



**EDUCATIONAL OVERSIGHT INSPECTION OF PRIVATE FURTHER
EDUCATION COLLEGES AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOLS**

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS

Company Registration Number - 6645686

Full Name	International School of Creative Arts
Address	Teikyo Foundation (UK), Framewood Road, Buckinghamshire SL2 4QS
Telephone Number	01753 208820
Email Address	enquiries@isca.uk.com
Website	www.isca.uk.com
Executive Director	Mr Colin Kerrigan
Proprietor	Mr Yukio Sato
Age Range	16+
Total number of students	81
Numbers by age and type of study	Under 18: 51 18+: 30 FE only: 81
Inspection dates	1 - 3 June 2016

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight of private further education colleges and English language schools. The inspection consists of a three-day team inspection of the institution's educational provision.

The ISI is an approved Educational Oversight body authorised by the Home Office to inspect privately funded further education colleges and English language schools in England and Wales offering courses on the Qualifications and Credit Framework. It is designed to improve the quality of education on offer to international students who attend UK colleges through Tier 4 of the points-based system for student visas.

ISI inspections are required to:

- Report on the extent to which colleges comply with the published Educational Oversight Standards;
- Assess and report on the quality of educational outcomes and provision;
- Where applicable, make recommendations outside the scope of the Standards to support continued improvement of quality.

Inspection provides objective and reliable reports on the quality of colleges, and by placing reports in the public domain, makes this information available to students, Government and the wider community. Inspection takes account of the context of each individual college, and of how it evaluates its own performance and demonstrates its success.

The inspection of the college is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on students. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the college, its services or other physical features;
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the college or its accounting procedures;
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the college's compliance with employment law.

CONTENTS

	Page
1 CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT	2
2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	3
3 THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS	4
(a) Assessment of students prior to or on arrival	4
(b) Suitability of course provision and curriculum	4
(c) The quality of teaching and its impact on learning	5
(d) Attainment and progress	5
4 STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY	7
(a) Health, safety and security of the premises	7
(b) Student registration and attendance records	7
(c) Pastoral support for students	8
(d) Safeguarding for under 18s	8
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	9
(a) Ownership and oversight	9
(b) Management structures and responsibilities	9
(c) Quality assurance including student feedback	9
(d) Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks	10
(e) Provision of information	10
6 ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	11
INSPECTION EVIDENCE	

1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 International School of Creative Arts (ISCA) is a specialist art and design co-educational day and boarding school. It was established in 2009 in association with University of the Arts London (UAL). The school is now a fully independent centre for pre-university study in art and design. The board oversees the school by monitoring the success of the students and ensuring the aims are met.
- 1.2 The school is situated on a large rural campus which is located between Slough and Gerrards Cross in Buckinghamshire. The campus is owned by and shared with the Teikyo Foundation. Students have access to shared facilities including swimming pool, sports hall and refectory.
- 1.3 The aim of the school is to be at the forefront of pre-university studies in art and design and equip students, from diverse cultural backgrounds, with the necessary technical and intellectual skills to progress to leading international creative arts universities in both the UK and overseas.
- 1.4 The school offers a range of creative subjects at A levels appropriate for progress to Higher Education in Art and Design. Students also have the chance to spend part of their time studying at Central Saint Martins (CSM) in preparation for the fast-track Foundation (FAD plus). The majority of students are full time boarders and four students who live offsite are over 18 years of age and housed with relatives or family friends.
- 1.5 The school offers A level creative courses in fine art, graphic communication, fashion and textiles, photography and 3D design. Students choose a further academic option of either mathematics, History of Art (critical and contextual studies). All programmes are supported by artistic, cultural and social enrichment activities. Where needed students may study English as a foreign language as an alternative to an A level subject.
- 1.6 At the time of the inspection 81 students are enrolled, the majority of which are under 18 years old. The large majority of students are female and come from a wide range of countries but predominantly are from the Far East and Europe. Selection is based on the entry requirements for the course, students' academic qualifications and an acceptable level of English language. The majority do not have English as their first language. Ten per cent of students had been identified with special educational needs (SEND).
- 1.7 The school was last inspected on the 24-25 March 2015 when it met all key standards and the quality of education was judged to exceed expectations.

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The school exceeds expectations for the quality of education.** At the time of the inspection, all Standards for Educational Oversight were met and quality is excellent.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is excellent. Initial assessment and induction are excellent at ensuring students are enrolled on the most suitable course and that any special educational needs are identified. Course provision is excellent and successfully meets students' educational and career aspirations. Teaching and learning are very good. The planning of teaching is excellent using a wide range of teaching methods to ensure students progress well. Students participate confidently producing a very high standard of creative work. Studios are well resourced and available for students to use into the evening. Teachers are extremely experienced and as a result standards are very high. Students are supported very well as progress is frequently reviewed and high quality, helpful feedback given during their individual tutorials and on their work. Language support is particularly effective in ensuring students have the communication skills to work collaboratively and for their future academic study. Progress and achievement are excellent and students' progression to higher education is very high. Courses on offer to Tier 4 students meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance.
- 2.3 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is excellent. The schools premises, including residential accommodation, are good quality and fit for purpose, well maintained and very secure. Good measures are in place to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Detailed risk assessments are in place in workshops and for trips. Admission and attendance registers are accurately maintained in accordance with Home Office requirements and attendance is high. Pastoral support is excellent. Students are very well supported on welfare and personal issues and receive outstanding careers guidance for their future aspirations. Safeguarding measures are excellent.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. Oversight by the proprietor is very good through his monitoring of provision and policies. A clear management structure and good communication results in a highly effective management team. Strong leadership is evident at all levels, providing a clear direction and ensuring high quality education. As a result the school fulfils its aims by ensuring that students succeed and progress to higher education. Senior managers are successful in appointing high quality creative teachers. An accurate self-evaluation report, and a development plan which is monitored very effectively, ensures improvements. Staff are monitored and supported through a comprehensive performance review system which includes regular lesson observations. Student views are gathered and discussed in the students' forum, however students report that they feel their views are not always sufficiently heard.

3. THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS

3.(a) Assessment of students prior to or on arrival

- 3.1 The assessment of students prior to or on arrival is excellent. The school uses extensive overseas publicity to ensure that their application procedures are clear to potential students. The application procedure is very thorough, including scrutiny of an applicant's portfolio of work and an in-depth interview with two highly experienced school managers. These interviews are particularly effective in gauging students' innovative and original thinking and creative skills. In this way the school ensures students are suitable for the school and studying on the correct course.
- 3.2 The online pre-arrival course, which is part of the induction process, is very effective in familiarising students with their courses before they arrive, including the development of creative ideas and how their work is discussed in critiques. In this way students are effectively introduced to their chosen course of study.
- 3.3 Teachers and tutors are very well aware of individual students' strengths and weaknesses. Excellent initial diagnostic assessment of students includes aspects such as any declared special educational needs, gifted and talented characteristics, and emotional, behavioural and language support required. This information is used to inform teachers and as a result individual students are closely monitored.
- 3.4 English language initial testing is extremely thorough. An appropriate standard English test is used during induction which provides detailed diagnostic information. Students are required to take English tests at regular intervals. The test scores are electronically recorded and these results are used to monitor progress.

3.(b) Suitability of course provision and curriculum

- 3.5 Course provision and curriculum are excellent and successfully focus on students' career aspirations. The school has very close links with higher education and the curriculum is completely aligned with these institutions' entrance requirements.
- 3.6 The courses on offer fully challenge the students enabling them to develop their skills. For example they spend part of their time studying at Central Saint Martins which is part of the University of the Arts London. All students register for their chosen range of A level courses which are clearly described in the handbook and website. These courses on offer to Tier 4 entrant international students lead to qualifications which meet the definition of an approved qualification for Home office purposes.

3.(c) The quality of teaching and its impact on learning

- 3.7 The quality of teaching and its impact on learning is very good. Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge and knowledge of both historical and cultural aspects of their specialisms. This maintains the students' interest.
- 3.8 Teachers plan excellent lessons containing clear aims and objectives and employ a variety of very appropriate teaching methods to ensure students progress well. In lessons teachers successfully elicit good responses from students through both direct and open questioning. In this way students learn to be analytical and express and expand on their opinions. The pace of teaching is good but in a small minority of classes the pace at the start of the lesson is slow.
- 3.9 The vast majority of students demonstrate a thorough understanding and enthusiasm for their work. They engage well with tasks both individually and when cooperating on group tasks. In the majority of classes students participate fully and express themselves well. Studios are well resourced and available for students to use into the evening. Students use available materials and resources well to produce innovative and imaginative projects. Teachers are very supportive of all students and particularly encouraging of the less confident students.
- 3.10 Student progress is thoroughly monitored. Individual feedback is constructive and inspires students to view their work with a critical eye. Students are very aware of their progress and what they need to do to improve. Teachers inform students of their academic progress in regular and frequent one-to-one academic tutorials. Written tutorial reports include discussion points and detailed targets. Analysis of assessments is effectively used to inform students at what grade they are currently working.
- 3.11 Marking and feedback of student work is thorough and training sessions for teachers are provided on good assessment practice. Feedback and grading is standardised through the internal verification system, which conforms to examination board requirements. English language work is regularly marked and includes grammar corrections with full explanations of grammatical rules.
- 3.12 The integration of English language teaching within specialist subjects is very frequent and effective. The school also provides very good dyslexia one-to-one assistance for students who have been identified as needing this support. Support staff have extensive practical experience in this area.

3.(d) Attainment and progress

- 3.13 Progression rates are very high with ninety eight per cent of students progressing to university. Students are very well educated in line with the school's aims and their courses' aims, both of which support their aspirations to progress to higher education. Progress and attainment in class are very good. Students demonstrate excellent skills and understanding of their chosen branch of the creative industries. Student examination achievement is very high with very few withdrawals from

courses. The school monitors the A level results against the national averages and uses this analysis in their self-evaluation.

4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.(a) Health, safety and security of the premises

- 4.1 Health, safety and security of the premises are very good. There are effective arrangements for managing the health and safety of students and staff and a clear commitment to assuring the welfare of students. Appropriate policies are in place which are comprehensive and are reviewed regularly. Monitoring of their implementation successfully leads to amendment where necessary. Very detailed risk assessments are used for workshops and students' visits.
- 4.2 Students receive health and safety information at induction and in the student handbook which they remember. Appropriate building checks and fire drills are undertaken and action plans monitored to ensure compliance. An appropriate number of trained fire marshals is in place to cover the school premises. Fire protection equipment is properly sited and regularly checked. Emergency procedures and signage are clear.
- 4.3 First aid policy is suitable and first aid boxes well stocked and available in all workshops and the accommodation block. First aiders have been trained and the incident log is up-to-date. Good provision is made for students who are ill or injured.
- 4.4 Premises, including residential accommodation, are fit for purpose; clean and tidy and very secure. The school is in good decorative order and classrooms are well fitted as design studios with sufficient information technology facilities. Residential accommodation is located within the school grounds and is well decorated and very secure. The bedrooms all have en-suite facilities and appropriate furniture for study purposes. Communal laundry and kitchen areas are clean and tidy with appropriate safety notices for the operation of equipment.
- 4.5 There are an appropriate number of washrooms in the school, which are clean and well maintained. The school is not fully accessible for students in wheel chairs. Facilities in the canteen for the preparation and serving of food are very good.

4.(b) Student registration and attendance records

- 4.6 Student registration and attendance records are excellent. A highly effective attendance policy clearly outlines procedures for monitoring attendance and course completion, resulting in an excellent attendance rate of 95 per cent over two years. Registration and attendance records are accurate and well maintained.
- 4.7 The attendance policy also outlines procedures for reporting Tier 4 students to the Home Office in a timely manner should there be a series of absences. No student has yet had to be reported.

4.(c) Pastoral support for students

- 4.8 Pastoral support for students is excellent. Staff provide highly effective support and guidance in accordance with the needs of the students and the school's aims. Pre-course group conversations, through an online video link, assist students in preparing to study at the school. A thorough induction over a two week period includes taster sessions with an arts orientation trip to London. Students say that staff are very supportive in helping them to settle into the school. A useful student handbook includes appropriate and essential contact information so that students know who to go to for support on personal issues.
- 4.9 An excellent social programme provides a wide range of sporting facilities and fun activities which enrich the students' experience of the school. A good variety of external excursions further enhance their academic and cultural experience.
- 4.10 Relationships are very positive between staff and students and among the students themselves and the school positively promotes integration and tolerance. The school provides outstanding guidance for students' progression to further study in universities.

4.(d) Safeguarding for under 18s

- 4.11 Safeguarding is excellent. Measures are in place to ensure all staff are familiar with the policies and procedures which are regularly reviewed and updated. All staff have received appropriate training in safeguarding. Well-designed arrangements ensure security and safety relating to the shared use of the premises. Policies include information on the use of internet and social media and a comprehensive policy on smoking, alcohol and misuse of drugs. These link effectively with the safeguarding policy, which outlines effective measures to protect students from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) Ownership and oversight

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. The board and leaders provide excellent oversight of the school in line with its aims and culture and fully discharge their responsibilities for educational standards.
- 5.2 The proprietor plays an effective role in strategic management and development including fulfilling his responsibilities for welfare, health, safety and security. He ensures high quality staff are appointed and that arrangements for safeguarding students are in place. He also ensures the sufficiency of resources by robust financial management. Subject areas now manage their own devolved budgets which enable the prompt acquisition of consumable resources which shows good progress on the recommendation from the previous inspection. A comprehensive range of policies is reviewed systematically and amended if required. All necessary legal permissions are in place.

5.(b) Management structures and responsibilities

- 5.3 The new management structure is clear and appropriate. Senior managers and teachers meet regularly and communication is good. Managers often look to staff for suggestions.
- 5.4 The executive director has a very thorough insight into the working of the school and challenges practices and ideas well. He is successful in coordinating a highly effective management team and a development plan which sets clear priorities for change. This plan includes challenging targets which are monitored regularly and improvements are very evident. The school has a clear direction which is reflected in the outstanding levels of progression of the students to higher education.
- 5.5 The new head of school very effectively discharges her responsibility for the day-to-day running of the school and maintaining the very high educational standards. All staff have clear roles and responsibilities which are well understood. The structure of meetings involves all staff. All teaching staff are highly qualified vocationally and hold teaching qualifications.

5.(c) Quality assurance including student feedback

- 5.6 Quality assurance procedures are very good with appropriate arrangements in place. Managers and staff are very effective in self-evaluation, setting priorities and ensuring that they are achieved. The self-evaluation report and development plan show critical evaluation and actions for improvement. These are monitored frequently.
- 5.7 The lesson observation system is thorough and focuses well on students' learning and attainment. Newly qualified teachers are mentored and observed frequently for

their first year. Observation reports identify improvements which are monitored. Staff performance is supported well at personal reviews where the outcomes of lesson observation are used as a focus. Continuous professional development needs are identified and much relevant staff development is undertaken.

- 5.8 The school receives feedback through the students' forum where minutes are taken and actions monitored well. This forum includes class representatives. However students' feedback to inspectors shows that they feel their views are not always sufficiently heard. The pre-inspection feedback from staff and students confirmed that they considered the school was good.
- 5.9 The policy and process for making and recording formal complaints is clear and appropriate with access to an independent panel if necessary.

5.(d) Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks

- 5.10 Staff recruitment, qualifications and suitability checks are excellent. The selection procedures for new staff are thorough and have resulted in the appointment of high quality staff. All suitability checks are carried out, qualifications verified and references taken up. All staff have Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks to confirm their suitability to work with those under 18 years. The central staff record of all appropriate employment checks is up-to-date.

5.(e) Provision of information

- 5.11 The school's website contains all the necessary information. The school provided all the information required for the inspection.

6. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for further improvement

In order to further improve the excellent quality provided, the school should:

- Strengthen the collection of students' views so that all students feel involved, and use the feedback to make improvements.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with students and examined samples of students' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the proprietor. Inspectors visited residential accommodation. The responses of staff and students to confidential pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the college.

Inspectors

Mrs Prue Amner	Lead Inspector
Ms Jane Beeson	Team Inspector
Ms Christine Powell	Team Inspector