



University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 27 May 2022

**Periodic Subject Review: Review of Film & Television Studies,
Theatre Studies, and the Centre for Cultural Policy Research held
on 3 and 4 March 2022**

Dr Richard Lowdon, Clerk to the Review Panel

Review Panel:

Professor Neil Evans	Convener of the University's Academic Standards Committee, and Professor of Integrative Physiology, Panel Convener
Professor Heike Roms	University of Exeter, External Subject Specialist (Theatre Studies)
Dr Michael Lawrence	University of Sussex, External Subject Specialist (Film Studies)
Dr Bethan Wood	Elected Academic Staff Member on Court
Duncan Henderson	Students' Representative Council
Professor Marc Alexander	School of Critical Studies, Cognate Member
Dr Amanda Pate	Academic and Digital Development
Dr Richard Lowdon	Senate Office, Clerk to the Review Panel

1. Outcome

- 1.1.1 The Panel **confirmed** there were no concerns regarding the academic standards of programmes delivered by Film & Television Studies, Theatre Studies, and the Centre for Cultural Policy Research, and recommended the validation of all programmes for a further six years.
- 1.1.2 The Panel **confirmed** that Film & Television Studies, Theatre Studies, and the Centre for Cultural Policy Research had a transparent academic governance and quality assurance structure which aligned to the University's regulatory framework.

2. Summary and context

2.1 College structure

- 2.1.1 The three subject areas under review are Film & Television Studies, Theatre Studies, and the Centre for Cultural Policy Research. These subjects are all part of the School of Culture and Creative Arts, which was formed in 2010 as one of the four Schools in the College of Arts. The other subject areas within the School are History of Art, Music, and the Kelvin Centre for Conservation. The School of Culture & Creative Arts, and the subject areas within the School have teaching and research collaborations across the College of Arts and the wider University.

2.2 Preparation for the 2022 Periodic Subject Review (PSR) and members of staff involved in the Review

- 2.2.1 The Reflective Analysis (RA) was written by Dr Amy Holdsworth (Head of Film & Television Studies), Dr Lizelle Bisschoff (Film & Television Studies), Professor Minty Donald (Head of Theatre Studies), Professor Elizabeth Tomlin (Theatre Studies), Professor Raymond Boyle (Director of the Centre for Cultural Policy Research), Pauline McLachlan (Head of Professional Services, School of Cultural & Creative Arts), and Karen Thompson (Convener of the School of Culture & Creative Arts Learning & Teaching Committee). Professor Kate Oakley (Head of the School of Cultural & Creative Arts) was responsible for the final edit of the RA.
- 2.2.2 The Review Panel met with the Head of the School of Cultural and Creative Arts (Professor Kate Oakley); Professor Raymond Boyle (Director of the Centre for Cultural Policy Research); Professor Minty Donald (Head of Theatre Studies); Dr Amy Holdsworth (Head of Film & Television Studies); Professor Gillian Doyle (Centre for Cultural Policy Research); Professor Elizabeth Tomlin (Head of Theatre Studies from August 2022); five undergraduate students; four Postgraduate Taught (PGT) students representing each of the three subject areas; 21 members of teaching and affiliate staff; four early-career staff representing each of the three subject areas; 10 Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) and external tutors; and seven members of Management, Professional and Administrative (MPA) and Technical staff. The Panel also met with Professor Wendy Anderson (College of Arts Dean of Learning & Teaching) and Dr Victoria Price (College of Arts Dean of Postgraduate Teaching).
- 2.2.3 It was noted in the RA, and within review meetings, that although present within the same School, the subject groupings for the PSR reflected a historical association. The three areas under review had evolved in quite different directions and now had quite different provision, some different aims, and faced some divergent challenges. In light of this, the generation of the RA was considered quite challenging in places.

2.3 Staff involved in teaching

- 2.3.1 68 members of staff (43.0297 FTE) contributed to teaching across Film & Television Studies, Theatre Studies, and the Centre for Cultural Policy Research. These staff had a wide range of roles, including lecturers, senior lecturers, professors, graduate teaching assistants (GTAs), teaching assistants, external tutors, research associates, research fellows, technical staff, project assistants, transcription assistants, and production editors.

2.4 Student numbers

Student numbers between 2017-18 and 2020-21 are summarised as follows:

Subject	Students (FTE) 2017-18	Students (FTE) 2018-19	Students (FTE) 2019-20	Students (FTE) 2020-21
Centre for Cultural Policy Research	55	47	84	140
Film & Television Studies	216 (UG) 59 (PGT)	227 (UG) 57 (PGT)	255 (UG) 35 (PGT)	274 (UG) 58 (PGT)
Theatre Studies	216 (UG) 40 (PGT)	215 (UG) 38 (PGT)	185 (UG) 40 (PGT)	192 (UG) 48 (PGT)
Total	571	566	599	712

2.5 Range of Provision under Review

The Review Panel considered the following range of provision currently offered by Film & Television Studies, Theatre Studies, and the Centre for Cultural Policy Research:

Undergraduate

- MA Creative Arts & Industries (School-wide programme starting in 2022-23)
- MA Film & Television Studies
- MA Theatre Studies

Postgraduate Taught

- MLitt Film & Television Studies
- MLitt Playwriting & Dramaturgy
- MLitt Theatre & Performance Practice
- MLitt Theatre Studies
- MSc Creative Industries & Cultural Policy (School-wide programme from 2021-2022)
- MSc Film Curation
- MSc Filmmaking & Media Arts
- MSc Media Management

3. Strategy for Development

3.1 Progress since the last review

3.1.1 In the previous PSR for Film & Television Studies, Theatre Studies, and the Centre for Cultural Policy Research, the Review Panel commended the subject areas for their broad-based and interdisciplinary curriculum, the use of external partners, the research-led and practice-based elements of their teaching, and the wide range of assessment modes that were used. Since the last PSR, these areas had been developed further, and new programmes had been introduced in areas such as Filmmaking & Media Arts, Film Curation, and Theatre Studies, in an effort to enhance employability, and increase student numbers. Student numbers had particularly increased in the Centre for Cultural Policy Research. For example, student numbers on the MSc in Media Management programme had increased from 48 students in 2015 to 105 students in 2021-22. Student numbers on the MSc in Creative Industries and Cultural Policy had also increased from a base of 17 students to 86 students since becoming a School-wide programme in 2021-22. In Film & Television Studies, undergraduate student numbers had also increased in recent years, and two new postgraduate programmes had been introduced - the MSc in Filmmaking & Media Arts, and the MSc in Film Curation (see paragraph 3.5.1 for further information about student numbers). The development of these new programmes reflected the subject's ambition to more fully embed screen skills and training across its postgraduate portfolio. In Theatre Studies, the subject had developed and introduced Honours and PGT courses that continued to be highly interdisciplinary, and that ranged across historical and contemporary periods, engaging with the professional practices of theatre and with research-led analysis of theatre and performance.

3.1.2 The introduction of new programmes following the recommendations of the previous PSR had also led to the revision of the curriculum and teaching model across the subject areas. For example, a strong theme, particularly in both Film & Television

Studies and Theatre Studies, has been the deepening of emphasis on professional practice, and the further development of strong partnerships with cultural organisations.

League table success

3.1.3 The Review Panel noted from the RA that, in 2020-21, Film & Television Studies at Glasgow was ranked first in the UK in the Complete University Guide, second in the UK in the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide, and third in the UK in the Guardian University Guide. Theatre Studies had also enjoyed league table success, coming top in the UK in the Complete University Guide in 2019, 2020, and 2021. The Panel acknowledged the consistently high league table rankings of Theatre Studies and Film & Television Studies, and noted that this served as a useful illustration of the quality of each subject's learning and teaching provision. Therefore, the Review Panel **commends** the high league table positions of Theatre Studies and Film & Television Studies as indicators of effective practice throughout the subject areas.

3.2 Vision and strategy

3.2.1 As stated in the RA, the School of Culture & Creative Arts has a number of strategic aims, these include:

- Successfully launching the undergraduate Creative Arts and Industries programme in September 2022.
- Strengthening employability across all undergraduate and PGT programmes.
- Reviewing existing external partnerships across the School to identify new ways in which external resources might be used to expand and enrich learning and teaching provision.

3.2.2 These objectives were reflected in different ways across Film & Television Studies, Theatre Studies, and the Centre for Cultural Policy Research (CCPR). CCPR's main strategic aim was to promote and extend its position as a leading centre for PGT level teaching in media management. CCPR also aimed to manage student recruitment and growth on the MSc Media Management programme with a view to diversifying its student intake. This was particularly important given the high proportion of students that were drawn from a single market, China. The strategy for development for Film & Television Studies focused on two central elements. The first element was to strengthen the portfolio of critical and creative practice-based teaching, and the second element was to reinvigorate the learning and teaching community following the COVID-19 Pandemic. In Theatre Studies, the main strategic objective was to review Level 1 and Level 2 to ensure that student take-up of Honours courses remained high, and to ensure that students were well-prepared for study at Honours level. The subject also aimed to embed within the curriculum, and in its wider support and pastoral practices, a sensitivity to difference and diversity. In part, this would be achieved through efforts to decolonise the curriculum, and by fostering a more welcoming and supportive environment for neurodiverse students and students with disabilities. Efforts would also be made to seek greater diversity among the staff and student body.

Decolonising the curriculum

3.2.3 The efforts of Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies to decolonise their curriculum was discussed at the meeting with the Head of School, Heads of Subject, College Dean of Learning & Teaching, and the College Dean of Postgraduate Teaching. During that meeting, the Review Panel was informed that Theatre Studies had taken a number of steps to decolonise its curriculum, including the appointment of artists and visiting tutors of colour as guest lecturers on courses such as 'Writing for Performance', 'Devising', 'Playwriting 2', and the prioritisation of scholars of colour and

scholars from developing nations to feature in the subject's online research seminar series. The subject had also instigated an individual review of courses to evaluate material and citations from a decolonising and anti-racist perspective with a view to making changes in the 2022-23 academic session. Film & Television Studies had attempted to diversify its curriculum by introducing a variety of genres and styles of film and media into its pedagogy and the screening components of the MSc in Filmmaking & Media Arts, including African, Iranian and indigenous cinema, and films with female directors. However, Theatre Studies had faced challenges recruiting staff with specific expertise in theatre in the 'Global South'. Both subject areas also acknowledged the lack of ethnic diversity amongst their staff and were making efforts to widen their pool of job applicants and pursue role descriptions that would diversify their curriculum and attract applicants of colour. The Review Panel welcomed the efforts of Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies to decolonise their curriculum and enhance staff diversity, and **commends** both subject areas for their work in this area.

- 3.2.4 The Review Panel discussed the issue of diversifying the curriculum at the meeting with undergraduate students. During this meeting, students acknowledged that Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies were undertaking work to decolonise the curriculum and diversify their staff. However, some students expressed frustration about the lack of non-white teaching staff in both subject areas and, while aware of initial smaller curricular changes, were not aware of the preparations for further changes to decolonise the curriculum. While the Panel welcomed the efforts of Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies to decolonise the curriculum, the Review Panel **recommends** that Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies updates students more regularly on their plans, and involves students more in their discussions about diversifying the curriculum and enhancing staff diversity.

School-wide courses and programmes

- 3.2.5 The Review Panel noted from the RA, and at the meeting with the Heads of Subject and Head of School that the School of Culture & Creative Arts had sought to reflect its collaborative strengths through the development of School-wide courses and programmes. For example, the School offered team-taught courses in 'Genders', 'Festivals' and 'Making Time'. The Centre for Cultural and Policy Research (CCPR) had also created a programme, 'Creative Industries & Cultural Policy', that had been developed into a School-wide PGT programme, and the School was planning to launch a School-wide undergraduate programme in September 2022, 'Creative Arts and Industries'. The development of a School-wide undergraduate programme was based on the School's belief that cultural industries were broad and drew on multiple cultural practices and traditions. The programme would combine theory and practice courses, and would contain employability and work-based elements aided by the recruitment of a new member of staff with a specialism in work-based learning.
- 3.2.6 The Panel welcomed the introduction and development of School-wide courses and programmes, and agreed that drawing on expertise from across the School would help to enhance collaboration and the sharing of good teaching practice within the School. The Panel also welcomed the appointment of a new member of staff with a specialism in work-based learning to convene the new 'Creative Arts & Industries' undergraduate programme, and noted that this would enhance graduate attributes and employability amongst undergraduate students. Therefore, the Review Panel highlighted the development of School-wide courses and programmes as an example of **good practice** within the School of Culture & Creative Arts.

3.3 Physical and technical resources

Teaching space and technical support on campus

- 3.3.1 The Review Panel noted from the RA that one of the biggest challenges for all three subject areas was the lack of space and production resources on campus. This issue was highlighted in the last PSR, and a recommendation was made that the School of Culture & Creative Arts should work with the College of Arts to review how teaching space, equipment, and technical support staffing requirements could be supported in the future to ensure that the subjects' accommodation needs were reflected in the College of Arts and University estate plans. Since the last PSR, work had been undertaken by School staff on plans for a new College of Arts building which would have offered new facilities. However, the College of Arts building was no longer in the University's campus development plans.
- 3.3.2 Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies were currently housed within Gilmorehill Halls, which was recently reconfigured to accommodate shared staff offices and administrative staff. No improvements had been made to practical teaching spaces in Gilmorehill Halls, although a new media room, equipped with high quality workstations, was scheduled to open in 8 University Gardens in 2022. This media room would be made available to both Music and Film & Television Studies. Since the last PSR, Theatre Studies had not been given any additional facilities on top of their existing purpose-built theatre, studio, and a space that had previously been used as a carpentry workshop. However, undergraduate and postgraduate students had been granted extended access in the evenings and weekends to practice spaces, and Theatre Studies hoped that this access could be retained with a swipe card system to improve security in Gilmorehill Halls.
- 3.3.3 As noted in the RA and in the meeting with the Head of School and Heads of Subject, both Theatre Studies and Film & Television Studies had seen a growth in the demand for production-based courses. However, they were unable to meet that demand due to the lack of space, production equipment, production software, and technical support staff on campus. As a result, they had been forced to cap student numbers on the MSc in Filmmaking and Media Arts, and the MLitt in Theatre and Performance Practice. There was also growing demand for practice-based work at undergraduate level, which the subject areas were unable to accommodate. Regarding CCPR, the Director of the Centre informed the Panel that the growth of PGT numbers and the lack of dedicated CCPR PGT teaching space had resulted in challenges with timetabling and identifying suitable teaching rooms.
- 3.3.4 Given the decision not to progress with the College of Arts Building, the School of Culture & Creative Arts was currently planning a feasibility study to explore how it might utilise partnerships with cultural organisations across Glasgow to increase access to practice teaching spaces. This study would report in the spring or summer of 2022. However, the Panel was informed that gaining access to practice teaching spaces through partnerships with organisations such as theatre companies was challenging because most of these spaces were already fully booked, and the demand for practice teaching spaces had increased due to the booming Scottish screen industry. In addition to this, Glasgow-based theatre companies were themselves very short of performance and rehearsal space, and often made requests to utilise spaces owned by the University.
- 3.3.5 The Panel was concerned about the lack of space and production resources on campus to support the growth of Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies programmes, particularly given the decision not to progress with a new College of Arts building. The Panel recognised the efforts made by the School of Culture & Creative Arts to develop and secure suitable spaces and **recommends** that the College of Arts works with the School of Culture & Creative Arts and University Estates to identify ways

in which each of the subjects' teaching space, equipment, and technical support staffing requirements can be secured to enable them to meet the demand for production-based courses and support future growth.

Access to licensed content and subscription-based services

- 3.3.6 As noted in the RA, and at the meeting with the Head of School and Heads of Subject, one of the major challenges faced by Film & Television Studies during the COVID-19 Pandemic was the issue of enabling remote access to screenings and licensed content for all students. Due to copyright restrictions and geoblocking, Film & Television Studies had been forced to identify workarounds to this problem assisted by their technician, Michael McCann. However, these issues had not been resolved, and an increased reliance on subscription-based streaming services had acted as a significant barrier to teaching in Film & Television Studies, with some staff members paying for subscription services out of their own pocket. Although investments had been made in services such as BFIPlayer and BoB, Film & Television Studies required more University support to address issues of copyright and access to subscription-based resources. The Review Panel was also informed that failure to provide students with remote access to licensed content and subscription-based resources made it difficult for Film & Television Studies to comply with the University's Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy. In addition to this, concerns were raised in the meeting with teaching staff about the move to online learning requiring students to have the necessary technology and IT equipment at home to access teaching materials and recorded lectures. As a result, there was a danger that this could result in discrimination against students who did not have the required equipment at home.
- 3.3.7 The Panel welcomed the efforts of Film & Television Studies to identify solutions to the issue of copyright restrictions and geoblocking. However, the Panel shared the subject area's concerns about remote access to screenings and licensed content, and access to subscription-based screening services. Therefore, the Review Panel **recommends** that the School of Culture & Creative Arts works with the College of Arts and Information Services to outline the requirements of Film & Television Studies for licensed content and subscription-based streaming services to ensure that all students are able to access these resources. The Review Panel also **recommends** that the other subject areas are able to feed into this process and outline their IT and software requirements.

3.4 Student admissions

Growth in student numbers

- 3.4.1 As noted in the RA, some of the subject areas under review had seen significant increases in student numbers in recent years. In the Centre for Cultural Policy Research (CCPR), student numbers had more than doubled over the previous three years. In Film & Television Studies, undergraduate student numbers (which made up 82.5% of its total student cohort) had grown by 27% since 2017, and postgraduate student numbers had remained broadly stable. In Theatre Studies, the number of undergraduate students had remained stable but postgraduate student numbers had increased by 20% since 2017. Therefore, the Review Panel **commends** the good student growth rates for each of the subject areas, particularly in the Centre for Cultural Policy Research.

Admissions caps

- 3.4.2 The Review Panel noted from the RA that both Theatre Studies and Film & Television Studies had seen an increase in demand for production-based courses, which had forced them to cap student numbers due to the lack of space and technical resources on campus. In the Centre for Cultural Policy Research (CCPR), the increase in student numbers had been exacerbated by the fact that its MSc Creative Industries and Cultural Policy, and MSc in Media Management programmes had been forced to postpone their September 2020 student intake until January 2021 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. As a result, CCPR had to teach two student cohorts simultaneously during the first semester of the 2021-22 academic session. Increases in student numbers in Film & Television Studies had resulted in increased class sizes, particularly at Honours and postgraduate level. This, in turn, had increased pressure on staff teaching workloads (including dissertation supervision) and assessment schedules and timetabling. It was also noted that there had been an increased number of requests for pastoral support - an issue that was particularly noticeable in Film & Television Studies where 33.8% of students were registered as having a specific learning difficulty, and 28.2% of students were registered as having a mental health condition (see paragraphs 6.1.4 and 6.1.5 for further information about student mental health). As a consequence of increased student numbers, subjects were forced to make pedagogical changes such as increasing the number of team-taught courses and holding multiple seminar groups.
- 3.4.3 Regarding the growth in student numbers at postgraduate level, the RA noted that the proportion of international students had increased significantly across each of the subject areas. In CCPR, 78.6% of the students on the MSc in Media Management were international students, of which 76.8% were from China. On postgraduate programmes run by Film & Television Studies, 43.1% of students were Chinese, and in Theatre Studies 20.8% of postgraduate students were from China, which represented a doubling since 2017. This had posed a number of challenges for each of the subject areas in relation to the different prior learning experiences of Chinese students and the increased requirement for English language support. As a result, there was a recognition amongst each of the subject areas that work was required to diversify the recruitment pool.
- 3.4.4 The issue of increased student numbers and admissions was also discussed at the meeting with the Head of School and Heads of Subject, and at the meeting with teaching staff. At the meeting with teaching staff, staff raised concerns about the lack of control that they had over the admissions process. In particular, staff informed the Review Panel that communication with Glasgow International College (GIC) regarding international student recruitment had been poor, which had made it challenging for staff to plan ahead because students often joined programmes at late notice. This, in turn, had resulted in programmes exceeding their student numbers cap, which had impacted on staff teaching and supervision workloads. Echoing the comments that were made in the RA, staff also informed the Panel that the standard of written and spoken English amongst the international student cohort was sometimes quite limited. As a result, these students often required significant support, which impacted on staff workloads. This issue had been particularly apparent during the 2020-21 academic session when the University made the decision to accept students who had undertaken a Duolingo English language test. Staff expressed concerns that the Duolingo test was inferior to other English language tests and that this had resulted in students being accepted onto programmes with poor written and spoken English skills.
- 3.4.5 At the meeting with the Head of School and Heads of Subject, the Panel was informed that the School and subjects had been in dialogue with Planning, Insights and Analytics (PIA), and External Relations regarding student recruitment, particularly at postgraduate level. However, the Heads of Subject and Head of School acknowledged

that there had been challenges regarding communication with GIC, and that student caps on some programmes, particularly production-based programmes, needed to be reduced due to the lack of space, staffing and technical resources on campus.

- 3.4.6 The Panel noted the concerns of staff about the impact of increased student numbers on workloads, the lack of communication with GIC, and the standard of written and spoken English amongst the international student cohort. However, the Panel recognised that the Heads of Subject and Head of School were currently liaising with staff in PIA and External Relations regarding these matters. The Panel was also sympathetic to the efforts of teaching staff and would encourage the School to reflect on the impact of increased student numbers once some of the temporary COVID-19 mitigation measures had been removed. Therefore, the Review Panel **recommends** that the Head of School and Heads of Subject continue to meet with Planning, Insights and Analytics (PIA), and External Relations to identify suitable caps for programmes and set appropriate English language requirements for international students, noting the concerns of teaching staff about the Duolingo English language test. The Review Panel also **recommends** that the School and each of the subject areas works with PIA and External Relations to formulate plans for diversifying student recruitment pools.

Widening access

- 3.4.7 As noted in the RA, and at the meeting with the Head of School and Heads of Subject, Theatre Studies and Film & Television Studies had made a strong commitment to widening participation on its programmes. In Film & Television Studies, 32.3% of its students were recruited from the 40% most deprived areas in Scotland - a figure that was roughly in line with the College of Arts average. Film & Television Studies had also seen an increase in the proportion of students entering its degrees through the University's 'Access' programmes, with 19.3% of students entering degree programmes via this route in 2020, compared with 7.4% in 2017. In addition to this, Film & Television Studies regularly participated in the University's Widening Participation Summer School. In Theatre Studies, 41.4% of students were drawn from the 40% most deprived areas in Scotland, with 23.4% of students entering their degrees via the University's 'Access' programmes - figures that had increased each year, and that were ahead of the College of Arts average. Therefore, the Review Panel **commends** the commitment of Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies to widening participation, and their efforts to increase the proportion of students from deprived areas.

3.5 External engagement activities

Dear Green Bothy

- 3.5.1 The Review Panel noted from the RA that the School of Culture & Creative Arts 'Cultural Activities and Collaborations Committee' was responsible for overseeing an active programme of public engagement and dissemination. For example, the School had played a significant role in the University's engagement activities during the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP26, through the establishment of the 'Dear Green Bothy' programme. The programme consisted of a series of free public events and activities, which aimed to demonstrate the vital role played by the arts and humanities in understanding and addressing the climate emergency. Both Theatre Studies and Film & Television Studies had contributed to the programme through their involvement in, and organisation of, events such as 'The Walking Library for a Wild City', 'Queer River, Wet Land', and 'We Get Shot with Silent Bullets: Screenings and Discussions with Africa in Motion'. Therefore, the Review Panel **commends** Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies for their contributions to the University's external engagement activities during COP26.

4. Learning and teaching enhancement

4.1 Development of alumni networks, external partnerships and work placement opportunities

Alumni networks

- 4.1.1 As noted in the RA, and at the meeting with the Head of School and Heads of Subject, all three subject areas had strong links with their alumni, who took part in a range of activities to support current students. For example, alumni from Film & Television Studies had been involved in School career events, and had been invited to give guest lectures sharing their career journeys in the film and television industry. These events allowed students to talk with alumni and learn about the different career opportunities available to them, and the challenges associated with working in the sector. Careers events also provided students with opportunities to develop their networking and communication skills - graduate attributes that were highly valued in creative arts careers. In addition to this, Film & Television Studies had created a Facebook group for PGT students and alumni. This page allowed students to interact with alumni and to receive information about internship and employment opportunities, and upcoming events. Film & Television Studies had also collated alumni profiles and published them on its postgraduate programme web pages and through social media, as well as using them in marketing and conversion activities.
- 4.1.2 Another example of alumni engagement was the development of an 'At Home' series of online lunchtime conversations with Scottish artists, many of whom were alumni of the University, during the COVID-19 Pandemic. These sessions were instigated by Theatre Studies and were designed primarily as a way of keeping students in touch with the local theatre scene and people associated with the performing arts sector. Students had also commented that the series had provided them with a useful opportunity to see and hear about the different professions that recent graduates had gone into, and that it had encouraged them to reflect on the different career trajectories that they themselves might take. In addition to the 'At Home' series, Theatre Studies had also engaged with alumni by inviting graduates back to take part in teaching.
- 4.1.3 The Review Panel acknowledged the work that had been undertaken by Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies to maintain links with its alumni, and to draw on this network to enhance graduate attributes, and provide internship opportunities and careers guidance for current students. Therefore, the Review Panel had identified this as an example of **good practice** within the subject areas. The Panel agreed that the 'At Home' series was an innovative way of connecting students with practitioners and theatres at a time when social distancing regulations prevented students from attending performances and engaging with artists in person. The Panel further noted that the 'At Home' series had provided Theatre Studies students with valuable opportunities to reflect upon the career options available to them. Therefore, the Review Panel **commends** Theatre Studies for developing the 'At Home' series during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

External partnerships

- 4.1.4 As noted in the RA, and at the meeting with the Head of School and the Heads of Subject, all three subject areas made use of guest lecturers from a wide range of organisations, including BBC Scotland, Regional Screen Scotland, National Theatre of Scotland, Creative Scotland, OFCOM Scotland, Channel 4: Nations and Regions, Berwick Film Festival, Alchemy Film Festival, African in Motion, and Aya Films. Each subject area also made use of a number of independent practitioners who delivered workshops and masterclasses to students. Students had expressed support for more careers advice, work placement opportunities, networking opportunities, and courses centring on industry-focused skills. In response to this, Theatre Studies was in the

process of developing a new course, 'Professional Practice - Pathways into the sector', commencing in the 2022-23 academic session, which would support students to identify, critically reflect on, and develop skills to enhance opportunities in line with their career goals. In addition to this, Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies continued to embed industry-related teaching across its programmes. For example, a new honours option had been introduced in 2020-21 on 'Working in the UK Screen Industries', which aimed to complement an existing core course on 'Media and Cultural Policy'.

- 4.1.5 Aside from changes to the curriculum, the School of Culture & Creative Arts had invested in a sponsorship of the Edinburgh International TV Festival 'talent schemes'. Film & Television Studies had also taken the opportunity to establish a partnership with the British Film Institute, and had developed a new partnership with the Glasgow Media Access Centre. These partnerships had enabled the subject area to provide production skills training for a small group of undergraduate students. Building on the success of these collaborations, Film & Television Studies had recently established a 'partnerships co-ordinator' position within the subject area.
- 4.1.6 The Review Panel welcomed the work that had been undertaken by Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies to develop partnerships with external organisations and independent practitioners within the creative industries sector to enhance graduate attributes and provide students with specialist skills. Therefore, the Review Panel highlighted the efforts of Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies to engage with external partners as an example of **good practice**.

Work placements and internship opportunities

- 4.1.7 As noted in the RA, Theatre Studies students were given the opportunity to undertake individual projects with partner organisations. In Film & Television Studies, a range of partnerships with external organisations had been established to aid in the delivery of professional skills development. For example, students on the MSc in Film Curation programme undertook a work-based placement or a creative project as part of a compulsory course. Film & Television Studies had also worked in partnership with the Africa in Motion Film Festival and Hungry Bear Media to develop internship and volunteering opportunities for students, and students had been offered paid internship opportunities to assist subject staff with their practice-led research. These internships provided students with a chance to engage with artists and to develop new skills in areas such as production design.
- 4.1.8 At the meeting with undergraduate students, the Review Panel was informed that placement and internship opportunities were usually discussed in the later years of undergraduate degree programmes, and that they had been mentioned at Staff-Student Liaison Committee meetings. However, students on Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies programmes also informed the Panel that they would appreciate more information about specific industry placement and internship opportunities, and that they would welcome more workshops, seminars and networking opportunities with employers.
- 4.1.9 The Panel recognised the efforts that had been made by Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies to provide students with placement and internship opportunities. However, the Review Panel **recommends** that Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies provides more information to undergraduate students at an earlier point in their degree programme about placement, internship and networking opportunities with employers, and opportunities to attend industry-related workshops and seminars. The Review Panel also **recommends** that Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies draw on their extensive alumni network in order to assist them with this work.

4.2 Approaches to assessment

Range of assessments

- 4.2.1 As noted in the RA, and at the meeting with the Head of School and Heads of Subject, each of the subject areas used a broad range of teaching methods and types of assessment on their programmes. In Theatre Studies, students were exposed to a variety of assessment methods, which enabled them to gain skills in leading workshops, delivering presentations, group creative practice, digital and live performances, arts criticism, scriptwriting, developing portfolios, producing dramaturgical reports and curation briefs, as well as more traditional skills such as essay writing. Assessments in Theatre Studies were also designed to teach skills that were directly applicable to the theatre industry. For example, the subject had developed work placements where students were allocated individual projects undertaken with a partner organisation. The subject had also developed an Honours course, 'Shaping Futures', that engaged students in work-based learning through seminars focussed on theatre in the context of Scottish cultural industries. The course was assessed by an industry-focused project that was designed by a partner organisation under guidance and in collaboration with School staff.
- 4.2.2 In Film & Television Studies, assessments were designed to offer undergraduate and PGT students opportunities to learn and gain skills in a number of vocational areas. For example, students gained digital and data management skills through audio-visual essays, archive projects, and critical blogs, and enhanced their professional practice skills through report writing, pitching exercises, presentations, and through the preparation of production documents. Students also had the option to undertake an audiovisual essay/dissertation, which offered them the opportunity to improve their creativity and practical skills within an academic framework. In particular, the audiovisual essay/dissertation allowed them to develop an understanding of visual and sound editing, digital screen capture, file handling, the manipulation of on-screen text, performing and recording voiceovers, and filming. Students also developed an appreciation of how to produce audiovisual forms that were most likely to circulate on social media – a skill that was applicable to a variety of jobs in the creative industries sector.
- 4.2.3 The Review Panel noted that Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies utilised a broad range of assessment methods across its undergraduate and PGT portfolio. The Panel also noted that assessments such as work-based projects, pitching exercises, and audiovisual essays allowed students to develop skills that would be directly relevant to a number of careers. Therefore, the Review Panel identified the range of work-based and sector-relevant assessment opportunities offered to students as an example of **good practice** within Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies.

Aligning assessment outcomes and feedback

- 4.2.4 As noted in the RA, all three subject areas employed a range of assessment methods across their programmes. These assessment methods had been adapted to support professional practice and work-based learning, and underwent significant changes in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Feedback on assessments was provided orally to students in discussions in seminars and workshops, in showcases and screenings of student work, in individual and group tutorials, and in peer-based learning activities. Written feedback was provided through comments on assessments, a feedback pro-forma in which individual criteria were addressed, and comments on seminar preparation activities via Moodle.
- 4.2.5 In Film & Television Studies, course leaders provided bespoke preparation sessions for assessments that included explanations of Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and assessment criteria. Detailed information on ILOs was also provided in course

documentation, and tutors were encouraged to outline the aims and objectives of weekly topics and lectures in class materials. In addition to this, assessment criteria were discussed with students in seminars, and these criteria were specifically addressed in written feedback on assessments. In an effort to more explicitly link marker comments to ILOs and assessment criteria, Film & Television Studies had made changes to its assessment feedback template in 2018-19. These changes, which had been discussed at Staff-Student Liaison Committee meetings, had been received positively by students, and the subject area had seen an improvement in its score for the assessment and feedback questions in the National Student Survey (NSS). In Theatre Studies, the subject had recently been commended by their External Examiner for its practice in Level 2 of explicitly aligning ILOs with each assessment task in the course handbook, which enabled students to see clearly what they were being assessed on. In response to this positive feedback, the subject was planning to extend this practice to all of its courses at the start of the next academic session.

- 4.2.6 The issue of assessment feedback was discussed in the meetings with undergraduate and PGT students. In the meeting with undergraduate students, students informed the Review Panel that they were generally satisfied with the level of feedback that they received on their assessments, and that feedback had helped them to improve their marks in subsequent assessments. Students also informed the Panel that feedback was usually timely. However, while some students informed the Panel that they had been encouraged by staff to attend their office hours to receive advice and feedback on their assessments, other students informed the Panel that staff could have done more to advertise their office hours and persuade students to attend. One student also informed the Panel that, due to the number of students requesting extensions and submitting Good Cause requests, they had not received feedback on one of their essays until the day before the exam, which made it impossible for them to apply the lessons learned from their feedback to their exam. In addition to this, students informed that Panel that there were sometimes inconsistencies between their assessment marks and the written feedback that they received. The Panel asked students if they had received any formative assessments during their programme. Some students in Film & Television Studies informed the Panel that they had been given optional formative assessment opportunities, whereas students on Theatre Studies programmes noted that they would welcome more formative assessment opportunities.
- 4.2.7 At the meeting with PGT students, students on the Centre for Cultural Policy Research (CCPR) programmes informed the Panel that feedback on assessments was sometimes received after the University's 15 working day target. However, delays to feedback were always well-communicated by staff. Students on CCPR programmes also expressed concerns that assessment deadlines were not spread out enough (which had resulted in some students requesting extensions), and that assessment feedback was not detailed enough. Students on Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies PGT programmes informed the Panel that feedback on their assessments had been timely and detailed, and that they often received feedback via Moodle. Regarding formative assessment opportunities, students on Film & Television Studies PGT programmes noted that they had completed a short formative essay, and that the guidance received in their feedback had assisted them in later summative assessments. Given their positive experience of formative assessments, Film & Television Studies students informed the Panel that they would welcome more formative assessment opportunities on their programmes.
- 4.2.8 The Panel recognised that Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies had undertaken work to clarify and communicate ILOs and assessment marking criteria with students, to align ILOs with assessment tasks, and to link marker comments to ILOs and assessment criteria by updating the assessment feedback template. The Panel also noted that students generally appreciated the depth of feedback received on

their assessments and the efforts of staff to provide timely feedback and communicate any delays. However, the Panel also observed that students in all of the subject areas had expressed a desire to receive more formative assessment opportunities, and that some students had expressed concerns about a lack of consistency between assessment marks and written feedback, and assessment deadlines being too close together. Therefore, the Review Panel **recommends** that each of the subject areas undertakes an assessment mapping exercise to ensure that assessment deadlines are adequately spaced, and that feedback is received in advance of subsequent assessments. The Review Panel also **recommends** that each of the subject areas reviews assessment literacy and considers providing students with more formative assessment opportunities, and that they review their feedback sheets to ensure that assessment marks and written feedback are consistent.

4.3 Staff support

Support for Graduate Teaching Assistants and external tutors

- 4.3.1 As noted in the RA, Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) were used across all three subject areas to support teaching. GTAs were recruited onto two-year contracts and had received significant pay increases in recent years, in addition to payment for teaching preparation time. Regarding support, each GTA was provided with a teaching mentor, and GTAs were invited to set up peer observations to learn from their peers and enhance their teaching practice. Film & Television Studies also invited each GTA to attend at least one subject meeting per academic year (paid). GTA tutors teaching at Levels 1 and 2 were inducted via teaching team meetings prior to the start of each semester, and all new GTAs undertook mandatory training by the College of Arts. Where GTAs were involved in marking, their marks were moderated by teaching or moderation teams. In addition to this, Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies employed professional artists as tutors. These affiliate staff members were mentored by the Course or Programme Convener who assisted them with marking through preparatory meetings and proactive moderation.
- 4.3.2 At the meeting with GTAs and external tutors, the Review Panel was informed that GTAs and external tutors generally enjoyed their role, and that there was a strong sense of collegiality within the GTA and external tutor community. GTAs and external tutors also informed the Panel that they felt supported by their peers, and spoke positively about the informal mentoring and peer-observation system that they had helped to develop. However, a number of concerns were highlighted during this meeting. First, some GTAs felt that they had received insufficient mentoring from members of teaching staff, and that there was sometimes a lack of clarity about what feedback they should be providing to students in response to queries about assessment marks. GTAs and external tutors also informed the Panel that they had received little guidance on marking presentations, and that there were sometimes differences between Course Conveners regarding their levels of expectation. Second, GTAs raised concerns about the lack of time that they had to mark assessments. In particular, they informed the Panel that they were only given two weeks to mark student work because another week was required for moderation. Marking turnaround times were sometimes reduced further if students requested extensions. Third, GTAs and external tutors informed the Panel that they were only paid for one hour of preparation time for tutorials and workshops, and that this was not sufficient to review and familiarise themselves with the lecture materials and plan/devise teaching sessions. Concerns were also raised by GTAs and external tutors that they sometimes only received teaching materials from staff immediately prior to their teaching session. In addition to this, GTAs and external tutors noted that as front-facing staff, particularly during the COVID-19 Pandemic, they had responded to lots of email enquiries from students and that they often provided wellbeing support for students, which wasn't

always recognised by their subject. Fourth, the Panel was informed by a number of GTAs and external tutors that they should receive more appreciation for the teaching contributions that they made, and that they did not feel included as part of the wider teaching community within their subject. In particular, they commented that they were 'always the last to know' and 'were not part of the conversation' when teaching decisions were made. Fifth, GTAs and external tutors informed the Panel that they did not receive student feedback on their teaching, which meant that they lacked evidence of good teaching practice for academic job applications. Some GTAs and external tutors also noted that they had not been given access to Moodle, which hindered their ability to prepare for teaching sessions.

- 4.3.3 The Panel recognised the significant contributions that GTAs and external tutors had made to teaching within each of the subject areas, and the sense of community amongst GTAs and external tutors. However, the Panel was concerned about the mentoring and support for GTAs and external tutors, their lack of preparation and marking time, the lack of recognition that they received for the pastoral support that they provided to students, and the integration of GTAs and external tutors into the wider teaching community within each subject. Therefore, the Review Panel **recommends** that each of the subject areas reviews the guidance, support and mentoring arrangements for GTAs and external tutors, the preparation time that GTAs and external tutors are paid for, and explores the possibility of providing these staff with student feedback via EvaSys. The Review Panel also **recommends** that each of the subject areas develops a plan for integrating GTAs and external tutors into the subject's learning and teaching community, and provides increased opportunities for involvement (paid or unpaid) in subject and School-level learning and teaching meetings.

Support for early-career staff

- 4.3.4 The Review Panel noted from the RA that all early-career academic staff undertook the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) as part of the university's Early Career Development Programme (ECDP). Early-career staff were also supported by their Head of Subject, an ECDP mentor, and through course development processes within the School of Culture and Creative Arts, and the College of Arts. At the meeting with early-career staff, the Panel was informed that staff felt well-supported by fellow members of academic staff from their subject area, and that they received help when their workloads became excessive. However, concerns were raised that staff on short-term contracts did not have access to training via the PGCAP and ECDP programme, which reduced their opportunities to gain the experience and skills required for full-time posts. Staff also expressed concerns that they were unable to focus on one course and develop it due to the lack of staff in some subject areas combined with the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic, colleagues being on research leave, and colleagues being bought out of teaching for roles elsewhere in the University, which left remaining staff with higher teaching workloads. In addition to this, staff raised concerns that the additional work involved in teaching practical courses, while recognised locally, was not reflected in larger-scale workload models, and that this had impacted on the recommended teaching reduction for staff undertaking the PGCAP of 50% in year one and 25% in year two. Similar issues were raised in the meeting with teaching staff, where the Panel was informed that PhD supervision and MSc dissertation supervision was not adequately accounted for in workload models. Furthermore, some staff raised concerns about the lack of recognition in the promotions criteria for staff on the Research & Teaching track and in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) for practice-based research outputs.

- 4.3.5 The Panel noted that, while early-career staff felt supported and well-integrated within each subject's teaching community, some work was required to ensure that early-

career staff were given more time to engage in training and development opportunities. Therefore, the Review Panel **recommends** that the College, School, and each of the subject areas reviews their workload models to ensure that practical teaching, and PhD and MSc dissertation supervision is adequately accounted for, and that early-career staff undertaking the PGCAP are able to take advantage of the recommended workload reductions for years one and two of the programme.

4.4 Responding to challenges

Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

- 4.4.1 As noted in the RA, and at the meetings with the Head of School and Head of Subjects, and teaching staff, the COVID-19 Pandemic had had a significant impact on teaching delivery in each of the subject areas. Some production-based programmes and courses were unable to run during the 2020-21 academic session due to physical distancing restrictions, and Centre for Cultural Policy Research (CCPR) programmes were required to move their start date from September 2020 to January 2021. The move to online teaching and assessment posed particular challenges for practice-based courses, and had forced each of the subject areas to adapt their teaching and assessment practices. In Theatre Studies, staff and students explored how to create work in digital formats for assessment. This had been largely successful, resulting in one student submission winning the 2021 award for best assessed group work in the annual School Undergraduate Prize. A newly-appointed member of staff specialising in digital arts, Dr Eirini Nedelkopoulou, had also developed a new course in digital theatre to further develop this aspect of the subject's curriculum. This linked with the 'collaboratively minded digitally enhanced' imperative in the University strategy, and the College of Arts Learning & Teaching Strategy's aim of 'Evolving Approaches to Student-Centred Active Learning' through 'maximising and supporting engagement with blended learning opportunities'.
- 4.4.2 During the meeting with teaching staff, staff informed the Review Panel that each of the subject areas had adapted well to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 Pandemic. For example, subjects had invited guest speakers to deliver online lectures and talks to students, and Theatre Studies had instigated an 'At Home' series of online, lunchtime conversations with Scottish artists (see paragraph 4.1.2 for further information about the 'At Home' series). However, the Pandemic had also placed a great deal of pressure on staff, and had required them to adapt their teaching and learn new technical skills within a very short timeframe. In addition to this, the Pandemic had resulted in an increased number of students suffering from mental health-related issues, resulting in a greater number of Good Cause submissions and requests of extensions. This, in turn, had impacted on the timing of assessments and assessment feedback, and had placed additional pressures on markers, Course Conveners and learning and teaching administrators.
- 4.4.3 The Review Panel recognised the considerable efforts made by staff in each of the subject areas to adapt their teaching and assessment practices in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Panel particularly praised the efforts of Theatre Studies to adapt assessments to digital formats, and to use some of the lessons learned during the Pandemic to develop a new course in digital theatre. Therefore, the Review Panel identified the positive response of each of the subject areas to the COVID-19 Pandemic as an example of **good practice**.

5. The student voice

5.1 Responding to student feedback

Closure of feedback loops

- 5.1.1 As noted in the RA, and at the meeting with teaching staff, each subject incorporated a range of formal and informal feedback mechanisms into teaching in order to gather student feedback. The main method of gathering course-specific feedback was via course evaluation surveys that were sent to students for every course at the end of each semester. These surveys were produced and distributed to students using EvaSys course evaluation software, and students were usually encouraged to complete these surveys in class using their laptop, tablet, or smartphone. Once surveys had been completed, EvaSys automatically collated a summary report, which included all student comments and a statistical summary of student responses to all of the survey's closed questions. This report was sent to all members of staff that taught on the course, who then produced a Summary and Response Document (SARD) summarising student comments and any actions that would be taken to address issues that had been raised. This document was then uploaded to Moodle to allow students to see how their concerns were being acted upon.
- 5.1.2 Student feedback was also gathered via Staff-Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings, which took place once a semester. These meetings were attended by student representatives from each level, and provided a forum for passing on and discussing student feedback with staff. Regarding the mechanics of SSLC meetings, the RA noted that agendas for each meeting were agreed and circulated in advance. Course evaluation feedback was also included as a standing item on every SSLC meeting agenda to ensure that student representatives were informed directly about any actions that had been taken to address issues that had been raised by students. Prior to each meeting, student representatives were encouraged to gather feedback from their classmates in person, and via email and social media. During the meeting, staff responded to any issues raised by the student representatives, and updated the representatives of any changes or progress that had been made towards resolving issues that had been identified in previous meetings. Following each meeting, minutes were circulated to all committee members and made available to students.
- 5.1.3 In addition to course evaluation surveys and SSLCs, the RA, and staff at the teaching staff meeting informed the Review Panel that mid-semester feedback was sometimes gathered by individual members of staff, which allowed them to implement changes prior to the end of the semester. Feedback was also gathered and responded to informally by staff over email, in person, and during supervisory meetings.
- 5.1.4 At the meeting with teaching staff, the Review Panel was informed that student response rates for course evaluation surveys had declined during the COVID-19 Pandemic, and that the low response rates for some courses had significantly undermined the usefulness of these surveys as a means for gathering student feedback and evidence of good teaching practice for promotions applications. Concerns were also raised that poor response rates sometimes resulted in feedback being unrepresentative of the class as a whole, which had made it counterproductive to produce Summary and Response Documents (SARDs) for some courses.
- 5.1.5 The issue of student feedback was also discussed at the meetings with undergraduate and PGT students. At these meetings, the Review Panel was informed that SSLC meetings generally worked well and that student representatives were comfortable sharing their concerns with staff. Students also felt that staff were willing to listen to issues raised by students, and that they were receptive to suggestions for improvements. In addition to this, students spoke positively about opportunities to provide mid-semester feedback, which allowed staff to be more responsive and

address any issues prior to the end of the course. However, concerns were raised by some students that minutes from SSLC meetings were not made available to students in all subject areas after each meeting. Some students also informed the Panel that they did not know who their class representatives were.

- 5.1.6 Regarding EvaSys course evaluation surveys, some students informed the Panel that they had not received course evaluation surveys for all of their courses, and that Summary and Response Documents were not always produced by staff or posted on Moodle in response to student feedback. This meant that some students were unclear about how their concerns were being addressed, and that this acted as a disincentive to completing future course evaluation surveys.
- 5.1.7 While the Panel agreed that students were generally content with the operation of SSLCs, the Panel noted from the documentation provided by each of the subject areas that the availability of SSLC minutes was only partially satisfactory. However, it was unclear whether the absence of these minutes was the result of meetings not taking place or of minutes not being recorded and stored centrally. Echoing the comments made in the meetings with undergraduate and PGT students, and in the meeting with teaching staff, the Panel also noted that some courses had not produced SARDs in response to student feedback, and that response rates for course evaluation surveys had been variable across courses. Therefore, the Review Panel **recommends** that each of the subject areas liaises with the Senate Office to develop a strategy for increasing student response rates for EvaSys course evaluation surveys, and that the subject areas that are not already doing so explore the possibility of sending mid-semester surveys to students to enhance student engagement. To facilitate the closure of feedback loops, the Review Panel also **recommends** that the subject areas develop a mechanism to ensure that Summary and Response Documents are completed for all courses where response rates are statistically significant, and that SSLC minutes are recorded and made available to all students. The subject areas should also ensure that there is effective communication of the actions taken in response to feedback to both students and staff.

6. Supporting student wellbeing

6.1 Student support mechanisms

Administrative support

- 6.1.1 As noted in the meeting with MPA and technical staff, the administrative and technical support team acted as the first point of contact for most students from all three subject areas. Members of MPA and technical staff received large numbers of student queries relating to a range of academic and non-academic matters. Staff felt well-equipped to respond to students' questions and were able to signpost students to relevant University support services if their problems could not be resolved locally. Members of the MPA and technical support team also noted that they felt well-supported by their colleagues, and that there were strong lines of communication between team members and members of teaching staff.
- 6.1.2 At the meeting with teaching staff, and in the responses to the staff survey, the Panel received positive feedback about the dedication and level of support that teaching staff had received from members of MPA and technical staff. Staff also welcomed the recent decision to allocate administrative support to specific subject areas, and to provide a single administrative contact for undergraduate programmes. In the meeting with MPA and technical support staff, the Panel observed that there was a strong sense of community and collegiality amongst the MPA and technical support team, and that staff were enthusiastic and committed to enhancing the student experience. Therefore, the Review Panel identified the quality of administrative support and sense of community

within the MPA and technical support team as an area of **good practice** within the subject areas.

Disability and mental health support

- 6.1.3 The RA noted that information about student support services was widely promoted to students at induction events and in class. Links to relevant services were also published on Moodle course pages, and representatives of key support services were invited to deliver induction talks. The RA further noted that teaching staff and administrative staff in each of the subject areas had good lines of communication with student support services such as Disability Services, and that students with additional support requirements were encouraged to register with Disability Services to ensure that necessary support arrangements were put in place.
- 6.1.4 Regarding support for mental health, the Review Panel was informed at the meeting with teaching staff that staff encouraged students to contact Counselling & Psychological Services (CAPS) if they required any support with mental health-related issues. However, teaching staff, particularly those involved in dissertation and thesis supervision, were often approached by students in relation to their mental health concerns. Staff noted that they sometimes felt ill-equipped or had inadequate support to handle these situations. The experience of encountering large numbers of distressed students had also impacted on their own mental wellbeing. Furthermore, staff noted that students who had attempted to access CAPS had informed them that there were large backlogs and waiting lists, and they expressed concerns that students on one-year PGT programmes occasionally failed to access any support whatsoever during their studies. Staff also expressed the view that more resources were required for CAPS to reduce appointment waiting times and ensure that students could always access the mental health support that they required.
- 6.1.5 The issue of mental health support was also discussed in the meetings with undergraduate and PGT students. At those meetings, students informed the Panel that they had struggled with their mental health during the COVID-19 Pandemic as a consequence of being unable to study and interact with their classmates face-to-face. Students were aware of CAPS and how to access this service. However, echoing the comments that were made by teaching staff, concerns were expressed at the meeting with undergraduate students about the long waiting times for appointments. Students at this meeting also informed the Panel that, while it was often possible to make an initial appointment with CAPS, it was difficult for students with long-term counselling requirements to arrange successive appointments. The Panel was concerned about the length of time that it was taking for students to secure appointments with CAPS despite the recent expansion of the service, and the appointment of additional counsellors and wellbeing officers. Therefore, the Review Panel **recommends** that the subject areas liaise with Counselling & Psychological Services (CAPS) to outline their support requirements and highlight the difficulties that students have faced accessing the service.

Advising and academic support

- 6.1.6 As noted in the RA, academic advising for all undergraduate students within the College of Arts was carried out by the Arts Advising Team. Arts Advising were responsible for responding to all queries from Level 1 and Level 2 students within Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies, and the Honours Convener was responsible for responding to queries from Level 3 and Level 4 students. In Theatre Studies, undergraduate students also received advice about changing courses and future study options during advisory lectures at the end of Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3. At postgraduate level, each incoming PGT student attends a series of individual meetings with their Programme Convener to discuss the various course choices that are

available. During PGT programmes, students are also encouraged to have early conversations about PhD opportunities with conveners, and the Postgraduate Research (PGR) Convener organises a session with PGT students to discuss PhD and scholarship opportunities. In addition to this, Film & Television Studies were discussing the possibility of developing a personal tutoring system for PGT students. This would involve each member of staff in the subject area having a cohort of personal tutees who could provide subject-level support to complement the existing advising services.

- 6.1.7 Academic advising was discussed at both the undergraduate and PGT student meetings. At the meeting with undergraduate students, the Review Panel was informed that students generally, but not always, knew who to contact if they required academic support, although some students raised concerns that the Arts Advising Team could be difficult to access at peak times. At the meeting with PGT students, the Panel was informed by some students that they required more academic and advisory support, and that they did not have a dedicated person who they could contact with academic-related questions. However, students in Film & Television Studies informed the Panel that communication with subject staff was generally good, and that they had received information about academic support services such as Student Learning Development (SLD).
- 6.1.8 The Panel noted that the College of Arts had recently appointed three 'Student Support Officers' (SSOs) to provide frontline support for students. These SSOs supported students by listening to their concerns, helping them to resolve issues independently, and signposting them to sources of information, advice and guidance in relation to their studies, their wellbeing, and their future careers. Given the concerns raised by members of teaching staff about the increasing number of mental health-related queries from students, and the concerns raised by postgraduate students about the lack of academic and advisory support, the Review Panel **recommends** that the subject areas clarify lines of responsibility for academic and non-academic student support. As part of this work, the Review Panel recommends that each of the subject areas communicate with students about the support that can be provided by the College of Arts Advising team (Levels 1 and 2), the Honours Convener (Levels 3 and 4) and the new College of Arts Student Support Officers (SSOs), and that the subject areas liaise with the SSOs to ensure that they interface effectively with teaching staff, subject MPA and technical support staff, subject advisory staff, and University student support services. The Review Panel also **recommends** that each of the subject areas reviews the signposting of University support services such as Student Learning Development (SLD), Disability Services, Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS), and the College Student Support Officers, in programme handbooks, communications sent to students, and in induction lectures.

Communication between staff

- 6.1.9 The issue of communication with teaching staff was discussed at the meeting with PGT students. During this meeting, students informed the Review Panel that communication with staff was generally good, and that staff listened to their concerns. However, some students informed the Panel that there was a lack of communication between staff on their programme, and that this had resulted in the duplication of some teaching content. The Panel was satisfied that lines of communication between students and teaching staff were usually good, and that students felt comfortable contacting members of staff with their queries. However, the Review Panel **recommends** that each of the subject areas develops a strategy to improve communication between programme teaching staff, and reviews course content during programme-level PGT teaching meetings to ensure that teaching content is not duplicated.

6.2 Retention and progression

6.2.1 The RA stated that both Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies had strong continuation and progression rates, although there had been a slight drop off in these rates in 2020. In Film & Television Studies, progression had fallen from 95% in 2019 to below 90% in 2020. In Theatre Studies, progression had fallen from 94.1% in 2019 to below 90% in 2020. Both subject areas believed that the reduction in progression rates had been influenced by the COVID-19 Pandemic, and agreed that this would need to be monitored over the coming years.

7. Summary and conclusions

7.1 Key strengths

The Review Panel identified the following areas as key strengths:

- The consistently high league table positions of Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies.
- The development of School-wide programmes, and the growth in student numbers, particularly in the Centre for Cultural Policy Research.
- The commitment of Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies to widening participation, and increasing the proportion of their students from deprived areas.
- The engagement of Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies with external partners, and the work undertaken by Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies to maintain links with its alumni to provide internship opportunities and careers guidance for current students.
- The quality of administrative support and sense of community within the MPA and technical support team.
- The work undertaken by Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies to decolonise their curriculum and enhance staff diversity.
- The external engagement activities carried out by Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies during COP26.
- The constructive response of each of the subject areas to the COVID-19 Pandemic, including the development of the 'At Home' series by Theatre Studies.

7.2 Areas for enhancement

The Review Panel highlighted the following areas as opportunities for further work:

- Ensuring that each of the subjects' teaching space, equipment, and technical support staffing requirements can be secured, and ensuring that students are able to access licensed content and subscription-based streaming services.
- Identifying suitable caps for programmes and setting appropriate English language requirements for international students.
- Communicating plans to decolonise the curriculum and enhance staff diversity with students and involving students in those discussions.
- Providing undergraduate students with more information at an earlier point in their degree programme about placements, internships and networking opportunities with employers, and opportunities to attend industry-related workshops and seminars.

- The spacing of assessment deadlines to ensure that feedback is received in advance of subsequent assessments, and ensuring that assessment marks and feedback are consistent, and that students are provided with more formative assessment opportunities.
- Support for Graduate Teaching Assistants and external tutors.
- Ensuring that workload models adequately reflect the work required for practical teaching and supervision, and that early-career staff are able to take advantage of the recommended workload reductions for the PGCAP.
- Ensuring the successful closure of student feedback loops and improving communication about routes to closure to students.
- Clarifying the lines of responsibility for academic and non-academic student support and improving the signposting of University support services.
- Improving communication between programme teaching staff.

Specific recommendations addressing these areas for work are listed in the table below, as are a number of further recommendations on particular matters.

7.3 Conclusion

The Review Panel concluded that Film & Television Studies, Theatre Studies, and the Centre for Cultural Policy Research were committed to enhancing the quality of teaching provision across their programmes. In particular, the Panel recognised the work that had been undertaken by staff in each of the subject areas to adapt their teaching and assessment methods in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, including the introduction of the 'At Home' series of online lunchtime conversations with Scottish artists. The Panel also recognised the significant contributions that had been made by Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies to the University's external engagement activities during COP26, and the work that had been undertaken by both subject areas to decolonise their curriculum. In addition to this, the Panel acknowledged the efforts that had been made by each of the subject areas to develop and maintain links with alumni and external partners, and to provide students with a broad range of work-based and sector-relevant assessment opportunities, which allowed them to develop skills that would be directly relevant to a number of careers. The Panel has made a number of recommendations, identifying opportunities for the subject areas to further enhance the quality of their learning and teaching provision. However, these recommendations should not detract from the Panel's overall view of Film & Television Studies, Theatre Studies, and the Centre for Cultural Policy Research as highly successful subject areas within the School of Cultural and Creative Arts.

8. Commendations

The Review Panel commends Film & Television Studies, Theatre Studies, and the Centre for Cultural Policy Research on the following, which are listed **in order of appearance** in this report:

Commendation 1

The Review Panel **commends** the high league table positions of Theatre Studies and Film & Television Studies as indicators of effective practice throughout the subject areas. [Paragraph 3.1.3]

Commendation 2

The Review Panel **commends** Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies for the work that they have undertaken to decolonise their curriculum and enhance staff diversity. [Paragraph 3.2.3]

Commendation 3

The Review Panel **commends** the good student growth rates for each of the subject areas, particularly in the Centre for Cultural Policy Research. [Paragraph 3.4.1]

Commendation 4

The Review Panel **commends** the commitment of Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies to widening participation, and their efforts to increase the proportion of students from deprived areas. [Paragraph 3.4.7]

Commendation 5

The Review Panel **commends** Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies for their contributions to the University's external engagement activities during COP26. [Paragraph 3.5.1]

Commendation 6

The Review Panel **commends** Theatre Studies for developing the 'At Home' series during the COVID-19 Pandemic. [Paragraph 4.1.3]

9. Good practice

- The development of School-wide courses and programmes. [Paragraph 3.2.6]
- The work undertaken by Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies to maintain links with alumni, and to draw on this network to enhance graduate attributes, and provide internship opportunities and careers guidance for current students. [Paragraph 4.1.3]
- The efforts of Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies to engage with external partners. [Paragraph 4.1.6]
- The range of work-based and sector-relevant assessments offered to students in Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies. [Paragraph 4.2.3]
- The positive response of each of the subject areas to the COVID-19 Pandemic. [Paragraph 4.4.3]
- The quality of administrative support and sense of community within the MPA and technical support team. [Paragraph 6.1.2]

10. Recommendations for further enhancement

10.1.1 The recommendations for enhancement detailed in the table below are aligned to the four key thematic sections of the Reflective Analysis as follows, with the recommendations listed in order of priority within each section:

- Strategy for development
- Learning and teaching and enhancement
- The student voice
- Supporting student wellbeing

Periodic Subject Review of Film & Television Studies, Theatre Studies, and the Centre for Cultural Policy Research

RECOMMENDATIONS

THEMATIC ACTIVITY: (Section 1: Strategy for development)	Enhancement benefits	For the attention of	For information
<i>Teaching space, equipment and IT support requirements</i>			
<p>The Review Panel recommends that the College of Arts works with the School of Culture and Creative Arts and University Estates to identify ways in which each of the subjects' teaching space, equipment, and technical support staffing requirements can be secured to enable them to meet the demand for production-based courses and support future growth.</p>	<p>Ensuring that each of the subject areas is able to meet current and future demand for programmes.</p> <p>Ensuring that students have the space and equipment required to support their learning.</p>	<p>Head of School, Head of Film & Television Studies, Head of Theatre Studies, Director of the Centre for Cultural Policy Research</p> <p>Director of University Estates</p> <p>College of Arts Management Group</p>	
<p>The Review Panel recommends that the School of Culture and Creative Arts works with the College of Arts and Information Services to outline the requirements of Film & Television Studies for licensed content and subscription-based streaming services to ensure that all students are able to access these resources. The Review Panel also recommends that the other subject areas are able to feed into this process and outline their IT and software requirements.</p>	<p>Allows students to access the resources required for learning.</p> <p>Reduces inequality of access amongst students.</p>	<p>Head of School, Head of Film & Television Studies, Head of Theatre Studies, Director of the Centre for Cultural Policy Research</p> <p>Director of University Estates</p> <p>Director of Information Services</p> <p>College of Arts Management Group</p>	
<i>Student caps and English language requirements</i>			
<p>The Review Panel recommends that the Head of School and Heads of Subject continue to meet with Planning, Insights and Analytics (PIA), and External Relations to identify suitable caps for programmes and set appropriate English language requirements for international students, noting the concerns of teaching staff about the Duolingo English language test. The Review Panel also recommends that the</p>	<p>Ensures that students can be adequately supported on their degree programmes.</p> <p>Reduces staff workloads.</p>	<p>Head of School, Head of Film & Television Studies, Head of Theatre Studies, Director of the Centre for Cultural Policy Research</p> <p>Director of External Relations</p>	

School and each of the subject areas works with PIA and External Relations to formulate plans for diversifying student recruitment pools.		Director of Planning, Insights & Analytics	
<i>Decolonising the curriculum</i>			
The Review Panel recommends that Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies updates students more regularly on their plans to decolonise the curriculum, and involves students more in their discussions about diversifying the curriculum and enhancing staff diversity.	Improved communication between staff and students. Making students feel more involved in the decision-making process in each subject.	Head of School, Head of Film & Television Studies, and Head of Theatre Studies	
THEMATIC ACTIVITY: (Section 2: Learning and teaching enhancement)	Enhancement benefits	For the attention of	For information
<i>Developing graduate attributes</i>			
The Review Panel recommends that Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies provides more information to undergraduate students at an earlier point in their degree programme about placement, internship and networking opportunities with employers, and opportunities to attend industry-related workshops and seminars. The Review Panel also recommends that Film & Television Studies and Theatre Studies draws on its extensive alumni network in order to assist them with this work.	Enhances graduate attributes and employability. Allows students to make strategic decisions about which courses to take. Gives students a sense of the range of career opportunities available.	Head of School, Head of Film & Television Studies, and Head of Theatre Studies	
<i>Assessment mapping</i>			
The Review Panel recommends that each of the subject areas undertakes an assessment mapping exercise to ensure that assessment deadlines are adequately spaced, and that feedback is received in advance of subsequent assessments. The Review Panel also recommends that each of the subject areas reviews assessment literacy and considers providing students with more formative assessment opportunities, and that they review	Reduces the clustering of assessment deadlines, and reduces the pressure on students. Allows students to learn from their feedback and improve the quality of their work.	Head of School, Head of Film & Television Studies, Head of Theatre Studies, Director of the Centre for Cultural Policy Research, and Dr Kimberly Davis (Academic & Digital Development)	

<p>their feedback sheets to ensure that assessment marks and written feedback are consistent.</p>			
<p><i>Support for Graduate Teaching Assistants, early-career staff, and staff workloads</i></p>			
<p>The Review Panel recommends that each of the subject areas reviews the guidance, support and mentoring arrangements for Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) and external tutors, the preparation time that GTAs and external tutors are paid for, and explores the possibility of providing these staff with student feedback via EvaSys. The Review Panel also recommends that each of the subject areas develops a plan for integrating GTAs and external tutors into the subject's learning and teaching community, and provides increase opportunities for involvement (paid or unpaid) in subject and School-level learning and teaching meetings.</p>	<p>Improves engagement amongst Graduate Teaching Assistants and external tutors.</p> <p>Allows Graduate Teaching Assistants and external tutors to feel valued and have a sense of belonging in their subject/School.</p> <p>Improves cohesion within subjects/Schools.</p> <p>Improves the consistency of the student learning experience.</p> <p>Enhances the career prospects of Graduate Teaching Assistants and external tutors.</p>	<p>Head of School, Head of Film & Television Studies, Head of Theatre Studies, and Director of the Centre for Cultural Policy Research</p> <p>Richard Lowdon (Senate Office)</p>	
<p>The Review Panel recommends that the College, School, and each of the subject areas reviews their workload models to ensure that practical teaching, and PhD and MSc dissertation supervision is adequately accounted for, and that early-career staff undertaking the PGCAP are able to take advantage of the recommended workload reductions for years one and two of the programme.</p>	<p>Allows for a fairer distribution of workloads and helps to reduce inequalities.</p> <p>Enhances the career prospects of early-career staff.</p>	<p>Head of School, Head of Film & Television Studies, Head of Theatre Studies, and Director of the Centre for Cultural Policy Research</p>	<p>Director of Academic & Digital Development</p>

THEMATIC ACTIVITY: (Section 3: The student voice)	Enhancement benefits	For the attention of	For information
<i>Closure of feedback loops</i>			
<p>The Review Panel recommends that each of the subject areas liaises with the Senate Office to develop a strategy for increasing student response rates for EvaSys course evaluation surveys, and that the subject areas that are not already doing so should explore the possibility of sending mid-semester surveys to students to enhance student engagement. To facilitate the closure of feedback loops, the Review Panel also recommends that the subject areas develop a mechanism to ensure that Summary and Response Documents are completed for all courses where response rates are statistically significant, and that Staff Student Liaison Committee minutes are recorded and made available to all students. The subject areas should also ensure that there is effective communication of the actions taken in response to feedback to both students and staff.</p>	<p>Improves response rates for course evaluation surveys and ensures that a more representative sample of student feedback is received.</p> <p>Allows staff to make changes to programmes in response to student feedback.</p> <p>Allows staff to demonstrate how they have responded to student feedback.</p> <p>Enhances student engagement with programmes.</p>	<p>Head of School, Head of Film & Television Studies, Head of Theatre Studies, Director of the Centre for Cultural Policy Research</p> <p>Richard Lowdon (Senate Office)</p>	
THEMATIC ACTIVITY: (Section 4: Supporting student wellbeing)	Enhancement benefits	For the attention of	For information
<i>Student wellbeing support</i>			
<p>The Review Panel recommends that the subject areas clarify lines of responsibility for academic and non-academic student support. As part of this work, the Review Panel recommends that each of the subject areas communicate with students about the support that can be provided by the College of Arts Advising team (Levels 1 and 2), the Honours Convener (Levels 3 and 4) and the new College of Arts Student Support Officers (SSOs), and that the subject areas liaise with the SSOs to ensure that they interface effectively with teaching staff, subject MPA and technical support staff, subject advisory</p>	<p>Improves the quality of academic and non-academic support provided to students.</p> <p>Reduces the pressure on MPA and technical support staff, and teaching staff.</p> <p>Clarifies the lines of responsibility for student support amongst staff in the School/subject area.</p>	<p>Head of School, Head of Film & Television Studies, Head of Theatre Studies, and Director of the Centre for Cultural Policy Research</p> <p>College of Arts Student Support Officers</p>	

<p>staff, and University student support services. The Review Panel also recommends that each of the subject areas reviews the signposting of University support services such as Student Learning Development (SLD), Disability Services, Counselling & Psychological Services (CAPS), and the College Student Support Officers, in programme handbooks, communications sent to students, and in induction lectures.</p>	<p>Provides students with greater clarity about who to contact for academic and non-academic support.</p>		
<p>The Review Panel recommends that the subject areas liaise with Counselling & Psychological Services (CAPS) to outline their support requirements and highlight the difficulties that students have faced accessing the service.</p>	<p>Makes the University aware of the scale of mental health support required by students.</p> <p>Allows the University to adequately resource Counselling and Psychological Services.</p>	<p>Head of School, Head of Film & Television Studies, Head of Theatre Studies, and Director of the Centre for Cultural Policy Research</p> <p>Director of Counselling & Psychological Services</p>	
<p><i>Communication between staff</i></p>			
<p>The Review Panel recommends that each of the subject areas develops a strategy to improve communication between programme teaching staff, and reviews course content during programme-level PGT teaching meetings to ensure that teaching content is not duplicated</p>	<p>Reduces the duplication of course content.</p> <p>Improves the student learning experience.</p> <p>Provides students with greater clarity about who to contact for academic support.</p>	<p>Head of School, Head of Film & Television Studies, Head of Theatre Studies, and Director of the Centre for Cultural Policy Research</p>	