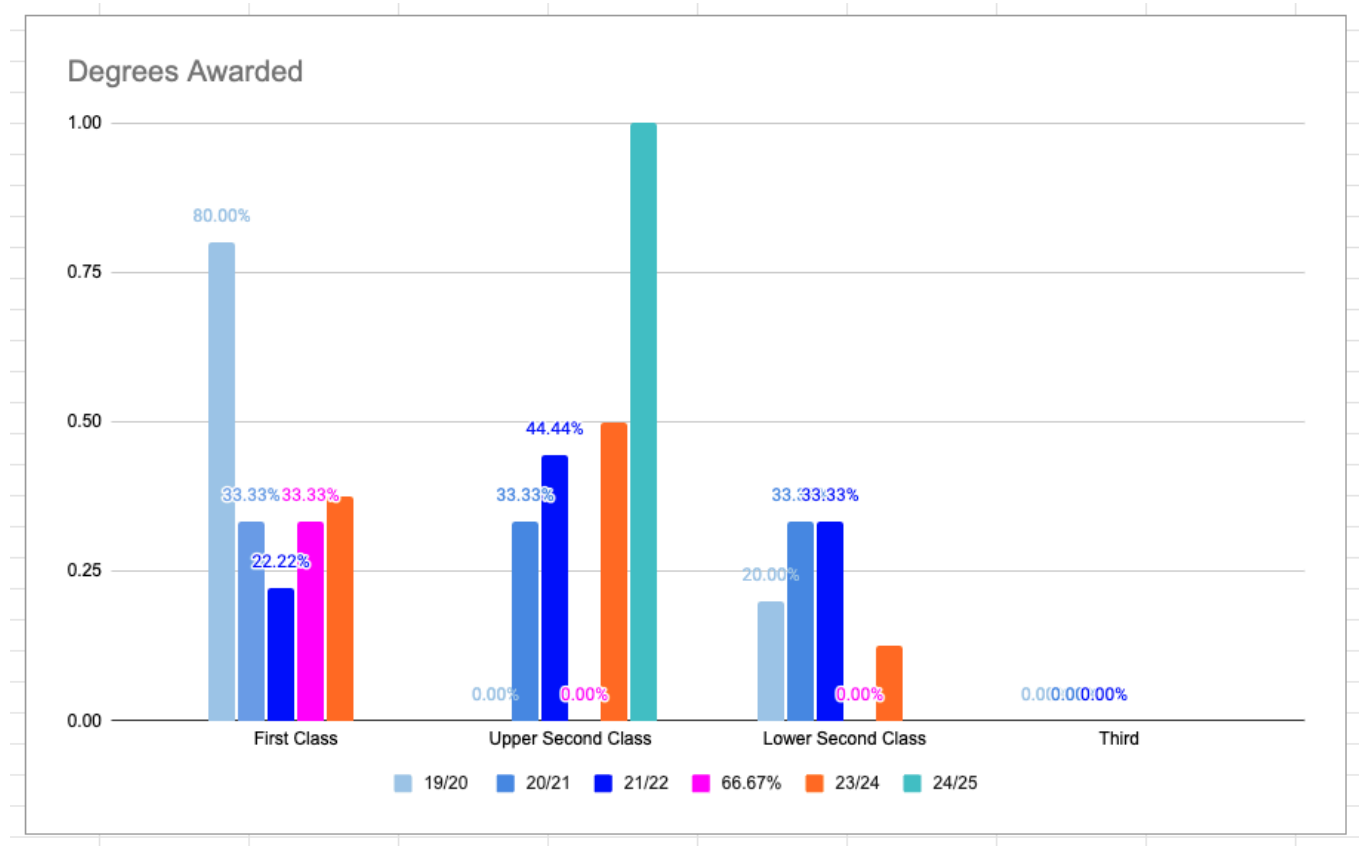


Degree Outcomes Statement (24/25)

This statement provides evidence that the Art Academy's governance and QAE arrangements are robust and ensure that our validated qualifications meet sector recognised standards.

The Art Academy's undergraduate programmes are validated by the Open University. Data on the Academy's degree classification profile over the past two academic years is provided (since the Academy has been delivering undergraduate programmes for a limited time and, therefore is unable to provide the past five years of data as recommended in the UKSCQA guidance for degree outcome statements).



Institutional Degree Classification Profile

It should be noted that we are aware that there are significant issues with the volatility of our data; with small student intake* and, therefore, low numbers of students from under-represented groups, it is difficult to discern significant or meaningful trends. Individuals equate to large changes in percentage points, and data may often need to be suppressed to protect anonymity. This is further compounded by the limited range of data currently available due to the Academy's relatively new undergraduate provision.

When considering the data it is important to understand the context; Art Academy students are generally mature (all undergraduate students are over the age of 21) and for most this is their second

degree. Indeed, many have a higher degree in another subject. At present, the Academy does not have access to SLC and students are self-funded. Whilst the data on good degrees (First and Upper Second Class awards) presented here is high, such students are highly motivated to achieve and benefit from studying at a small institution with very high levels of contact time and support.

Disaggregated data for good degrees by characteristics cannot be reported here without compromising anonymity. Having reviewed the internal data, we are confident that there are no significant differences in attainment. We will continue to monitor disaggregated data for any emergent trends amongst specific groups in relation to 'good' degrees awarded.

** fewer than ten students were awarded degrees in each year presented here.*

Assessment & Marking Practices

All of the Academy's degrees are validated by the Open University and undergo detailed (external) scrutiny at the point of approval (validation) and again every five years (re-validation) to ensure that programme content, learning outcomes, teaching and assessment are aligned with national reference points, specifically the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of Degree Awarding Bodies in England, Wales & Northern Ireland and the Art & Design Benchmark Statement.

An OU appointed external examiner oversees standards, verifies module assignment briefs, reviews assessments and the quality of feedback, and samples student work annually (across all undergraduate levels). The external examiner provides advice on academic standards, including how these compare to similar programmes nationally. External examiners are trained and supported by the OU and receive a detailed briefing from the Academy at the start of their tenure (usually five years). The external examiner's report for the most recently completed academic year confirmed that standards remained current and aligned with national reference points, that grading and classification were comparable with other degree providers, and that students were achieving them through valid and fair assessment.

All programmes are subject to annual monitoring which is scrutinised by the OU. As part of this process, programme teams evaluate all aspects of the programme from recruitment to attainment and set actions for improvement in agreement with the OU. The external examiner's report and student feedback are central to the monitoring process. This is also similarly conducted at an institutional level annually.

The external examiner sits on the Exam & Progression Board to verify standards have been met. Two OU observers also sit on (and report on) the E&PB to verify that it is conducted fairly and consistently in accordance with the OU Regulations for Validated Awards. Students can appeal the decision of the E&PB where circumstances that materially affected the student's performance were not previously divulged or a demonstrable material procedural irregularity occurred creating a reasonable possibility of altering the result, in line with the Academic Appeal policy & procedure.

The Art Academy's Assessment policy & procedure requires all student work to be double marked against grading matrices (approved by the OU); all work is assessed independently, in parallel, by two assessors and then agreed at Module Assessment Boards to ensure that all marks are fair and appropriate for the level. To further ensure rigorous quality assurance, where there are significant differences in the grades of the assessors, a third is required to moderate. For the largest credit

module of level 6 assessment is conducted in parallel by a panel of five assessors including an external assessor (from another HE institution).

To try to ensure that all students can demonstrate their true abilities and academic performance, the Academy has both an Extenuating Circumstances policy and an Alternative Assessment policy which are discussed with students at the start of each academic year and which they are encouraged to use.

Academic Governance

The Board of Trustees delegates responsibility for the oversight of academic development, quality assurance & enhancement and decision-making to the Academic Board. Membership of the board is largely external, drawing on expertise from other HE institutions and includes student representation. It has a number of committees including the E&PB and the Academic Quality, Standards & Student Experience Committee. AQSSEC manages quality assurance and enhancement and student experience across the Academy, on behalf of the Academic Board. The E&PB reports to the Academic Board and the OU on final degree classifications, academic appeals, approved extenuating circumstances and alternative assessment arrangements. These matters are also considered by the programme teams in the annual monitoring which is approved by the Academic Board via AQSSEC. The annual reports also evaluate trends in attainment to support continuous monitoring of standards.

The Academic board approves all student related policies, which are periodically reviewed (within an appropriate schedule). Changes and amendments to policy are also monitored by the OU. The Academic Regulations (OU Regulations for Validated Awards) are, for the most part, set by the OU with some Art Academy-specific policy inclusion.

New programmes are scrutinised by AQSSEC for the Academic Board's approval before examination through the OU's validation (or re-validation) process.

AQSSEC delivers a report to the Academic Board each meeting on it's and the other committee's (of the Academic Board) activities. Minutes of the Academic Board are published to students (and other internal stakeholders) and the Board of Trustees.

Classification Algorithms

Classification of bachelor's degrees leading to an OU Validated Award are based on the average mark across all modules at Level 6 and Level 5 at a ratio of 2:1. OU Regulations for Validated Awards came into effect for all partners from September 2015. In devising the Regulations for Validated Awards, the OU considered that a degree classification which placed more emphasis on the exit velocity/final-year of the student, was the fairest to introduce.

Where the final result of the award classification calculation creates a mark of 0.5% or greater this is rounded up to the next full percentage point. Where the calculation creates a mark below 0.5% this will be rounded down to the next full percentage point (e.g. 59.5% is rounded to 60%; 69.4% to 69%; and so on). For the purposes of rounding up or down, only the first decimal place is used.

Students are required to successfully complete all modules registered against their programme (and there are no optional modules on Art Academy degrees). Where a student is unsuccessful at the first

attempt, a resit or retake may be authorised by the E&PB, as per the OU Regulations for Validated Awards.

Teaching Practices and Learning Resources

The Art Academy offers very high contact time, high tutor-student ratios and an alternative model to fine art education to most other providers. Tutors participate in an ongoing programme of pedagogic-focused CPD and peer reviews (of teaching practice). Student satisfaction with teaching is very high (evidenced in internal student feedback surveys).

As well as continuous improvement to learning resources (in consultation with students), Art Academy London has set out ambitious plans to improve learning resources in a new strategic plan, including the acquisition of a new state-of-the-art building due to open Spring/ Summer 2024.

Due to the limited range of data and its volatility, it is not currently possible to discern the effects of enhancements to teaching & learning strategies and learning resources on classifications. We will continue to monitor the impact of teaching and learning strategies and resources as our dataset grows.

Identifying Good Practice and Actions

The Art Academy has implemented a robust and rigorous assessment process, as described above, which requires all work to be double marked. This is supported by tutors undertaking calibration and standardisation exercises, with colleagues from other HE institutions, to examine and agree approaches to assessment, helping to ensure a consistency of application of the approved grading matrices.

Student understanding of the assessment process and engagement with it is aided by their participation in exercises that require them to analyse learning outcomes and apply the grading matrices to assess samples of work themselves.

As our Academic Board membership is largely external and we are validated by the OU, both programme design and delivery is subject to rigorous scrutiny and monitoring.

Risks and Challenges

For the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years detailed here, the Art Academy adopted an approach of 'no-detriment' to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic, following the regulatory advice from the Office for Students and under the guidance of the OU. Rather than adopt an overarching policy of no-detriment, where all grades are automatically adjusted, the no-detriment approach provided for appropriate adjustments to submission requirements and changes to specific modules, considering the best options for each programme and cohort. Where changes were made these were reviewed by the external examiner, OU academic reviewer (relevant faculty adviser) and approved by the Academic Board and the OU. Relaxed grounds upon which a claim for extenuating circumstances could be made, with COVID related reasons considered without supporting evidence, was central to the approach and exceptional periods of study interruption were allowed beyond those set out in the OU Regulations for Validated Awards (with OU approval on a case by case basis). Whilst the 'no-detriment' approach ceased at the start of 2021/22, extenuating circumstances claims for COVID related reasons are now accepted with self-certified evidence.

The Art Academy is currently working on an application to be registered with the OfS. As a full-cost institution meeting our widening participation goals is challenging and successful registration (and accompanying access to student loans in the future) will remove the financial barriers that currently exist for many potential students. As part of the application we are devising an Access & Participation plan that will identify current recruitment and attainment gaps and propose ways to begin to address these and build upon the outreach activities we currently undertake (as part of our charitable status). We are aware the growth and diversification of our student body will bring new challenges, but are confident that by continuing to make the student voice central to the Academy, addressing the learning needs of students as individuals through high contact time and tutor-student ratios in an inclusive community (as is uniquely possible in a small institution) and championing an alternative and approach to fine art education, we can ensure maximum student success against national degree standards.

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Author of amendments	Darren Nairn	Next review date	October 2026
Changes (list sections)	Institutional Degree Classification Profile Risks and Challenges Institutional name throughout		
Approved by	Academic Board	Date of approval	Sept 2025