

Periodic Review Report Template	
School	Arts and Social Sciences
Discipline Name	Art History, Conservation, Cultural Management and Film Studies
Date of Review	6th & 7th May 2009
Review Panel (approved by University Learning and Teaching Committee)	<p>Internal Membership</p> <p>Edward Griffiths (Chair): Acting Associate Dean, School of Health, Community and Education Studies</p> <p>Simon Robson Subject Director (Property), School of the Built Environment</p> <p>Dr Sarah Soppitt Senior Lecturer in Criminology, School of Arts and Social Sciences</p> <p>David Wright: Students' Union President</p> <p>External Membership</p> <p>Dr Andrew Stephenson Subject Director, Visual Theories and Research Leader, School of Architecture and the Visual Arts, University of East London</p> <p>Facilitators</p> <p>Ms Chris Rickelton (Lead) Administrative support to panel, Academic Registry</p> <p>Peter Fenwick Administrative support to panel, Academic Registry</p> <p>Liz Morrow Administrative support to panel, Academic Registry</p> <p>Sally Iles Learning and Teaching Support Adviser, Academic Registry</p>
Method of Review	This review was conducted using the periodic review procedure defined in Northumbria's Review Handbook (2008 version), available from http://northumbria.ac.uk/sd/central/ar/lts/review/intrev/

Section 1	Discipline Aims and Context
<p>The School of Arts and Social Sciences (ASS) is committed to further build its capability as a high quality teaching and research-led School and has recently experienced a period of dramatic change in order to position itself to 'play a leading role in the intellectual, socio-economic and cultural development of our learning communities in the region, nationally and internationally'. The Division of Visual Arts has resulted from the amalgamation of the Divisions of Art History and Fine Art, which were joined latterly by programmes and staff from Film and Television in order to align staff expertise and research strengths. Its vision is 'to make a difference to the artistic and cultural landscape through excellence in learning and teaching, student support, dedicated research, scholarly activity, professional practice, knowledge transfer and enterprise'. This review focused on three distinct elements: conservation, cultural management and visual cultural studies and postgraduate provision, including some highly specialised post graduate programmes. The disciplines contributing to this review embrace the aims of the Division namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure the Division as one of the top 15 universities in national league tables • Develop further the suite of programmes at postgraduate and undergraduate level together with a greater emphasis on continuing professional development • Enhance the number and quality of applications for the programmes from home and international students at undergraduate and postgraduate level. • Develop and support a group in which all staff are research active and which further increases its reputation for outstanding international research, enterprise and esteem <p>To that end the Division is committed to delivering high quality programmes as well as producing value added outputs from research, enterprise and consultancy activities both in the U.K. and through a wider and stronger international portfolio</p> <p>The Division is located across four buildings. Whilst there are concerns about some aspects of the School's</p>	

estates it has recently opened the Gallery North, Graduate Studio Northumbria and the Student Centre together with some phased improvements for Media. It is also noted that the infrastructure has recently been enhanced to some extent in terms of office accommodation and student communal spaces. Further enhancements are being planned from 2009-10 onwards and the Panel has confidence in the convictions expressed with regard to the ongoing developments in respect of the Estates Strategy.

The Panel met a team of 20 academic members of staff from the Division of Visual Arts who contribute to the programmes under review, 2 Administrators, 1 English Language Support Tutor and a Subject Librarian.

The two tables below provide details of the student numbers for each programme that was included in the review

Table 1

Undergraduate Programme	08/09 Home Target	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total Home for programme
BA Hons HOMADF	20	22	27	10	59
BA Hons Film and Television Studies	27	24	19	29	72
BA Hons Art History and History	0	0	0	5	5
BA Hons Art History and Sociology	0	0	0	2	2
BA Hons Visual Culture	0	0	0	7	7
BA Hons English and Art History	0	0	7	8	15
					160

Table 2

Postgraduate Programme	CCF/T Sept	CCP/T Sept	CCF/T Jan	CCP/T Jan	DL F/T Sept	DLP/T Sept	DLF/T Jan	DLP/T Jan	Yr 1 Sept	Yr 2 Sept	Total
MA Preventive Conservation	2	1			2	13					18
MA Conservation of Fine Art									13	14	27
MA Cultural Management	7	5	2					6			20
MA Event and Conference Management	9	2	5	1							17
MA Museum and Heritage Management	2	1				1					3
MA Music Management and Promotion	2						1				3
MA Film Studies	8										8
											96

Section 2	Curricula and Standards
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The Panel identified the following strengths:

- In the context of the School's overarching vision there is a well articulated and clear direction of

travel and the panel commended the local, national and international reputation of the provision and its future aspirations.

- There is robust evidence of a strong research base with the collective skill mix and expertise of staff being fit for purpose for the delivery of the different programmes.
- There is exploitation of the synergy between research and teaching which will be further strengthened with the recent appointment of active researchers into academic posts
- There are effective strategies and policies in place to ensure that the standard of each programme is maintained at a suitable level and relevant subject benchmarks are adhered to.
- There is significant evidence of collaboration with a complex network of external stakeholders and it is evident that this adds value in ensuring that the programmes remain current and valid in light of developing knowledge in the disciplines.
- There is evidence that there are appropriate learning resources and information technology is being capitalised upon to facilitate learning

The Panel made the following recommendations for further development:

- Guidance and support for students whilst on placement should be strengthened especially to ensure the proficiency of work based providers in relation to student self management and in line with the QAA Work Based & Placement Guidance (September 2007)
- Explore further with employers how they might be more formally engaged in programme design and delivery
- Ensure that updating of programme specifications is made explicit through appropriate use of programme specifications and log of changes

Section 3

Management Information

The Panel identified the following strengths:

- There are systems and processes in place within the School and the Discipline to provide the necessary information to staff at all levels in the School.
- There is a well articulated Student Attendance and Withdrawal Policy for both home and international students.

The Panel made the following recommendations for further development:

- To negotiate a review of the way in which management information data is presented by the Centre of the University in order to be better able to interpret the data and assess trends

Section 4

Student Experience

The Panel identified the following strengths:

- Employers expressed confidence in the quality of the students and in the ability of the Discipline to produce highly employable graduates
- Students were very positive about the expertise and passion of the academic staff of the Discipline. They valued their expertise and were very enthusiastic about the currency of their programmes.
- Students believe there is a robust infrastructure for student support and praised the staff for their availability and accessibility to provide them with such support

The Panel made the following recommendations for further development:

It is acknowledged that the Discipline has established mechanisms and processes to communicate with students and that newly introduced School student administration and support systems are bedding down.

- Given that some students reported concerns about confusing information (e.g. assessment hand in dates), the School and the Discipline should work together to monitor and improve communication strategies, particularly when changes are made to student administration processes such as assessment receipting.
- It is suggested that the Discipline continue to develop its consultative mechanisms with students.

Discussions with students should include keeping them informed of decisions and ensuring they are fully aware of consultation processes.

- The Discipline further considers how it might ensure careers support is enhanced in its programmes
- The School and the Discipline should continue to work together to ensure that issues raised as a result of the introduction of the Student Attendance and Withdrawal Policy are recognised and dealt with.
- The Discipline should build upon its current success with placements and volunteering to further enhance its portfolio

Section 5	Enhancement Strategies
<p>The Panel identified the following strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The culture to seek to continually improve the quality of student experience is evident. • There is a strong evidence of learning and teaching enhancement with substantial commitment from staff across the disciplines • There is substantial evidence of scholarship and research informed teaching together with contemporary professional expertise. • The staff delivered three excellent presentations, namely: Innovative e-learning and teaching; Authenticating Students Learning Experiences through Engagement and Research informed curriculum and learning • The Discipline's desire to enhance the postgraduate culture, to build upon excellence in research and to further enhance the internationalisation agenda • The enthusiasm and commitment of the Division to drive up standards in order to be one of the top 15 universities in national league tables <p>The Panel made the following recommendations for further development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Division should share its good practice in terms of its value added research based teaching with other Schools within the University and beyond. 	

Section 6	Discipline Response to Report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to the recommendation to strengthen the guidance and support for students on placement especially to ensure the proficiency of work based providers in relation to student self management and in line with the QAA Work Based & Placement Guidance (September 2007) the Department has reviewed and produced a development plan to further enhance distance learning programmes. The Department has also developed and implemented its Student Work Placement Guide in line with QAA Work based Placement Guidance. • In response to the recommendation to explore the engagement of employers in programme design and delivery the Department has begun to review the communication and links between programmes across all departments and perspective employers as well as alumni. An employer's forum is due to be launched in Summer 2010. • In response to the recommendation to ensure that the updating of programme specifications is made explicit through appropriate use of programme specifications and log of changes the Department has such Quality processes in place as regular contributions to and attendance of Quality Committees and SLT meetings. • In the light of the outcomes of the QAA Institutional Audit, the Department is supporting negotiations into the review of how APM data is presented in order to be better able to interpret data and assess trends. • In response to the recommendation to monitor and improve communication strategies in light of students reporting concerns of confusing information about such aspects as deadlines the Department continues with its (in)formal meetings with HoD, emails with Programme Leaders and Senior Administrators, Programme and Assessment Handbooks, and the Student Advice and Support Centre (SASC) through which students can get information or leave queries for administrative and academic staff. • In response to the suggestion of developing its consultative mechanisms with students the Department has begun a programme of (in)formal meetings, begun developing an ELP site to facilitate and enable online discussion and consultation across cohorts and the Department, and 	

continues to support School Student Representatives and their forums through regular meetings.

- In response to the recommendation to further consider the maintenance and enhancement of career support in its programmes the Department is currently considering a Departmental framework for CPD in areas such as Gallery Management (using Gallery North).
- In response to the recommendation to ensure School and Discipline collaboration on issues raised through the introduction of Student Attendance and Withdrawal Policy the Department is taking ongoing action with the School to review policy and procedure supported through the Induction, Welcome Back, and Guidance process.
- As a response to the recommendation to build upon its current success with placements and volunteering the Department refers to its actions mentioned in bullet points one and two and its aim of working more closely with alumni.
- In response to the recommendation to share its good practice in terms of its research and teaching with other schools the Department refers to its Research Seminar Series, participation of staff in cross-University conferences, and its plans for an online workshop to be introduced in September 2010.