Policy 012: Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 This policy identifies the main objectives within learning and teaching at ACM.

1.2 This policy explains the ways in which ACM collaborates with students and education stakeholders, both internal and external, to enhance student learning opportunities.

1.3 This policy outlines ACM's approach to providing high quality programmes and courses that are focussed on student progression and achievement and characterised by the currency and relevance of their subject matter, innovative delivery, assessment and feedback.

2. Policy Statement

Partners in Learning, Teaching and Enhancement

2.1. The active participation of students in ACM's enhancement processes is an essential and valuable component in maintaining and improving the quality of learning opportunities.

2.2 ACM's curriculum provides opportunities for students to consistently and actively engage in Learning and Teaching processes and strategies throughout their studies. It supports important notions such as active learning, students as partners, and students as co-creators of the curriculum. These are vital in developing a range of graduate attributes, both professional and personal, helping to build student confidence, ability to communicate effectively, and sense of an academic and specialist self.

2.3 ACMs works in partnership with its collaborative and validating partners, and appropriate external organisations to ensure a broad range of learning opportunities are made available to all students.

2.4 ACM is responsive to the needs of the music industry and works in collaboration with key industry partners in the development and enhancement of education.

Curriculum Design

2.5 ACM is committed to ensuring that all taught provision at all education levels aligns with external frameworks, including Subject Benchmark Statements and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

2.6 ACM designs and delivers innovative and relevant programmes that are shaped by the most current industry practice, developing students technical and applied skills, disciplinary research and scholarly skills, as well as subject knowledge. ACM is committed to developing a professional and academic skills framework, which is made available to all students, and which is supportive of the transition to professional practice, open intellectual inquiry, academic progress, and allows students to thrive academically, professionally, and creatively.

Creative and Innovative Delivery

2.7 ACM enhances learning and teaching through creative and innovative delivery, including

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the appropriate use of technology and the continued development of resources.

2.8 The academy believes that a wide range of delivery methods can be employed to promote learning. These include full-time attended courses, part-time courses, online delivery, and blended delivery.

Assessment for Learning

2.9 ACM ensures that assessments are designed as an integral part of the learning process ("assessment for learning") as well as a means of measuring student progress and achievement.

2.10 Assessments are designed to afford students the best opportunity to adequately demonstrate their understanding and meeting of modular and programme learning outcomes.

Approaches to and the use of Feedback

2.11 ACM ensures that assessment and feedback to students on their work promotes effective and independent student learning and contributes to their academic, professional and technical development.

2.12 ACM ensures that feedback should is developmental, informing future assessment and professional practice undertaken by students.

2.13 ACM ensures assessment and feedback practices are appropriate, valid, inclusive, reliable and transparent, clearly communicated in a timely manner, and subject to regular review.

Professional Practice

2.14 Teaching is informed by professional experience at the highest standards and, where appropriate, carried out by those engaged in original creative work at a high level.

2.15 ACM ensures that our approaches to learning and teaching position students for further success after completion of their programme or course of study. This includes supporting students to gain professional experience and employability skills during their studies.

2.16 ACM is committed to ensuring that students acquire the knowledge, skills and experience through their studies to ensure their success in future life, and within their chosen vocation or area of employment.

Student Responsibility

2.17 Students are enabled and supported to take responsibility for their own learning.

2.18 The curriculum encourages students to develop a range of key attributes in: creativity, self-reflection, technical application, sociability, resilience, and industry preparedness.

Review

2.19 Learning and Teaching strategies evaluate the impact of learning, teaching and

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assessment activities with regard to the quality of the student learning experience, through cyclical monitoring, review, and enhancement activity.

2.20 Students are engaged in the monitoring, review, development and enhancement of Learning and Teaching practices, and are assured that their feedback influences their learning experience.

2.21 The evaluation of student opinion and appropriate response to the results is a key indicator in ACM's processes for the assurance and enhancement of Learning and Teaching.

Learning and Teaching Approaches

2.22 Learning and Teaching approaches will adopt an evidence-based approach to the enhancement of learning, teaching and assessment practice, and has in place, robust mechanism to ensure the oversight and identification of internal and external good practice, strengths and achievements for wider dissemination and consideration, and considering areas where further enhancement would be of benefit.

2.23 ACM ensures the implementation of a robust framework of marking and feedback mechanisms, and moderation of summative assessments.

2.24 Moderation of assessment ensures a standardised approach to assessment marking and feedback across subjects and levels. ACM's approach towards moderation includes double marking, second marking, analysis of grade distribution, and monitoring through external examiner/moderators.

2.24 The design and delivery of ACM courses and programmes is flexible and responsive, paying due regard to varying learning needs and styles and our students' educational experience and current/emerging industry practices and needs. ACM aims to maintain inclusive learning and teaching practices that provide fair and equitable learning opportunities for all students.

Staff Development

2.25 ACM supports and promotes the continued professional and academic development of academic staff. ACM will strive to ensure all academic staff have the opportunity to undertake professional qualifications or work towards professional accreditation.

2.26 Learning and Teaching practices identify and determine areas of development and enhancement, to support and strengthen ACM's taught programmes.

Observation of Teaching

2.27 ACM believes that observation of teaching can drive the quality of learning and teaching through peer support and self reflection. Observation of teaching encourages all staff to reflect on the effectiveness of their own teaching and identify their development needs.

2.28 Observation of teaching practice additionally provides the opportunity foster discussion and dissemination of best practice, and to identify any weaknesses and put in place an

action plan to improve practice, where the need is identified.

2.29 Observations provide the opportunity to increase staff awareness of the student experience and to assist departments in providing a high quality educational experience for their students.

Assessment Principles

2.30 Assessments are designed to measure all of the intended learning outcomes summatively and are a valid measure of student achievement.

2.31 Assessments are reliable and consistent. All assessments will aligned to the generic level descriptors from validating partners and all awards will be delivered in accordance with the regulations of awarding institution.

Marking follows clear and consistent guidelines and be moderated by both ACM academic staff and external examiners/moderators in accordance to the awarding institutions regulations. External examiners/moderators will be asked to report on the reliability of assessment.

2.32 Assessments are equitable and encourage all programmes to employ a diversity of assessment methods to allow students to demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding.

ACM is also aware of the need to make reasonable adjustments in the assessment of students with evidenced learning needs or other additional or outstanding requirements.

2.33 Assessments and assessment briefs are transparent and explicit. Students are clearly informed of the purpose and requirements of all assessment tasks. Feedback to students relates to the stated learning outcomes and assessment criteria that are made available to students at the commencement of each module. Feedback is timely, in accordance to the policy of the validating university partner, and focusses on the outcomes being assessed. Students receive a variety of feedback including written, audio, and video modes.

2.34 All assessments support the learning process by being authentic, aligned with the intended learning outcomes and related to the learning topic.

2.35 Assessment mechanisms will be efficient so as to not overburden the student by overly assessing knowledge and skills. This includes care taken over the scheduling of assessments and ensuring the modes are varied and accessible.

2.36 The outcome of assessments is monitored and used to enhance assessment practice. The results will be reported to the ACM Academic Board and the sub committees facilitate monitoring, review and enhancement, as well as through the reports of external examiners/moderators and assessment boards, and annual monitoring reports to the awarding institution.

2.37 When a student fails to meet and pass all assessment criteria (learning outcomes), opportunities for resubmission of components and re-assessment of the module will be considered by the Student Progression and Achievement Board (SPAB) and recommendations made and confirmed by overall consensus of the board. Students will be given fair and reasonable opportunities to demonstrate that they have met the requirements for successful completion of all the components of study in line with the regulations of the

awarding institution. Students will normally be notified of the outcome within five working days of the Board's decision, and in accordance with the policy of the University partner.

Resources for Learning

2.38 ACM believes that the resources for learning form an integral a part of the learning experience. Equipment and physical resources utilised by staff and students should promote professional standards and be representative of professional practice.

2.39 Academic resources form a vital part of learning and teaching. The Creativity Centre at any ACM site is a focus point for materials such as books, journals, and online resources.

2.40 Academic skills are promoted throughout ACM through learning and teaching. ACM commit to regular workshops and materials to promote good practice within academic standards and digital literacy.

3. Responsible Parties

3.1 The policy lead is responsible for the cyclical monitoring and review of the policy in liaison with the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager. The Learning and Teaching Policy lead is:
   ● Group Head of Education

3.2 Decisions and appropriate actions in support of the implementation of the Policy will be authorised by the following designated staff:

   ● Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager
   ● Head of Quality and Student Experience
   ● Programme Managers
   ● Teaching Staff
   ● Education Strategist

4. Reference Points
   4.1   Internal:
      ● Equality and Diversity Policy
      ● Observation of Teaching Procedure
      ● Changes to Module Procedure
      ● Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy
      ● Special Educational Needs Policy
      ● Student Charter

   4.2   External:
      ● QAA Quality Code Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching
      ● QAA Quality Code Chapter B4: Enabling student development and achievement
      ● QAA Quality Code Chapter B5: Student Engagement
      ● QAA Quality Code Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review
      ● HEA Study Centre for Education ESCalate (2006a) Peer Observation [Accessed online from http://escalate.ac.uk/resources/peerobservation/index.html 21 June 2016]

      ● HEA Study Centre for Education ESCalate (2006b) Planning for Peer

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Observation of Learning and Teaching [Accessed online
http://escalate.ac.uk/resources/peerobservation/02.html 21 June 2016]

5.   Date of Approval and Next Review

Version: 1.2

Approved on: 17 Aug 2017

Approved by: Academic Board

Next Review: 01 Aug 2018

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