special commendation

FAD – Amelia Al-Attar, Abingdon and Witney College
Abingdon and Witney student Amelia Al-Attar was awarded a special commendation prize for her work, a set of two traditional family photo albums, at first sight identical but one where her own image had been digitally erased from every print. In addition to being a very technically sophisticated piece the judges were impressed with the alternative narratives that the work provoked in the viewer, posing questions about identity and relationships.
Sarah Atkinson, Head of Academic Standards

Huge congratulations to all of the artists exhibited, we received excellent praise for the quality of the work shown and we wish you all the best in your creative future.

Section Four

Equal Opportunities

The following data and diagrams are given to illustrate the key statistical information including age, gender and BAME related data for the UAL Awarding Body Level 3 and Level 4 Diploma in Art & Design – Foundation Studies. The information is based upon data collected from the qualifications and learning management system Quartz.

Student registrations by age

Student registrations – age band	2016–2017		2015–2016		2014–2015	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Over 19	3309	47.7	3479	46.5	3673	46.4
Under 19	3628	52.3	3999	53.5	4237	53.6
Total	**6937**		**7478**		**7910**	

In 2016/17, 52% of learners registered for FAD were under 19 years, while the remaining 48% were over 19 years. The number of learners in the over 19 age band has risen slightly over the past three years, by 1.3% from 46.4% in 2014/15.

Given the change in funding for adult learners over the past 3 years, this is may suggest that funding has not had an adverse impact on registrations for students over 19 years.

See Figures 5 and 5a in Benchmark Data and Statistical Analysis.

Section Four

—

Equal Opportunities

Student registrations by gender

Student registrations – gender	2016–2017		2015–2016		2014–2015	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Female	5201	75	5493	73.5	5978	75.6
Male	1708	24.6	1806	24.2	1917	24.2
Not specified	28	0.4	179	2.4	15	0.2
Total		**6937**		**7478**		**7910**

In 2016/17, 75% of students registered were female, approximately 25% male and less than 1% did not specify gender. The imbalance between male and female students remains fairly constant, with 24.2% rising to 24.6% male students over the last three years. The number of students choosing not to disclose their gender has returned to less than 1% again this year.

Research to identify causes and address disparity between the percentage of female and male students registering for FAD would be welcome, and UAL Awarding Body should continue to monitor this trend with centres.

See Figure 6 in Benchmark Data and Statistical Analysis.

Student registrations: Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) registrations

Student registrations – ethnicity	2016–2017		2015–2016		2014–2015	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
White	3970	57.2	4339	58	4825	61
BAME	1231	17.7	1492	20	1919	24.3
Not specified	1736	25	1647	22	1166	14.7
Total	**6937**		**7478**		**7910**	

In 2016/17 student registrations were made up of approximately 57% white, 18% BAME and 25% not specified.

Over the past three years we have seen the percentage of black, Asian and ethnic minority students continue to fall with 6.6% fewer

registering in 2016/17 than in 2014/15. The number of students who choose not to disclose their ethnicity has risen by 10.3% which could impact on the accuracy of this data.

See Figure 7 in Benchmark Data and Statistical Analysis.

Section Five

—

External Moderation

With UAL Awarding Body continuing to grow rapidly, two new chief examiners took up post in 2017. Matt Moseley for Level 1 and 2 Art & Design and Justine Head for Fashion Business Retail (FBR). New moderators were invited to attend an external moderator training event in November, and senior moderators accompanied new moderators during their first visit to ensure quality.

The ten strong senior moderation team for 2016/17 consisted of: Penny Horsefield, Elspeth Mackie and Suzanne Archer (North region); Patrick Caines and Nel Davies (Central region); Chris Roberts, Penny Glidewell, Matias Shortcook and Ian Parker (South East region) and Tansy Wilson (West region).

Each senior moderator takes responsibility for up to nine external moderators and provides them with a point of contact and support during and beyond the Level 1, 2, 3 and FAD moderation period. Overall during the 2016 /17 moderation cycle the awarding body allocated 71 existing Art and Design external moderators, and eight new ones to Levels 1–3 and FAD centre visits, with 95 FAD external moderation reports being completed.

External moderation of FAD started in April with the last centre moderation completed in July. Every centre was required to make work available at the point of external moderation.

The majority of external moderation teams presented good, timely feedback and thorough reports. These continued to note good practice and highlighted areas for improvement where appropriate. Centres were required to submit proposed and confirmed grades online through Quartz, external moderators were then required to verify these grades also using Quartz and a revised format for the EM report was submitted within ten days of a centre visit via SurveyMonkey.

External moderators reported that the majority of centres were moderation ready. The administration and management of the visit by the centres, including access to mark sheets for the selection of the sample was good, and the sample was identified within the exhibition for easy access. Where centres had not inputted the necessary proposed grades and/or supporting paperwork was unavailable, external moderators noted that time for full and purposeful moderation had to be extended beyond the normal visit allocation time. This needs to be addressed by all centres in time for the next moderation cycle.

Feedback on the moderation visits was very positive with centres noting the helpful comments and professionalism of the external moderation teams. Centre responses confirmed that the external moderators checked for quality, consistency and accuracy internally, and where appropriate, were able to suggest recommendations for internal change. External moderators followed the correct procedure, with team members reporting that they thought visits had an "extremely positive impact" and "work very well".

Liberty Bishop, Colchester Institute

Alexandra Markova, CCW

Helen Graham Van Herp, New College Stamford

Section Six

—

Commentary on Assessment Evidence

Context

Centres that have been working with the qualification have become more adept at supporting this element of the Final Project (FP) through using different strategies to capture the resources students intend to work with such as written proposals, presentations (Pecha Kucha), programmed trips, and programming research weeks prior to finalising the main focus of the project. This mixed approach has enabled candidates to gain understanding and commitment to their chosen area of investigation prior to formally writing and formatively planning. This heightened confidence has supported the concise writing of proposal statements, appropriately supported with clearly identified primary and secondary research, i.e., influential practitioners and specific places to collect information from first hand.

Areas for development have been identified where passages within the project proposal fail to isolate a subject that has the potential to open doors, and enable a broad and exploratory enquiry. This can lead to missed opportunities that might surprise and redirect initial ideas. Candidates sometimes fail to support their proposed subject with appropriate research material.

Harvard referencing is being seen at most centres now. The best practices are where centres are encouraging candidates to look at subjects in their broadest sense, pulling from different fields of expertise as appropriate, e.g., science, literature, philosophy, history as well as art and design.

Referencing at its weakest is web based only, or there are so many references input that it is questionable if all these books, sites, papers, periodicals have actually had influence on the work, or whether it is just a collection of references to "look good". Validity is very important and candidates need to be made aware of the value and importance of meaningful research. Ten references used influentially are worth more than 100 that have been glanced at.

The inclusion of a timetable/planner as part of this written submission is also seen as an invaluable starting block from which to gain an overview of the time available. In some cases, candidates use this initial timetable to add to and modify as the period progresses, but in many instances candidates replace, or supplement this, with a personal pocket book or similar that contains active "to-do" lists, thoughts and ideas as they spring into their consciousness along with "notes to self".

The overriding strength in developing this element of Unit 7 is when candidates actively reflect on and engage with their objectives, enabling change and modifications to their initial starting point in a constructive and active manner. This is borne out through the body of work and, in some cases, the proposal has been revisited at the end and additional written or typed statements included and referenced.

Section Six

—

Commentary on Assessment Evidence

The following quotes have been taken from the 2016/17 external moderation reports:

"Project proposals from a range of pathways in the sample were highly individual, well-written and provided good starting points for development. The best proposals were soundly based on perceptive reflections about individual practise in Stages 1 and 2 of the course. Weaker proposals were vague and focussed on trying out new methods and materials but without context or rationale."

"Proposals were varied, highly individual and often involved a personal area of interest. Written proposals clearly communicated the student's strong motivation. The higher achieving students established a challenging line of inquiry at an early stage, with the potential to achieve high grades at individual assessment level."

"Students on all pathways were given a free choice of subject in developing a proposal. Student proposals were generally of a high standard and many were strengthened by a clear link to Stage 2 work, meaning ideas had a sound context and rationale and clearly extended learning. In addition, the higher achieving students showed genuine self-awareness and early critical engagement with the practices and practitioners in their chosen pathway."

Research

In the best examples, there is an active engagement throughout the project with initial material collected, reviewed, revisited and reviewed again through its development and application to processes and media towards a meaningful outcome.

"The better students' research extended beyond the expected with one distinction student researching music and sound, politics, environment and technology in developing ideas on "modern dystopia". Weaker students' research included relevant visual sources but was not extensive and served to endorse a selected direction rather than expand or challenge an idea or promote further inquiry."

"There was a very good range of research evidence. Sources showed Independence and individuality, reflecting the diversity of projects and the motivation and curiosity of the students. Research included a wealth of primary and secondary material introduced appropriately throughout projects. Higher achieving students showed a high level of critical engagement across several subject domains, showing an ability to interrogate material intelligently without losing sight of their proposal intentions. For example, a student looked across science, engineering, education and creative practice in pursuing a line of reasoning."

"Weaker students used research more simplistically - only superficially analysing the aesthetic qualities of a piece of work without understanding the creative practice behind the work. For these students research formed a sort of 'mood music' around their ideas and was interpreted more literally in experimentation."

"Students prepare to write their proposals through a separate pre Unit 7 assignment, supported by guidance on Final Major Projects, resulting in a 'research and reflection journal'. These individual books provide a rich source of evidence for context, and help to ensure proposals are soundly based and students are well motivated."

Section Six

—

Commentary on Assessment Evidence

Problem solving

Where centres are encouraging learners to integrate problem solving throughout their projects, there has been a significant emphasis on how the project proposal can identify initial problems, before further practical and theoretical research is used to refine experimental practice, combining theory with practice and therefore resulting in a more considered and successful outcome.

"The best students were able to articulate their problems well. They were sufficiently self-aware about the conceptual and practical aspects of their work and practice to identify where the work was taking them and reflect on it, allowing them to make well considered decisions."

"Several students solved problems intuitively and visually by taking an image through a range of similar iterations in both 2D and 3D to produce some striking and thought provoking images. However, this process sometimes lacked purpose and reflection, with weaker students work looking repetitive and lacking direction and development."

"Students at all levels showed an individual sensitivity to materials, often manipulating these thoughtfully to solve conceptual problems."

Planning and production

In the best examples, external moderators see evidence of learners using timetables and planning sheets as live documents. In this way learners take responsibility for their projects and allow them to be fluid and organic, recording any amendments or change in direction through reflection and critical review.

"Most students had clear schedules, which they used as working documents to identify changes of direction along with unintended yet interesting outcomes. Students' journals, used routinely and highly valued, provided evidence of ongoing planning. Students managed their time well, particularly those engaged with materials such as clay which involved careful planning."

"All students provided clear evidence of planning and production. Projects were well controlled. Plans were well considered and students managed their time effectively to ensure they accessed resources in a timely way, and made use of independent work time out of college. Reflective journals showed the controlled approach to projects and documented the progress made."

"All students worked effectively and productively from proposal to presentation. They were well supported at all levels by sensitive teaching interventions, which guide the creative process. An early Pecha Kucha presentation supports research and idea generation, and the subsequent three critiques support structure; each with a different purpose, provides a range of feedback, opportunities for reflection, and a platform for the further refinement of ideas."

Section Six

—

Commentary on Assessment Evidence

Practical skills

Reports show evidence that this is consistently one of the areas of excellence as centres provide a diverse experience, and strive to equip their learners with broad ranging skills.

"High level practical skills were a very strong feature of the work in the sample. Final images were strong. Students are able to work at large scale and work across pathways. Students are resourceful in teaching themselves digital skills. Most students used drawing as a core skill to either record, or design, or draft.2

"Students showed a good understanding of their chosen pathway and the professional skills required, e.g. in graphics some students designed, customised and innovatively used their own action plans."

"The best work showed students able to master skills from different disciplines to produce a final outcome. A sculpture student used print and video in an installation, a painting student used photography and digital applications to develop a painting and a graphics student mastered photoshoot direction, movie making and produced a book."

Presentation

It should be noted that far more learners are considering different approaches to presentation in response to criteria 7.1, and this year it was evident across grade bands. It is also important to note that presentation, and the way ideas and processes are communicated, is important across the whole of the submission and should not be restricted to the final exhibition. External moderators are beginning to see an increased number of centres encouraging the presentation of digital and printed publications, appropriate to the individual's creative context.

"Work was highly individual and well presented with proposals, plans, evaluations, process and finished work available. Work was well organised and final pieces were selected and displayed with confidence. Students were not afraid to work on a large scale and showed competence in producing large pieces that had real impact."

"Work was very well presented in an exhibition gallery, open to the public. Pieces were professionally displayed with students having given much thought to the final choice of space and form. Presentation was highly individual and reflected the range of subject matter, media and materials."

"Students exhibited in the college in an exhibition open to the public and had also to plan for exhibiting in a venue in the town in a different space, which provided a good opportunity to demonstrate their presentation skills. Students confidently selected pieces for display and provided interesting artists statements to accompany work as well as business cards in some cases."

Section Six

—

Commentary on Assessment Evidence

Evaluation and reflection
Best practices demonstrate an active, consistent critical engagement throughout the creative process in real-time. Worst practice remains diaristic and descriptive, with minimal critical engagement. Final evaluations remain an issue for many centres, with statements being essay-like in their sentiment, descriptive and often too long. Where centres have achieved a meaningful level of engagement, the evaluative and reflective process has been central to the programme from its outset. Candidates are experienced at reflecting and evaluating critically and support statements with examples where appropriate. Word limits and supportive questions have further focussed individuals in responding to this process in a meaningful manner.

"Learners presented final evaluations. The better evaluations were perceptive and showed recognition of creative practice and achievements. Weaker evaluations focused on process and materials rather than the impact of their work in relation to their original intent."

"Students in graphics made effective use of blogs to organise their ideas and question and reflect on work. Students in painting and sculpture used reflective logs to challenge and work through their ideas. The best students were self-aware and showed a high level of engagement throughout the process."

"Weaker reflective skills in middle and lower level students focussed on descriptions of processes, and did not sufficiently impact on critical creative decision making. Both Merit students in the sample might have achieved a higher grade with more incisive and objective reflective skills, which would have pointed them in a different direction. For example, a student working on memories from old photographs, using print and ceramics,
could have focussed more on ceramics and less on print, where feedback showed ceramic outcomes clearly carried the idea better. A student working on 'Pick Me Up' cards was not able to identify the lack of substance behind the attractive outcome and remedy this in time."

Assessment methodologies
In this climate of reduced staffing, centres have been challenged in developing a rigorously tested and measured approach to assessment, both formative and summative. External moderators have seen some excellent practices being embraced to maintain the quality and parity of measurement and feedback to ensure students are supported in their continued development creatively and academically. Of note have been centres that have set up internal standardisation events for Unit 7, across sites or pathways, exploring the language of assessment criteria and their application/interpretation against the different pathways of study. This sharing of understanding of practices and interpretation of language has supported the cross-marking/blind-marking process and summative assessment.

Example structure from:

Large centre 200+
> All staff involved in summative assessment of Unit 7 across all pathways.
> All students assessed twice, once by a pathway tutor and once by another non-pathway tutor from the team against all assessment criteria and matrix.
> Where grades are not agreed a third staff member internally verifies and grades the student against all assessment criteria and matrix. This defining grade forms the

Section Six

—

Commentary on Assessment Evidence

rationale for grade to be moved up or down. IV commentary where there was an adjustment was made solely against the criteria where agreement could not be reached in the first round of assessment.

> Assessment commentary was perceptive and reflective of the language embedded in the assessment matrix, reinforcing the level of achievement and endorsing the grade decision.

> Tracking of this process is recorded on comprehensive spreadsheet that collates all necessary statistics for external moderation visit.

> All students who have been deemed referral were set a series of tasks reflective of the failings in the profile of assessment evidence. Tasks set out in point form with clearly defined requirements to be completed within a set time period.

Medium-sized centre of less than 120

> Benchmarking process looked at four students' work across the three grade bands.

> Assessment was carried out on the UAL grade record sheet against the exemplification matrix.

> All students were primary assessed (blind) by a member of staff outside their pathway.

> All students were second assessed (blind) by pathway tutor.

> Grades collated and where discrepancies are evidenced on the tracking sheet all three staff revisit and moderate to an agreed grade at the moderation meeting.

> 16% of cohort was internally verified.

> Tracking of this process is recorded on detailed spreadsheet that collates all necessary statistics for external moderation visit.

Small centre less of than 50

> All teaching staff take part in the final assessment.

> FMP assessment is launched with a benchmark process that looks at predicted pass, merit and distinction submissions.

> All students are then marked independently by one assessor.

> A second round of independent assessment takes place of all students.

> Grades are collated and where there is not grade agreement a discussion ensues and the issues arising from the two rounds of assessment are discussed and a grade is agreed.

> Assessment was carried out on the UAL grade record sheet against the exemplification matrix.

> Standardisation of agreed grades was carried out across the different sites delivering the specification due to the limited numbers on course. All grades were agreed.

Conclusion

—

Main observations from the 2016/17 quality cycle include:

Students used blogs, online portfolios and digital technologies innovatively, individually and appropriately to support both the creative process and ambitious realisations across all pathways.

Research should be used effectively throughout the project to challenge, check, refine and resolve, not just as a stimulus for ideas. Higher achieving students had often read extensively to develop an understanding of the meanings behind ideas, and showed a high level of autonomy and ownership.

There were many well-considered and informative artists' statements accompanying individual exhibitions.

The best work showed intellectual curiosity and an ability to handle complexity. Higher-level students showed they were able to finely balance the investigation into theory and materials in pursuing a line of inquiry. Students mastered several skills and fluently used traditional craft skills, alongside more contemporary technical and digital skills, to produce test pieces and maquettes.

Actions and Recommendations

—

Actions and recommendations implemented
from previous Chief Examiner Report

Actions and recommendations implemented from previous Chief Examiner Report

—

Action:	Improve the quality of proposals. Students should spend more time on developing proposals to develop a better understanding of their project aims. This is particularly important in providing a pertinent research base from which to generate the weight of evidence for achievement at higher levels for criteria 3.1 and 3.2 and 6.1 and 6.2.
Response:	Centres are becoming more adept at supporting this element of the FP through using different strategies to capture the resources students intend to work with, i.e. written proposal, presentations (Pecha Kutcha), programmed trips, and programming research weeks prior to finalising the main focus of the project. This mixed approach has enabled candidates to gain understanding and commitment to their chosen area of investigation prior to formally writing and formatively planning. This heightened confidence has supported the concise writing of proposal statements that are appropriately supported with clearly identified primary and secondary research, i.e. influential practitioners and specific places to collect information from first hand. —
Action:	Develop students' abilities in evaluation and reflection. Centres sometimes rely on a formulaic approach to a final evaluation piece. Whereas this is effective in ensuring students produce a certain level of evidence it can discourage students from adopting individual reflection and evaluation habits and behaviours, built into their day-to-day practice.
Response:	Where centres have achieved a meaningful level of engagement, the evaluative and reflective process has been central to the programme from its outset. Candidates are experienced at reflecting and evaluating critically and support statements with examples where appropriate. Word limits and supportive questions have further focussed individuals in responding to this process in a meaningful manner. —

Actions and Recommendations

—

Action:	Ensuring lower-ability students provide evidence of theoretical problem solving.
Response:	Where centres are encouraging learners to integrate problem solving from the outset of the qualification and throughout their projects, there has been a significant emphasis on how the project proposal can identify initial problems, before further practical and theoretical research is used to refine experimental practice, combining theory with practice and therefore resulting in a more considered and successful outcome. —

Action:	Offering additional support for new centres (particularly those transferring from other awarding bodies with different philosophies) to ensure that centres are "moderation ready" at the end of the year.
Response:	Centre support has included: > Qualification delivery for new centres prior to commencing delivery > Advisory visit in the first term > Two standardisation events (Blackburn and Leeds) > Access to Visual Standards Platform > Examples of good practice on website. —

Action:	Centres need to identify potential referral students as early as possible and ensure they are able to retrieve. Too many students are at risk of failing because they were not able to generate evidence for assessment after the hand in date.
Response:	**Response:** More and more centres are introducing formative assessment points, group critiques, self-assessment and 1:1 tutorials providing SMART targets during the final project period to ensure that students are on track, have responded positively to all assessment criteria and, if necessary, have the necessary time available to retrieve a pass grade. —

Action:	Centres need to use the "special consideration" category more appropriately and more effectively.
Response:	Additional guidance has been prepared for centres. —

Actions and Recommendations
—

Actions and recommendations for UALab
—

Action: To improve systems for registration and reporting for centres and moderators.

Response: The Awarding Body reacted positively to issues regarding the digital platform Quartz, the organisation and communication of our external moderation visits and report reviews. Feedback from our centres suggests a marked improvement as we continue our commitment to ensuring that the level of communication valued by UAL Awarding Body centres is maintained. The number of administrative and academic staff also continues to grow to accommodate this increased activity, and this has included the appointment of two new chief examiners: Matt Moseley for Art & Design and Justine Head for Fashion, Business and Retail.
—

Action: To improve the efficiency of returning reports, certification and overall communication with and for centres.

Response: Delays to a small proportion of certificates occurred in 2016 due to a technical results processing issue. Once identified, this lead to a delay in issuing some certificates to ensure accuracy. The problem has been identified, rectified and did not reoccur in 2017. UAL Awarding Body continues to invest in more staff, systems and capacity to ensure good service levels in the years ahead.
—

Action: To continue to offer support and training for delivery teams in developing quality practices and continuing to engage with HE to ensure FAD students are practically and theoretically prepared for effective study and employment.

Response: Support is available to centres within delivery meetings for new centres and covered in the FAD conference and by both standardisation events. The Awarding Body has begun the process of refreshing FAD to update the qualification and better reflect current practice.
—

Actions and Recommendations

—

Action:	To develop support material for colleges relating to embedding English in preparation for degree level study to include critical practice, proposal writing, reflective practice, etc.
Response:	This is ongoing and part of the guidance and support material being developed as part of FAD Refresh. —

Action:	To ensure allocations are accurate and feasible in the time allocated.
Response:	Feedback from our centres suggests a marked improvement. —

Action:	To ensure centres and external moderators understand the expectations of each other, i.e. minimum quality standard and preparation for the external moderator's visit.
Response:	External moderator training, delivery meeting, conference and standardisation events addressed these issues and feedback from centres and external moderators suggest improvement. —

Actions and Recommendations
—

Actions and recommendations identified for implementation 2017/18

> Consider how students are being supported through the year in developing their independent study skills and management of time in a proactive and meaningful way in support of planning and production, reflection and problem solving.

> Ensure all summative assessment of formative units records qualitative feedback to students that supports development of their understanding of the creative process and how to improve.

> Revisit the delivery of and support material for proposal writing to ensure students understand the importance of achievable goals, and accessible subjects that offer scope and a creative problem to solve. Is the student capable of handling the ambition of the project and have they the visual understanding to handle complex and or conceptual positions?

> Further develop students' reflection and evaluation skills, ensuring students understand the difference between them and how to use them effectively in developing high-level work. Final evaluations should include judgements about the impact and effectiveness of the work in addressing the proposal intent, as well as evaluating the creative process.

> Provide students with clearer guidance and support on using blogs, online portfolios and digital technologies in a purposeful and relevant way.

> Centres could further develop their analysis of Unit 7 grade profiles at individual assessment criteria level, working with the exemplification grade criteria, to achieve a better understanding of why students narrowly miss achieving a higher grade and instigate measures to support improved performance.

Actions and recommendations for UALab

> Provide additional guidance for centres on applying "special consideration".

Benchmark Data and Statistical Analysis

—

This information is based on data collected from the qualifications and learning management system Quartz. Note that the fail figures include both withdrawals and fails and therefore impact on the percentage achievement rate shown.

Levels 3 and 4

Diploma in Art & Design – Foundation Studies
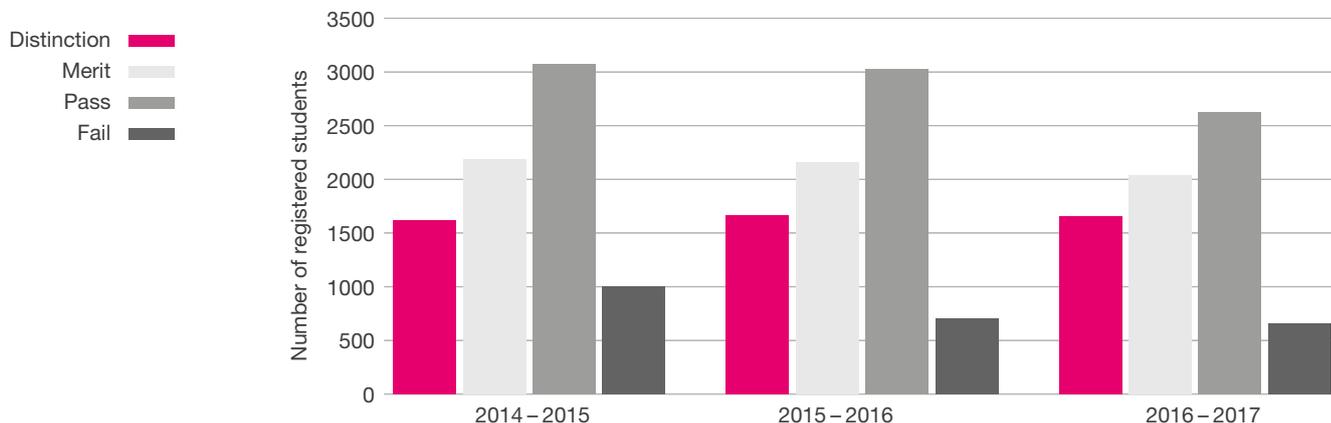
Figure 1. Achievment by Grade

Figure 2. Achievment Graph: by Grade

	2016–2017		2015–2016		2014–2015	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Distinction	1660	23.8	1662	22.0	1616	20.5
Merit	2042	29.2	2158	28.6	2190	27.8
Pass	2624	37.6	3024	40.1	3073	39.0
Fail	656	9.4	704	9.3	1000	12.7
Total	**6982**		**7548**		**7879**	

The table shows a continuing positive shift with distinction grades rising by 3.2% over the last three years.

Merit grades have also gradually risen – by approximately 1.4% over the last three years, both of which have resulted in a lower percentage of pass grades. But the most significant difference is in those learners who did not achieve. This has decreased by over 3% in the last three years.

It is encouraging to see that many external moderator reports this year highlighted how centres were mapping individual progress throughout the final project, with more and more learners evidencing 1:1 tutorials, peer and self-assessment, as well as considering the language of the grade exemplification matrix to assist their understanding of the assessment criteria.

Benchmark Data and Statistical Analysis

—

Levels 3 and 4

Diploma in Art & Design – Foundation Studies

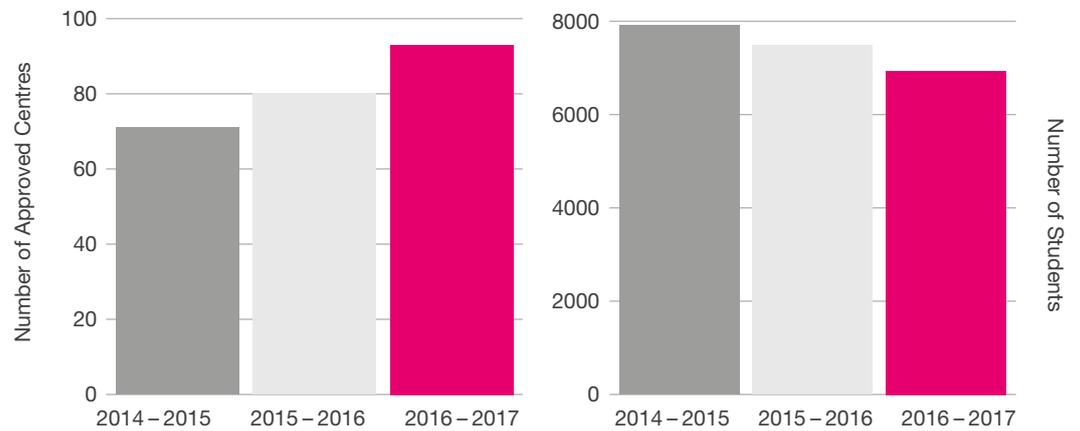Figure 3. Student registrations: Centre type: Age Band
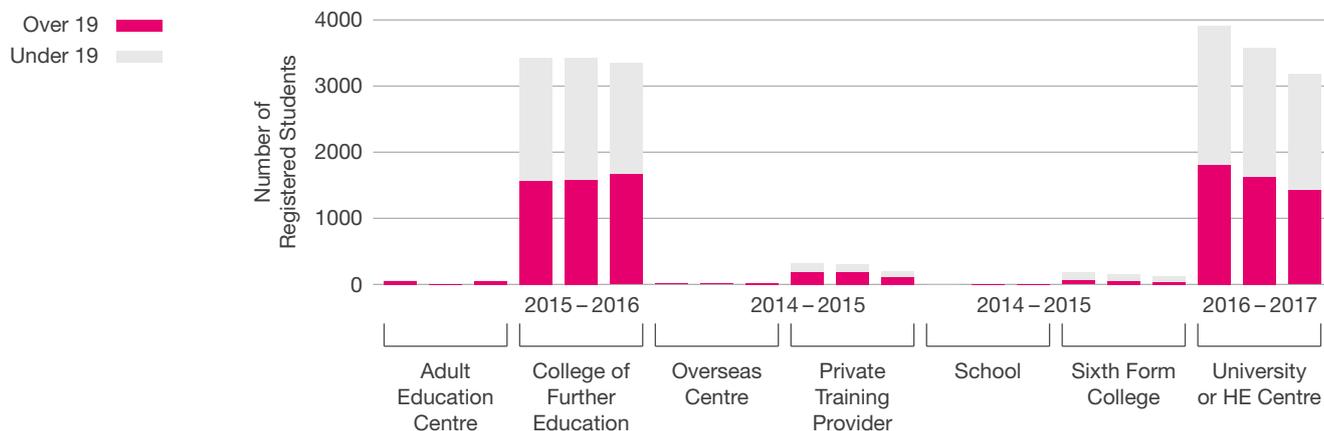
Centre Type	Age Band	2016–2017		2015–2016		2014–2015	
		Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Adult Education Centre	Over 19	52	0.7	5	0.1	50	0.6
	Under 19	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.0
	Total	52		5		52	
College of Further Education	Over 19	1665	24.0	1580	21.1	1562	19.7
	Under 19	1682	24.3	1840	24.6	1864	23.6
	Total	3347		3420		3426	
Overseas Centre	Over 19	16	0.2	13	0.2	12	0.2
	Under 19	0	0.0	2	0.0	3	0.0
	Total	16		15		15	
Private Training Provider	Over 19	112	1.6	191	2.6	183	2.3
	Under 19	89	1.3	115	1.5	137	1.7
	Total	201		306		320	
School	Over 19	4	0.1	10	0.1	0	0.0
	Under 19	12	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Total	16		10		0	
Sixth Form College	Over 19	35	0.5	51	0.7	57	0.7
	Under 19	82	1.2	91	1.2	133	1.7
	Total	117		142		190	
University or HE Centre	Over 19	1423	20.5	1629	21.8	1809	22.9
	Under 19	1763	25.4	1951	26.1	2098	26.5
	Total	3186		3580		3907	
	Total	6935		7478		7910	

Levels 3 and 4

Diploma in Art & Design – Foundation Studies

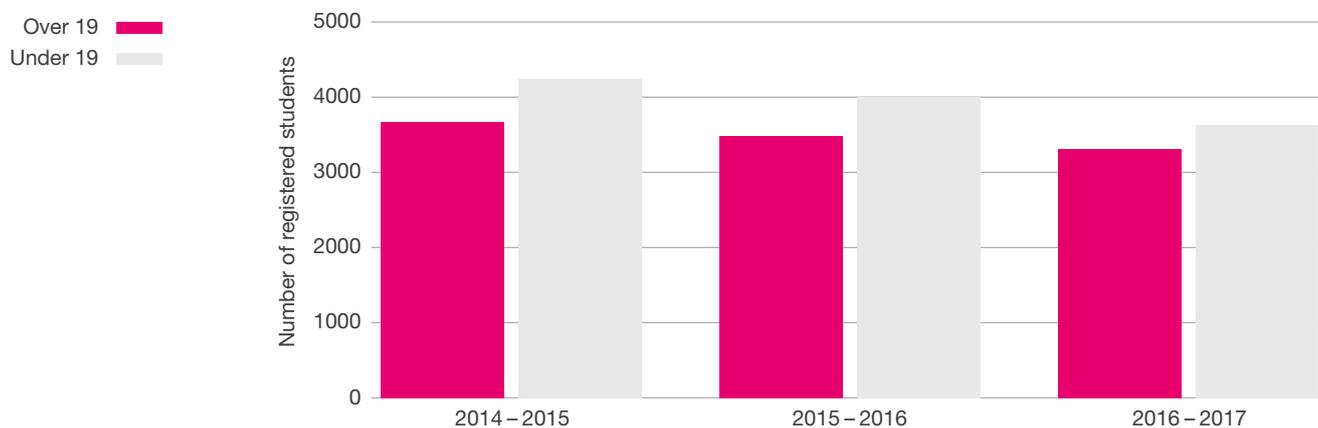**Figure 4. Approved Centres and Student registration**

	2016–2017		2015–2016		2014–2015	
No of Approved Centres	93		80		71	
No of Registered Students	6935	31.1%	7478	33.5%	7910	35.4%

Benchmark Data and Statistical Analysis
—

Levels 3 and 4
Diploma in Art & Design – Foundation Studies
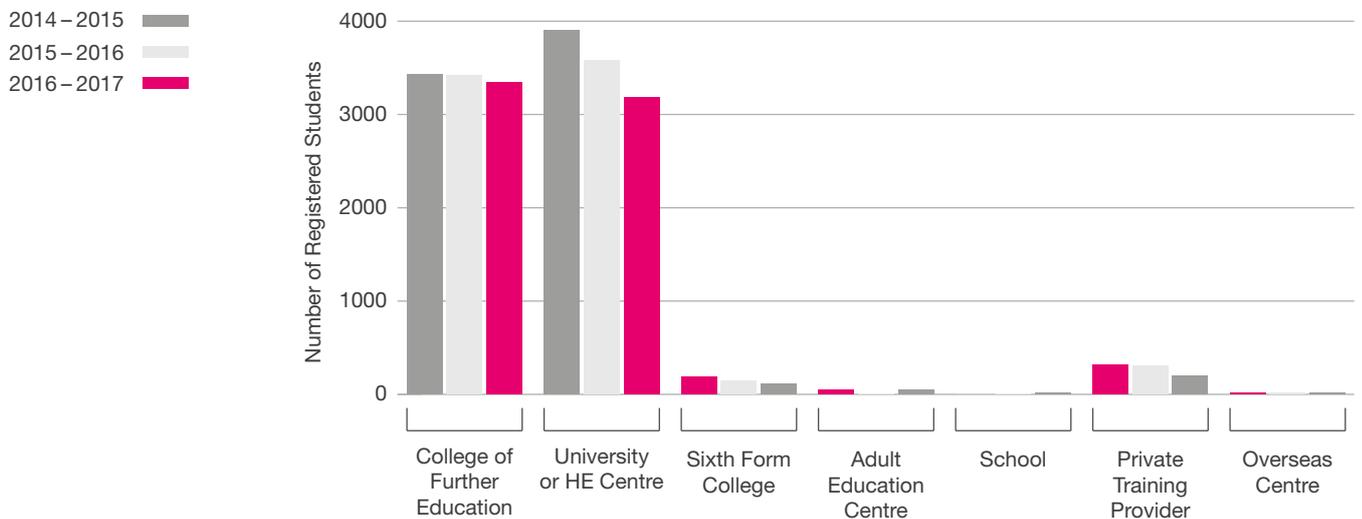
Figure 5. Student registrations: Age band

Over 19
Under 19

	2016–2017		2015–2016		2014–2015	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Over 19	3307	47.7	3479	46.5	3673	46.4
Under 19	3628	52.3	3999	53.5	4237	53.6
Total	**6935**		**7478**		**7910**	

Levels 3 and 4

Diploma in Art & Design – Foundation Studies

Figure 5a. Student registrations and type of centre

	2016–2017		2015–2016		2014–2015	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
College of Further Education	3347	48.3	3420	45.7	3426	43.3
University or HE Centre	3186	45.9	3580	47.9	3907	49.4
Sixth Form College	117	1.7	142	1.9	190	2.4
Adult Education Centre	52	0.7	5	0.1	52	0.7
School	16	0.2	10	0.1		0.0
Private Training Provider	201	2.9	306	4.1	320	4.0
Overseas Centre	16	0.2	15	0.2	15	0.2
Total	**6935**		**7478**		**7910**	

Benchmark Data and Statistical Analysis
—

Levels 3 and 4
Diploma in Art & Design – Foundation Studies

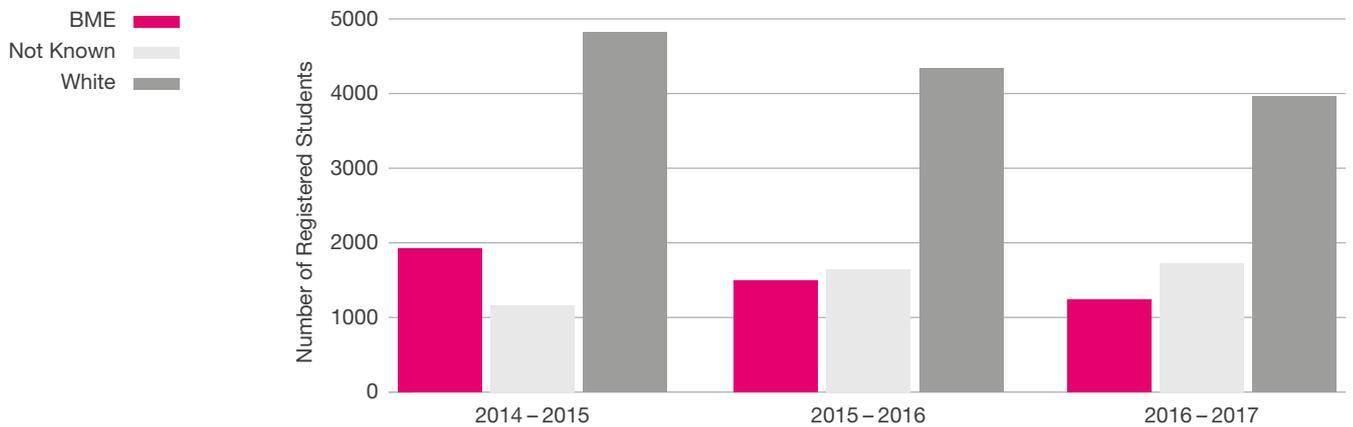**Figure 6. Student registrations: Gender**
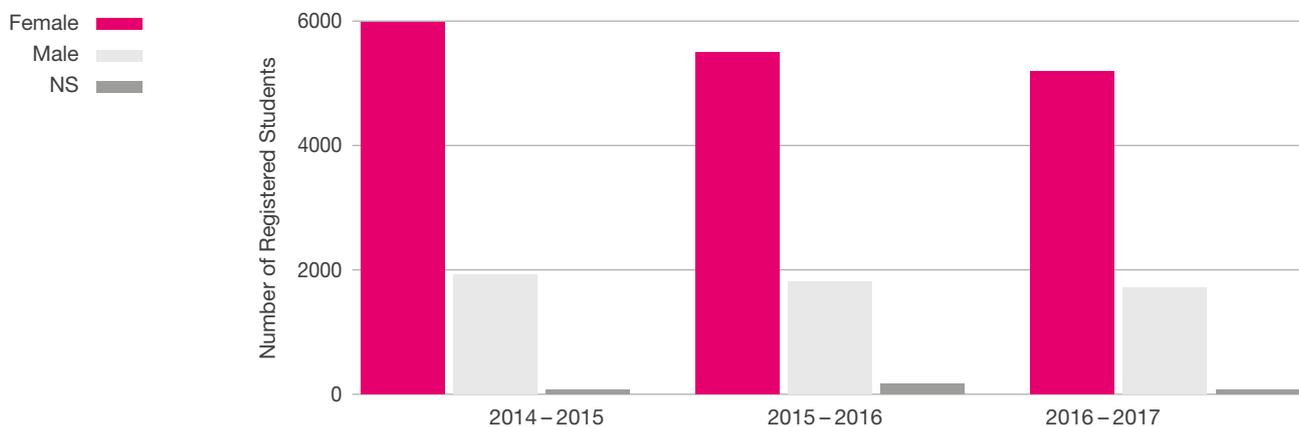
Female ▬
Male ▬
NS ▬

	2016–2017		2015–2016		2014–2015	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Female	5198	75.0	5495	73.5	5978	75.6
Male	1707	24.6	1807	24.2	1917	24.2
Not Set	30	0.4	176	2.4	15	0.2
Total	**6935**		**7478**		**7910**	

Levels 3 and 4

Diploma in Art & Design – Foundation Studies

Figure 7. Student registrations: Ethnicity

	2016 – 2017		2015 – 2016		2014 – 2015	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Not Known/Not Provided	1728	24.9	1644	22.0	1165	14.7
White	3971	57.3	4342	58.1	4824	61.0
BME	1236	17.8	1492	20.0	1921	24.3
Total	**6935**		**7478**		**7910**	

Martha Mouat Salkeld, Falmouth

Reading College Art & Design. Photo by Liz Carrington

Joanna Spreadbury, UCA Canterbury

Pylin Manchee, City College Norwich

Ebrahim Patel, Blackburn College

Want to find out more?

—

Contact

UAL Awarding Body
272 High Holborn
London
WC1V 7EY

Tel: 0207 514 9851
ual.awardingbody@arts.ac.uk

UALawardingbody
UALawardingbody

Version 4.0
arts.ac.uk/awarding